

# SCHOOL & LOCAL AUTHORITY OFF ROLL PROCEDURES



# London Borough of Hounslow - Summary of School off roll procedures

## Introduction

All pupils are required to be on the roll of a school, educational establishment or have elected to home educate. The attendance of students is monitored closely, parents/carers are reminded of their responsibilities for their child's attendance to ensure their children are receiving education appropriate to their needs, aptitude and ability. Where a pupil is out of provision they are recorded as a child missing education.

The local authority and schools are required to ensure safeguarding policies and procedures are in place so that all children remain safe and fully engaged in education provision. This includes the local authority being aware of any children not engaged in an education provision and has a duty to ensure parents/carers are fulfilling their responsibilities regarding engagement in education.

A partnership between schools and the local authority is essential if we are to minimise the risks to children, maximise engagement to help ensure desired outcomes for learning are met. When no information or contact has been provided by parents for a child who is not attending, a referral should be made on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of absence to the School Attendance Support Officer (SASO) to carry out a Contact Visit, in order to establish why a child has stopped attending.

A pupil attending a school must be on the school roll and recorded in both the school admission and attendance register. The admission register for a school should be an accurate record of who is a registered pupil at any given time. Once a pupil's name has been added to the register, the pupil is a registered pupil until their name is deleted from the register. Deletion from the admissions register cannot be backdated. Trial or temporary placements are not legal, unless a dual registration has been agreed between the two Headteachers, for example, this could be used for 6-day provision or a period of respite. It is illegal for a school to ask a parent to seek another school, for example, if a child is at risk of permanent exclusion or poor attendance. The new enhanced pupil census data arrangements will contribute to more effective tracking of pupils and support safeguarding responsibilities.

On 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024, the DFE announced an update to the Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance, Working Together to Improve School Attendance and introduced The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 revokes and replaces the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 ("the 2006 Regulations"). It consolidates several amendments made to the 2006 Regulations and makes changes to modernise the keeping of the admission and attendance register and the information recorded in the registers, mandates the use of a set of codes to record attendance and absence, provides additional circumstances in which leave of absence from schools maintained by local authorities and special schools not maintained by local authorities can be given, provides for local authorities, the Chief Inspector and the

Secretary of State to examine and take extracts from registers and sets out the returns schools are required to make to the local authority as to the contents of their registers, including a new return (not required by the 2006 Regulations) in regard to absence due to sickness.

In view of the number of times the 2006 Regulations had been amended and the need to modernise and clarify aspects of the drafting, as well as making the substantive changes described above, it is appropriate to entirely revoke those Regulations and replace them with new ones.

The Government's vision for improving school attendance is for pupils, parents, schools and local authorities, and other partners to work together to prevent patterns of absence from developing. Where patterns of absence exist already, intervention should be early to understand the barriers to attendance and the right support provided to help the pupil return to school.

Making this a reality requires accurate recording in schools' admission and attendance registers, but also timelier sharing of, and access to, the information held in registers, across schools, local authorities, and the Department for Education. The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 will ensure that the correct information is recorded in registers, and the right people have access to the information held at the appropriate time.

Every school in England must keep admission and attendance registers electronically. The admission register contains the details of all pupils at the school (both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) and underpins the key management information systems within schools. The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 slightly increases information held relating to registered pupils. The main changes are to the grounds for deletion, where a pupil's name will be deleted from the admission register.

The Education Act 1996 ('1996 Act') is clear that all pupils are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their individual needs, and many pupils now continue their education in their own school alongside appropriate support. Where a health condition prevents the pupil from attending school, local authorities may have a duty, under section 19 of the 1996 Act, to make arrangements for alternative provision of education. For these reasons, this ground for deletion has not been included in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Previously where a pupil of compulsory school age had been absent from school for a continuous period of twenty school days without permission or valid reason or had failed to return to school within ten days following an agreed period of absence, and the school and local authority had located the pupil, where no other ground for deletion applied, there was very limited course of action the school and/or local authority could take - particularly where the pupil and parent were abroad. Therefore, a pupil could be absent from school for a long period, as long as the school and local authority were able to locate the pupil, despite it being clear to the school and local authority that the pupil was unlikely to return. The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 adds another condition to the grounds for deletion that mean a pupil's name will be deleted from the admission register in such a case where the school and local authority have located the pupil, and they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to

believe the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps they could take (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance.

