



## **Children missing in Education Policy**

Turning Heads directors are responsible for ensuring that those benefiting from us or working with us are not harmed in any way. The directors of Turning Heads have a legal duty to act prudently, and this means that they must take all reasonable steps within their power to ensure that no one is harmed. It is particularly important where beneficiaries are vulnerable persons or children in the community.

This policy applies to all those involved in Turning Heads, including, but not exclusively, administrators, volunteer drivers, parents, young people, and third party suppliers.

Definition of Children Missing Education In Children Missing Education - Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (2016)

**Children missing education are defined as those who are not on a school roll or receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. Those who are regularly absent or have missed 10 school days or more without permission may be at risk of becoming 'children missing education'.**

There will not always be a safeguarding concern for children and young people who are missing education. Most children and young people are moving schools supported by their parents/carers, schools and local authority admissions services. A smaller number, however, are at risk of dropping out or disengaging from education and, being out of school, they are at risk of exploitation, going missing and significant harm.

These 'missing' children can be vulnerable; it is essential that all services work together to identify and re-engage these children back into appropriate education provision as quickly as possible. It is important to establish, at the earliest possible stage, the reasons for the child being missing.

Possible reasons that should be considered include:

- Failure to start appropriate provision and never enter the system;
- Stopped attending, due to illegal exclusion or withdrawal by parent/carers;
- Failure to complete a transition between schools;

- Children from refugee and asylum -seeking families;
- Children from families who are highly mobile;
- Children at risk of a forced marriage;
- Children experiencing abuse and neglect;
- Children supervised by the Youth Justice System.

In the circumstances of a child going missing who is not known to any other agencies, Turning Heads will inform the Children Missing Education (CME) Officer of any child who has not attended for 10 consecutive school days without provision of reasonable explanation.

Prior to doing so, Turning Heads will have made enquiries to ascertain whether the child is still residing at the home address and is not attending or whether the child is missing.

In the following circumstances a referral to children's social care and /or the police should always be made promptly:

- The child may be the victim of a crime;
- The child is subject of a Child Protection plan;
- The child is subject of section 47 enquiries;
- The child is looked after;
- There is a known person posing a risk to children in the household or in contact with the household; The answers to further questions could assist a judgement whether or not to inform children's social care and the police
- In which age range is the child?
- Is this very sudden and unexpected behaviour?
- Have there been any past concerns about the child associating with significantly older young people or adults?
- Was there a significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence?
- Has the child been a victim of bullying? • Are there health reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g.: Does the child need essential medication or health care?
- Was the child noted to be depressed prior to their unexplained absence?

- Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g.: Rites of passage, female genital mutilation or forced marriage planned for the child?
- Has the child a disability and/or special educational needs?

### **Appointed Person**

***An appointed person*** should be made known to members, volunteers and parents alike; as the designated person to whom concerns should be addressed. If the concern is about this designated person, please report to **Alan Tilley, Turning Heads**.

**The appointed person for Children Missing in Education at Turning Heads is:**

***Name: Alan Tilley Contact number: 07817777739***

Reviewed: 1 February 2022

Next Review: 1 February 2024