Luccombe Hub

This document forms part of the policy handbook and is intended for use at Luccombe Hub

Title:	**Children Missing in Education & Attendance Policy**
Subject Area:	Safeguarding – Whole Centre
Applies:	Immediately
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1. Introduction

1.1 Aims

The Government has placed a duty on Local Authorities to make arrangements to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area who are of compulsory school age and not receiving a suitable education.

This section of this policy aims to help identify Children Missing Education and the role that staff at The Luccombe Hub will take to minimise risk to young people.

The term 'suitable education' means efficient full-time education suitable for age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs the child may have.

1.2 Consultation

The Luccombe Hub will communicate this policy to all staff, relevant professionals and learners through inductions, meetings, day to day communications, staff meetings and training. A copy of this policy and all policies will be available on request or via the website.

1.3 Legislation and guidance

- Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (added by section 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- Education Act 1996 (section 7, 8, 14 and 19)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (section 4 and 38)
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2016
- Working together to Safeguard Children
- section 10 of the Children Act 2004

2. Procedures and practice

The Luccombe Hub aims to minimise the risk of children missing in education by working closely with our referring agency, this will include Dorset Local Authority, BCP Local Authority, Wiltshire Local Authority. The Luccombe Hub aims to provide an environment where children are safe, engaged and develop a positive approach to learning to work towards desired outcomes and to ensure learner safety.

2.1 Steps

Where The Luccombe Hub feels that a child is missing from education we will take the following steps:-

1. In the first instance the Centre will make every effort to ascertain the whereabouts of the learner this might include telephoning home, contacting the GP, friends and other relatives that are known. It is imperative that guidelines are followed in relation to 'children missing education', particularly as some of our most vulnerable families who frequently change addresses are likely to get lost in the system if the appropriate action isn't taken by our Centre.
2. If we have reason to believe that a child has transferred to another school or educational provision, every effort will be made to contact that school/educational setting to ascertain whether or not that information is true or false. If any members of the Centre staff have any reason to believe that there may be any child protection issues involved then they will raise an immediate concern via the 'My Concern' online system and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will make contact with the Local Authority – safeguarding referral via CHAD/MASH straight away and if necessary, notify the police.
3. After 4 weeks, if the School and the Local Authority are unable to locate where the child has moved to, we will be advised by the Local Authority to remove the child's name from our roll. We will ensure that no children are removed from the Centre roll unless authorised to do so by them.

ATTENDANCE:

The Luccombe Hub understands that a high level attendance will have a positive impact on progression and learning and good levels of attendance are needed for learners to take advantage of the wide variety of positive experiences. Where attendance is low we know that this can have a significant impact on students wellbeing and attainment.

The Luccombe Hub aims to support learners attendance through open communication and development of positive relationships with the learner and parents/carers.

It is the aim of the Luccombe Hub that all learners maintain an attendance rate of 95% and above in line with best practice. However, we understand that our learners are more vulnerable and have greater needs that their mainstream counterparts and therefore may have more genuine reasons for absence. It is our responsibility to create an environment and provide sufficient support and encouragement to ensure frequent and regular attendance. Our Pastoral Lead works closely with parents and carers, particularly if attendance begins to decline, developing a tailored action plan to support the family and encourage the learner's return. These plans incorporate Thrive strategies, such as transitional objects, visuals, and alternative communication methods, to provide the necessary support and ensure attendance improvement.

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend the Centre and we are committed to ensuring our families understand this importance. The majority of our learners attend the centre via SEN transport and this is taken into account when marking any lateness.

If there are problems which affect a learners attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents/carers and learners to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

PROCEDURES

The Luccombe Hub maintains a register which is marked accurately, recording learners attendance and absence and in the latter case if authorised or unauthorised. A certified extract of the register can be used as evidence in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance or in seeking an Education Supervision Order.

Registration

The Luccombe Hub uses computer-based registration system. The register is marked according to the time each learner is due to attend and this information is fed through to the various commissioning agencies to confirm the attendance of that learner, for example - Dorset Local Authority SEN department.