Local authorities have responsibilities under the Education Acts for seeking to ensure all children of compulsory school age in their area receive a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational needs the child may have. Previously local authorities only had access to the registers of schools maintained by them which made this duty difficult to fulfil. The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 extends that access to all schools in their area. It continues to allow His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills ("the Chief Inspector") to examine and take extracts from registers.

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 creates a new requirement for all schools to inform their local authority if a pupil is absent because of sickness and has missed, or is expected to miss, 15 school days either consecutively or cumulatively for sickness, to help the local authority to fulfil any duty they may have under section 19 of the Education Act 1996.

Off roll situations can be complex and it is difficult to cover every eventuality that may occur in a set of procedures. Please seek further advice from SASS or CME regarding off roll and safeguarding concerns about a pupil in the first instance.

**A link to the full CME Guidance for local authorities can be found at:**

**[Children Missing Education - Guidance for Local authorities  
\(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)**

**A link to the full School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 can be found at:**

**[The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024  
\(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)**

## **Grounds for deleting a pupil from the school admission register**

### **1. Ground A - The pupil has been registered at another school**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(a)

222. Where a pupil has been registered at another school, unless:

- a school attendance order naming the school is in force in relation to the pupil (see further information below),
- the pupil is a mobile child and the school is their main school (see further information below),
- the school has agreed with a person with control of the pupil's attendance at the other school that the pupil should be registered at more than one school (see further information on dual registration below), or
- the school itself has control of the pupil's attendance at the other school and has decided that the pupil should be registered at more than one school (see further information on dual registration below).

### **Transfer between schools**

Where a pupil is transferring to another school, the original school must delete the pupil's name from the admission register as soon as they are entered on the admission register of the new school. The new school must enter the pupil's name on the admission register on the first day that it has agreed or been told the pupil will attend the school as explained under Expected First Day of Attendance.

For example, if a pupil leaves School A on 28 March and their expected first day of attendance at School B is 29 March, they would be added to the admission register of School B and deleted from that of School A on 29 March.

School A will:

- record the pupil's attendance and absence up to and including 28 March, delete the pupil's name from the admission register on 29 March, and
- transfer the appropriate pupil information via the S2S system.

School B will:

- enter the pupil's name on the admission register on 29 March,
- record the pupil's attendance and absence from 29 March,
- follow up any unexpected absence on or after the 29 March, and
- request the transfer of the pupil information.

There are a small number of exceptions, these are:

### **School attendance order**

If a school attendance order is in place for the pupil, and the name of the school has been replaced by the relevant local authority with that of another school, their name

must be deleted from the admission register under the reason for deletion at ground D (regulation 9(1)(d)).

If the school attendance order has not been amended and still names the school, the pupil's name must not be deleted under ground A even if they have been registered at another school as well.

### **Mobile child**

Where a child of compulsory school age has no fixed abode and their parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place, the child can temporarily attend another school without the need for their main school to remove their name.

Main school in this context means the school that, during the last 18 months, the child has attended during periods when their parent was not travelling in the course of their trade or business, or, if there is more than one school that fits that description, the school that most recently fulfils those criteria.

### **Dual registration**

In circumstances where it has been agreed between the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance that the pupil will be registered at more than one school, the pupil's name will remain on the admission register. This is also the case where it has been decided by the school if it has control of the pupil's attendance at the other school. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending another school on a temporary basis, such as a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school.

