

## **Children missing from Education**

*Children may suddenly stop attending a childcare setting for a number of reasons, however, when a child does not arrive for their usual session and there has been no contact from the parent or carer, under our safeguarding responsibilities we have a duty to take the necessary steps to ensure that the child concerned is safe and well. It is recognised that the vast majority of families will inform us if their child is going to be absent from the setting due to illness or holiday, or if they are planning to move or end their child's time at the setting.*

*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 & 19)  
Education Act 2002 (section 21)  
Education and Inspections Act 2006 (section 4 & 38)  
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006*

### **Child protection:**

*Children Act 1989 (section 17 & 47)  
Children Act 2004 (section 10, 11, 12 & 17)  
Education Act 2002 (section 175)*

### **Our policy for missing children is:**

#### **We believe:**

.All children who are deemed to be missing are vulnerable and this can be a sign of other issues in the child's life, as recognised in recent local and National Serious Case Reviews (SCR).

### **Our Procedures for missing children is:**

#### **We support this by:**

- In the first instance, we will take action to try and contact the family to ascertain the child's whereabouts. The action taken needs to be child-specific, recognising that we generally know our children and families very well.

### **Vulnerable children**

- If the child concerned is considered as vulnerable, or we have concerns about the child's wellbeing, the designated safeguarding lead (or a named deputy in their absence) will be informed immediately.
- The designated safeguarding lead/key person will attempt to contact the parent/carer to establish why the child has not arrived for their session. If contact is made and a valid reason for the absence is provided, the information will be recorded. Any relevant professionals involved with the family will be informed e.g. social worker, family support worker.

- If contact is made and the designated safeguarding lead/key person is concerned that the child may be at risk, the relevant professionals will be contacted immediately to discuss the concerns. The events, conversation and follow up actions will be recorded. If contact cannot be made the designated safeguarding lead will contact the relevant professionals and inform them. If there is no social care involvement with the family then we will contact Kirklees Referral and Response Service on 01484 456848 and share our concerns; this may result in a referral being made.

### **Child with No Known Concerns**

- The child's key person (or secondary key person in their absence), will contact the parent/carer to establish the reason for the child's absence, using phone numbers provided. Text messages and email could also be used if there is no response to the call.
- If contact is made and a satisfactory explanation is received, we will identify when the child will be returning to the setting and make a written record of the conversation. If contact is made and there are concerns about the child's wellbeing then we will contact Kirklees Referral and Response Service
- If contact is not made, we will try to contact the parent/carer throughout the day on the numbers/emails provided. If there is no response, we will try contacting all emergency contact numbers.
- If the child attends another setting, we will contact them to see if the child is attending or if they have had contact with the parent/carer. If appropriate, speak to other parents/carers attending your setting who might know the family (without breaching confidentiality) to try to find out if they have seen or heard from the parents/child
- If the child has any siblings, contact any settings/schools they attend to see if they have been attending, or if they have had contact with the family. Continue trying to contact the parent/carer and emergency contacts. If there is no success you could also contact the childrens centre local to the family and the child's health visitor.
- If the family are not able to be traced through our checks and the family are not engaging or responding to requests to contact us, we will contact the Kirklees Missing Education (CME) Team on 01484 225509 and provide them with the details of the child and family. We may also contact our childcare co-ordinator for advice if required.