Registration Times

Morning Registration 10:00 – 10:15

Afternoon Registration: 12:45 – 13:00

Procedures for following up absence/lateness

The majority of our learners arrive by way of SEN transport. We will wait for 30 minutes before contacting the carer as we recognise that sometimes our learners require additional time to transition to the transport in the morning. We are also aware that taxis do run late. If the carer confirms that the young person was collected we will then contact the SEN transport team as a matter of urgency to confirm that the taxi is on it's way. If the SEN transport team are not able to confirm this, we will try to contact, if known, the relevant taxi company directly. If a learner arrives 30 minutes after the start of registration period, they will be marked as late. The Luccombe Hub understands that our learners may struggle to attend sessions and we therefore, simply ask that they phone or message ahead to advise of their child being late. Parents or carers dropping students off late must report to The Hub reception or Post 16 reception, to speak with a senior member of staff/facilitator on duty and not just drop child and leave. The register will be updated accordingly including time of arrival.

Where a learner is unable to attend it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to contact the Centre on the first morning of the child's absence. This can be done by leaving a message on the answer phone or sending a text message to the Principal before 9.45am. If this contact is not made the Centre will contact the parent/carer by telephone or, if the parent is unobtainable, send an email and/or write a letter requesting information.

If this fails to provide an explanation for the absence the Principal or deputised staff member will attempt to get in touch and a (second) email/letter may be sent to the parents/carers.

Where a learner is repeatedly late to their session, The Luccombe Hub will investigate if there is a specific reason for this and try to resolve the difficulties which are preventing the learner attending on time. Where a learner suffers with 'school refusal'/ high anxiety, experiencing bullying etc , the learner will be encouraged to be involved in finding a solution in order to feel listened to, safe and playing an important role with overcoming this barrier.

Authorised and unauthorised Absence

"Leave" in relation to a The Luccombe Hub means leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the Senior Leadership Team.

The Principal or other SLT member will only consider authorising an absence during term time where a request has been made in advance in writing either by letter or email and where they are satisfied that there are exceptional or special circumstances to justify the request.

The DfE (2013) now state that leave of absence requests for holidays should not be granted. The Luccombe Hub reserves the right to decide on a case-by-case basis and acknowledges that due to individual needs of its learner's special consideration to requests for leave may be given.

The Luccombe Hub may require the parent/carer to provide written evidence for the reason behind the need for absence e.g appointment cards, medical cards or GP letters

If there is an extended period of absence due to medical reasons the Centre will request further information from Parent/Carers or Local Authority and will utilise our Remote Learning Policy to provide opportunity to access learning if appropriate. The Principal, Pastoral & Behavioural Lead and Head of Education will work together with the family and learner to review future medical considerations and reasonable adjustments that may be required together with managing a transition to return to the Centre when the learner is able.

Where the Centre does not agree with the absence of the learner for a whole session or part way through a session and the parent/carer has advised that they intend to remove the child anyway. They must sign and complete the unauthorised absence form (Appendix 1)

Strategies for promoting attendance/punctuality

Attendance statistics are monitored by the Principal and SLT and reported to the commissing Local Authority.

The Senior Leadership Team will contact parents and carers to discuss any issues, which may cause a student to experience attendance difficulties, these will be promptly investigated by the Centre. The Senior Leadership Team will have regular meetings with the placing authority (if required), in order to identify and support those learners who are experiencing attendance difficulties. The Luccombe Hub aims to provide a voice for the learner in order to work on a solution where applicable.

Learner absence monitoring procedure

1. Registers must be completed, and information provided on a weekly basis to commissioning body.
2. All absent learners will be contacted on their first day of absence by a designated member of the administration team where a reason for absence has not been given. This may be by way of telephone call or email by 11:30am.
3. Lateness will be logged as a note on the learners register. Consistent lateness will be raised with the SLT to confirm appropriate action.
4. If on the first call to a learner's home no one answers, then a message will be left for the family to contact the Centre as soon as possible to explain why the learner is not at the Centre.
5. On making contact with the learner's family, they will be reminded that every day the learner does not attend their sessions, that the Centre needs to be informed and an update as to their progress made. The Centre will contact them where they have not received contact and a learner does not attend on a day.