## **2. Ground B - The pupil has not continued at the school following completion of nursery education**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(b)

Where a pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education and on completing nursery does not continue into reception (or more senior class).

## **3. Ground C – The pupil is also registered at one or more other schools and the other schools have agreed the deletion**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(c)

Where a pupil is registered at one or more other schools, and:

- the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again,
- each school where the pupil is registered has given consent to the deletion,

- there is no school attendance order naming the school in force in relation to the pupil (see further information below), and
- the pupil is not a mobile child, or if they are, the school is not their main school (see further information below).

### **School attendance order**

If a school attendance order is in place for the pupil, and the name of the school has been replaced by the relevant local authority with that of another school, their name must be deleted from the admission register under the reason for deletion at ground D (regulation 9(1)(d)).

If the school attendance order has not been amended and still names the school, the pupil's name must not be deleted under ground C even if the other criteria are satisfied.

### **Mobile child**

Where a child of compulsory school age has no fixed abode and their parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place, the child can temporarily attend another school without the need for their main school to remove their name.

Main school in this context means the school that, during the last 18 months, the child has attended during periods when their parent was not travelling in the course of their trade or business, or, if there is more than one school that fits that description, the school that most recently fulfils those criteria.

### **4. Ground D - The pupil has a school attendance order which has been changed to name another school**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(d)

Where the pupil is the subject of a school attendance order that previously named the school, but another school has now been named on that order instead.

### **5. Ground E - The pupil had a school attendance order which has been revoked**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(e)

Where the pupil was the subject of a school attendance order naming the school, but the order is revoked because the local authority that made the order is satisfied that arrangements have been made for the child to receive suitable full-time education for their age, ability and aptitude and special educational needs somewhere other than at a school.

### **6. Ground F - The parent of a pupil has notified the school in writing that the pupil will be leaving the school to be educated otherwise than at a school**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(f)

Where the pupil's parent has informed the school in writing that the pupil will no longer attend the school after a certain day and will receive education otherwise than at a school and that day has passed, and there is no school attendance order naming the school in force in relation to the pupil.

### **School Attendance Order**

If a school attendance order has been revoked because the local authority that made the order is satisfied that arrangements have been made for the child to receive suitable full-time education for their age, ability and aptitude somewhere other than at a school, the pupil's name must be deleted from the admission register under the reason for deletion at regulation 9(1)(e).

### **7. Ground G - The pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(g)

Where a pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school, the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again, and the pupil is not a boarder at the school.

In circumstances where parents are moving away and withdrawing their child but are unable to say how their child will continue with their education, for example, the family are relocating but have not been able to secure a place at a new school in advance, once the pupil has completed their final day at school and moved out of the area, the school must delete the pupil's name from the admission register and the pupil's information should then be transferred to the Lost Pupil Database via the S2S system.

#### **Reasonable distance**

DfE does not define reasonable distance because each case depends on the family situation and the geography of the area for example, the parent's ability to get the child to the school, a safe walking route or the accessibility of local transportation.

#### **Temporary or occasional absence**

Relevant regulation 9(5)(a)

Whether a pupil normally lives a reasonable distance from the school is not affected by a temporary or occasional absence. A judgement should be made in an individual case as to whether an absence is temporary or occasional, but a prolonged absence is not generally considered as temporary.

### **8. Ground H - The pupil has not returned following a leave of absence**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(h)

Where a pupil has been granted a leave of absence and:

- the pupil has not attended school within the ten school days immediately after the end of the period that the leave was granted for,

- the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause, and
- the school and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out
- the pupil's location and circumstances, but:
  - o they have not succeeded, or they have succeeded but they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps that could be taken (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance.

DfE's guidance on Children Missing Education sets out the expectations for schools and local authorities in respect of making reasonable efforts to find out a pupil's location and circumstances.

