

# Applecroft School



## Children Who Are Missing From Education

<b>Person Responsible:</b>	<b>Lead DSL</b>
<b>Review Cycle:</b>	<b>Annually</b>
<b>Date of Issue:</b>	<b>October 2025</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>October 2026</b>

# Children Who Are Missing From

## Education

### 1) Introduction:

#### School Vision:

'To be a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life.'

#### School Mission Statement:

'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'

#### School Values:

- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Children missing from education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing from education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, child sexual exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Local authorities have a duty under section 436A of the Education Act 1996 to make arrangements to establish the identities of children in their area who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise. This duty only relates to children of compulsory school age\*.

Arrangements made under section 436A also play an important role in fulfilling the local authority's wider safeguarding duties. This guidance does not replace any Child Protection Procedures. Existing safeguarding procedures and mechanisms for reporting and recording child protection concerns are to be observed at all times.

Department for Education guidance [Children Missing in Education](#) makes it clear that in carrying

out this duty, local authorities must have in place arrangements for joint working and information sharing with other local authorities and partner agencies. It also states that all agencies which come into contact with children must cooperate with the local authority's arrangements for identifying children thought to be missing from education.

This document sets out what Hertfordshire County Council staff and Applecroft School staff should do when a child believed to be missing from education comes to their attention.

Separate guidance is available for schools on Herts Grid for Learning at [thegrid.org.uk](http://thegrid.org.uk) about the legitimate removal of pupils from a school roll. A child legitimately removed from roll is not in most cases missing from education and all schools, including academies and independent schools, are legally required to notify the local authority when they remove/plan to remove a child from their roll.

*\*A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between 1 January and 31 March, then they are of compulsory school age on 31 March; if they turn 5 between 1 April and 31 August, then they are of compulsory school age on 31 August. If they turn 5 between 1 September and 31 December, then they are of compulsory school age on 31 December. A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach eighteen.*

## **2) Who is a Child Missing from Education?**

A child is missing from education if they are of compulsory school age (age 5-18), do not have a school place and no alternative education arrangements have been made for them. A child is not defined as missing from education if they have a school place but are not attending regularly, if they are being home educated or if they attend alternative provision such as a college or Education Support Centre. Some children, often the most vulnerable, are at greater risk of going missing from education.

These vulnerable groups include:

- looked after children
- children living in women's refuges
- young runaways
- children of homeless families, perhaps living in temporary accommodation · children with long term medical or emotional problems
- unaccompanied asylum seekers
- children of refugees or asylum-seeking families
- children in new immigrant families not yet established in the UK
- children from a Gypsy, Roma or Traveller background
- children who are privately fostered
- young carers
- children from transient families
- teenage mothers
- young offenders
- children permanently excluded from school

### **Children missing from education are at greater risk of:**

- physical harm
- sexual exploitation
- becoming involved in crime
- demonstrating anti-social behaviour
- abusing drugs and alcohol
- being illegally employed
- becoming part of gangs

It is vital therefore that the authority, schools and other agencies work closely together to help safeguard children who may be missing from education.

### **3) New Starters:**

Applecroft School will ensure that pupils are entered on the admission register at the beginning of the first day in which we have agreed, or been notified that a pupil will attend our school. If a child fails to attend on the agreed/notified date, we will try to establish contact with the parent/carer to establish the child's whereabouts. We will also check with agencies known to be involved with the family and/or check the original LA/ school that the child has moved from. We will make contact where possible. If we are unsuccessful in our enquiries, we will take measures to notify the local authority at the earliest opportunity. When a pupil is added to the register at a non-standard transition point (i.e. at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school), we as a school will:

- Notify the LA within five days
- Provide the LA with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil (The LA may also request this information for pupils added to the admission register at a standard transition point.)

### **Recording Data at Applecroft School**

We ensure that the school's admission register (Arbor) is accurate and kept up to date. As a school we:

- Encourage parents to inform us of any changes that occur by sending out letters and communicating with parents on a regular basis.
- Where possible hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. When changes do occur, we as a school will record on the admission register (Arbor)
  - The full name of the parent with whom the pupil lives;
  - The new address; and
  - The date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

## When Pupils Leave for another School

When Applecroft School is notified by parents/carers/ CPT (Corporate Parenting Team) that a pupil has been registered at another school or will be attending another school in future, we as a school will record the following information on the admissions register:

- The name of the new school
- The date when the pupil first attended or is due to start attending that school

When a pupil leaves, we will send a common transfer file (CTF) to the pupil's new school. When a pupil leaves the school but their destination school is unknown, or the pupil is moving abroad or to an independent school, we will upload the CTF to the 'lost pupil database' in the DfE's school2school system. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-to-school-guides-for-schools-andlocal-authorities>

## Removing Pupils from the Admission Register

Pupils can legally be deleted from Applecroft School's register when there is consent from HCC or the direction of the secretary of state. When a pupil is removed from the register at a non-standard transition point (i.e. not including pupils who have completed the school's final year) **for any of the reasons set out in the [School Attendance \(pupil registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)**, Applecroft School will notify the LA as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

The school will also provide the LA with the following information:

- The full name of the pupil
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives
- At least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives
- The full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable
- The name of the pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable
- The ground in regulation 9 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register

## Monitoring Attendance

Applecroft School will monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register. We:

- Monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance through daily phone calls home, weekly attendance meetings and the schools attendance officer;
- Refer poor attendance to the LA
- Investigate any unexplained absences as part of their wider safeguarding duties

- When a child fails to attend regularly, or have missed ten school days or more without permission, the school is to inform the LA.
- Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child.

Applecroft School have a safeguarding duty to investigate any unexplained absences and report to MASH if there is any safeguarding concerns. A Child Missing in Education form may also be completed.

#### **4) Role of the Children Missing from Education Officer (CMEO):**

The Children Missing from Education Officer (CMEO) is part of the [Hertfordshire Virtual School](#) and is responsible for receiving all CME referrals. The CME Officer keeps a record of all children reported as missing from education. Children are tracked until they return to suitable education.

Examples of the work undertaken by the CME Officer include:

- making enquiries to parents/carers as to the educational arrangements they are making for their child
- ensuring parents/carers make applications for school places
- making follow-up enquiries with schools, teams and agencies within the local authority · making visits to the last known address
- liaising with other local authorities and schools
- asking for follow-up from the police and Border Force as appropriate
- issuing School Attendance orders on behalf of the local authority
- adding information to the School2School secure data system

If the child is missing from education, the CME Officer will ensure the details are passed to the appropriate team to secure suitable education. All children missing from education will be monitored by the CME Officer until such time as suitable provision is made.

#### **5) Referral process for children believed to be missing from education:**

The referral procedure for children believed to be missing from education should be followed by all Hertfordshire County Council staff and all schools and partner agencies if a child they believe to be missing from education comes to their attention.

Anyone who believes a child may be missing from education can contact the CME Officer for advice on 01992 555 261. To make a referral to the CME Officer please complete and return the [referral form](#) via Herts/Schools FX to [csf.cme@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:csf.cme@hertfordshire.gov.uk).

Please **DO NOT** email information containing children's details as this is not secure.

It is likely that schools receiving direct applications for admission to the school outside of the normal admissions cycle will be the first to know of children missing from education. In the event that the school is unable to offer a place, and it appears from the application that the child is not in education, a referral should be made as described above.

Following this procedure will enable the local authority to meet its statutory duties relating to the identification of children missing education, safeguarding their welfare and protecting their entitlement to education.

**Linked policies:**

- Child Protection
- Safeguarding
- Attendance