6. Where an absence of a learner is for 3 days or more and the family has not made contact, further investigation will be made as to the wellbeing of the learner by the SLT. Details will be logged on the Centres 'My Concern' and safeguarding procedures followed.
7. Where staff are unhappy with the reasons given for a learner's absence then the Senior Leadership Team will be informed of any concerns and will follow up with the family.

2.2 Roles and responsibilities

Families will:

- Notify the Centre of any absences on the first day of that absence
- Keep close contact with the centre if their child is on extended leave due to ill health
- Make best edevours to book appointments outside of core Centre hours.

Teachers/Facilitators will:

- Liaise with the Senior Leadership Team about attendance and advise of missed sessions to ensure registers are maintained accurately.
- Inform administration staff/SLT if they receive any communication that a learner will need to leave the centre part way through the day by prior arrangement e.g. for a medical appointment.

Administrative staff will:

- Maintain a record of learner attendance on the Centre's computer system
- Telephone learner's homes as necessary re attendance
- Pass on information re attendance to the relevant staff
- Keep records and inform outside agencies as necessary to comply with local and national policy and procedures
- Store notes from home in the learner's file

Senior Leadership Team will:

- Liaise with the placing authority or other relevant services
- Contact parents/carers (by telephone or home visit) to monitor attendance
- Liaise with admin staff over any queries
- Keep records of learners who arrive late and note down reason
- Follow any safeguarding procedures required.

2.3 Aspects

Children are identified as missing from education when they are of compulsory school age and are:
- Not on a school/educational setting roll
- Not being educated other than at school (EOTAS)
- Identified as having been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time

Children go missing from education for a number of reasons including:

- They do not start school at the appropriate time and so they do not enter the education system
- They are removed from school/educational setting by their parents
- They fail to find a suitable school place after moving to a new area
- The family move home regularly
- Family breakdown

• Children who do not make the transition between key stages, e.g. Nursery to Primary, Primary to Secondary Children and young people in the following groups are more likely to be missing from education:
• Young people who have previously committed offences
• Children living in women's refuges
• Children of homeless families perhaps in temporary accommodation or housing
• Young people who run away from home
• Children with long-term medical and emotional needs
• Unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees and children who are from asylum seekers/refugees families
• Children of immigrant families not yet established in the UK
• Looked after children
• Children with Gypsy/Traveller background
• Young carers
• Children from transient families
• Teenage mothers

Excluded pupils, Children missing from education are at a much greater risk of physical harm, as well as:
• Becoming involved in crime
• Demonstrating anti-social behaviour
• Abusing drugs and alcohol
• Sexual exploitation
• Being illegally employed
• Forced marriages

Information to Parents

Punctuality

Please arrive on time to the start of your timetabled sessions. We understand that this is not always possible and therefore provide a grace period of 30 minutes. Where you know you will be late for a specific reason e.g. doctors appointment, vehicle failure, please contact the centre as soon as possible to advise us of your expected time of arrival.
Where there is persistent lateness over several sessions, the Principal will endeavour to seek how we may best support you in attending on time.

Where a learner is provided SEN transport, lateness will be noted on the learners register but the coding will be based on discussions with the learner and the transport driver. Where a taxi is consistently late the Centre will contact SEN transport department to resolve the issue.

Reporting Non-Attendance

In addition to the procedures set out above, the Centre will report such non-attendance to the family home in accordance with best practice.

3. Concluding notes

3.1 Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis or earlier if changes to governmental regulations/laws apply.

3.2 Links to other policies

Admissions Policy
Behaviour Policy
Remote Learning Policy

3.3 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Unauthorised absence

Leave of absence/removal from The Luccombe Hub

Unauthorised absence

Parents/Carers are requested to seek authorisation for the absence of their child from the Centre.

This form is to be signed by the parent/carer requesting the absence/removal of their child from the session early or for whole days where agreement has not been given by the Centre.

Section A – to the Principal.
Child's name: _____ Date of removal from session/Day of non-attendance _____ Time of removal, where applicable _____

Section B

I am the parent/carer with whom the child normally resides. I sign this form to confirm that I am Collecting the child early and/or removing child from their timetable. I understand that the Centre is not in agreement with this decision and will mark the absence as unauthorised on their registers and inform the Local Authority of my decision.

Signed……

Name…….

Dated……