### **Pupils who have been located but have not returned to school**

Where a pupil has been located and their circumstances discovered but they have not returned to school, a joint decision is required between the school and the local authority before this ground is used. Both must agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe the child will return to the school, even with reasonable support and/or enforcement to try to cause their return to school. This means the final criterion will be met very rarely, usually when a pupil has been out of the country for a prolonged period and there are no signs of the pupil returning.

This ground cannot be used in any case where the pupil could reasonably be supported to return to school regardless of whether that support has been provided. It cannot be used where a pupil is absent because of a health reason. It also cannot be used in cases where attendance legal action to cause the pupil to return to school could reasonably be taken instead. In such cases, the appropriate support or enforcement should be taken rather than the pupil's name being deleted from roll.

Examples of appropriate use include:

- The pupil is still away from home and the parent has refused to give a date for their return but there is no reason to think there is anything preventing them from returning.
- No date or evidence of the pupil returning has been provided by the deadline set out in the school's contact with the parent and there is no reason to think there is anything preventing them from returning.
- The parent has given a date, or several dates, for returning and the pupil has failed to return by or on the last given date.

Examples of where regulation 9(1)(g) may be appropriate instead:

- The date for return the parent has provided is too vague or too far in the future to reasonably believe the pupil still normally lives a reasonable distance from the school.

The school does not believe, taking account of any information from the parent, that the pupil still resides within the area and the pupil's absence does not appear to be temporary.

### **9. Ground I - The pupil has been continually absent from school for 20 school days**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(i)

Where a pupil has been continuously absent from the school for a period of 20 school days or more and:

- at no point during that period did any of the circumstances in regulation 10(3) Table 2 or 10(4) Table 3 other than the ones for codes G, N, or O apply.
- the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause, and
- the school and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out
- the pupil's location and circumstances, but: o they have not succeeded, or they have succeeded but they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps they could take (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance.

DfE's guidance on Children Missing Education sets out the expectations for schools and local authorities in respect of making reasonable efforts to find out a pupil's location and circumstances.

#### **Pupils who have been located but have not returned to school**

Where a pupil has been located and their circumstances discovered but they have not returned to school, a joint decision is required between the school and the local authority before this ground is used. Both must agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe the child will return to the school, even with reasonable support and/or enforcement to try to cause their return to school. This means the final criterion will be met very rarely, usually when a pupil has been out of the country for a prolonged period and there are no signs of the pupil returning.

This ground cannot be used in any case where the pupil could reasonably be supported to return to school regardless of whether that support has been provided. It cannot be used where a pupil is absent because of a health reason. It also cannot be used in cases where attendance legal action to cause the pupil to return to school could reasonably be taken instead. In these cases, the appropriate support or enforcement should be taken rather than the pupil's name being deleted from roll.

Examples of appropriate use include:

- The pupil is away from home and the parent has refused to give a date for their return but there is no reason to think there is anything preventing them from returning.
- No date or evidence of the pupil returning has been provided by the deadline set out in the school's contact with the parent and there is no reason to think there is anything preventing them from returning.
- The parent has given a date, or several dates, for returning and the pupil has failed to return by or on the last given date.

Examples of where regulation 9(1)(g) may be appropriate instead:

- The date for return the parent has provided is too vague or too far in the future to reasonably believe the pupil normally lives a reasonable distance from the school.

The school does not believe, taking account of any information from the parent, that the pupil still resides within the area and the pupil's absence does not appear to be temporary.

## **10. Ground J - The pupil is detained under a sentence of detention**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(j)

Where a pupil is found guilty of a crime and detained under a sentence of detention (as defined in regulation 3) before the pupil's name can be deleted from the admission register the school must have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will not return to the school once they are released.

This must be decided on a case by case basis after considering whether the pupil will return at the end, or part way through their sentence (e.g. where part is served on licence in the community). In determining whether there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will return to the school following their detention, it is expected that schools will discuss this with the pupil's youth offending team worker.

Pupils who are remanded to custody awaiting trial or sentencing cannot be removed under this ground.

## **11. Ground K - The pupil has died**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(k)

Where a pupil has died.

A pupil's name should only be deleted from the admission register when the school is informed of the death. This would normally come from the pupil's parent but it is possible that notification comes from another source, such as relatives or the police.

Once the school receives the information, it is particularly important to delete the pupil's name as quickly as possible to prevent inadvertent and unnecessary contact with the family about the child.

## **12. Ground L - The pupil will be over compulsory school age and will not continue into the sixth form**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(l)

Where a pupil will be over compulsory school age by the school next meets, and:

- the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again, or
- the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements to be transferred to the school's sixth form.

### **Compulsory school age**

A pupil ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

## **13. Ground M - The pupil is a boarder at a school maintained by a local authority or academy and their boarding fees have not been paid**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(m)

Where a pupil is a boarder at the school and:

- the school is maintained by a local authority or is an academy,
- charges for the pupil's board and lodgings are payable by the pupil's parent, and those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.

## **14. Ground N - The pupil has ceased to be a pupil at an independent school or non-maintained special school**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(n)

Where a pupil has ceased to be a pupil at the school and the school is not maintained by a local authority or an academy (including a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts).

## **15. Ground O - The pupil has been permanently excluded from the school**

Relevant regulation 9(1)(o)

Where a pupil has been permanently excluded from the school.

A pupil's name cannot be deleted from the admission register until the outcome of any consideration of reinstatement and independent review (in the case of a disciplinary exclusion from a maintained school, pupil referral unit, or academy) or appeal (in the case of a city technology college or city college for the technology of the arts)

## **Deleting the name of a pupil of compulsory school age from the register of a special school**

Relevant regulation 9(2)

Where a pupil of compulsory school age is registered at a special school under arrangements made by a local authority, the pupil's name cannot be deleted without the consent of the local authority, or if the local authority refuses to give consent, without a direction from the Secretary of State, unless:

- The pupil is registered at the school as result of a school attendance order, but the school is not now named on that order or the order has been revoked because arrangements have been made for the child to receive suitable full-time education for their age, ability and aptitude somewhere other than at a school, and the pupil's name is deleted under regulation 9(1)(d) or (e); or
- The pupil has died, and the pupil's name is deleted under regulation 9(1)(k); or
- The pupil has been permanently excluded from the school, and the pupil's name is deleted under regulation 9(1)(o).

It is expected that the local authority will not withhold consent unnecessarily, nor delay for an unreasonable period.

## **Transfer of Common Transfer File (CTF) via School to School (S2S)**

### **Background:**

The DfE has made available to all maintained schools in England and Wales a secure way to electronically transfer the common transfer file (CTF) to any other maintained school. This system is called school to school (s2s) and is a free service for schools and LAs.

There is also a lost pupil's database to store the CTF of pupils who either move outside the English maintained system or leave a school without providing information about their new school. This database gives the functionality for LEAs to search for information on pupils arriving into their LEA for whom no CTF has been received. This database is being incorporated into the identification, referral and tracking (also known as Information Sharing Index) (IRT or ISA) projects.

The S2S system is now only available through the DfE sign in portal which links to several different DfE services including, S2S, GIAS and Collect:

How does the process work?

All schools have their own secure area on the s2s site which can be accessed by their individual school login and password through the DfE sign in <https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/>. If a school is unsure of their login and/or password details, then they can reset the details through the link below <https://help.signin.education.gov.uk/contact/email-password>

Information on s2s and the LPD is available on the DFE Website <https://www.gov.uk/school-to-school-service-how-to-transfer-information> , Senior Management Information Officer in the Education and Early Intervention Team on Tel: 020 8583 2617 or email [neal.richards1@hounslow.gov.uk](mailto:neal.richards1@hounslow.gov.uk).

Schools can look up information on schools in England by using the DFE database Get Information About Schools <https://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>  
This will give the address and website of the school as well as its DFE number.

DFE Enquiries - 0370 000 2288