Missing Monday Panel Terms Of Reference

Reviewed: August 2026

CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk

Terms Of Reference "Missing Monday" Panel

Contents

1. Purpose 2
2. Scope 2
3. Referrals in scope 4
3.1 Referrals out of scope 4
4. Triage 4
5. Threshold Criteria For Attendance And Inclusion Officer Involvement 4
5.1 Croydon's Principles 5
Referral Criteria Table 6-8
6. Providers should ensure the following Required documentation is presented 9
6.1 Attendance Inclusion Officer Responsibilities 9
Referral Pathway 10
7. Evidence Checklist for Referral 11
8. Membership 11
9. Frequency Of Meetings 11
10. Governance 11

1. Purpose

The purpose of this panel is to support efforts to reduce the number of children and young people in Croydon who are absent from education or missing from the school roll. It also ensures that safeguarding considerations remain central to schools' responsibility to promote the wellbeing of all children.

An officer appointed for addressing the issue of children missing from education has been employed by the London Borough of Croydon on a fulltime basis.

The purpose of the panel is to support the work of the CME Lead while ensuring corporate oversight and shared responsibility for decision-making regarding children who may need to be reported missing to the police, in accordance with the local missing children procedure (The panel will make joint decisions about thresholds and will determine which children are reported missing to the police or other law enforcement agencies).

2. Scope

The panel will consider safeguarding risks and vulnerabilities, including female genital mutilation (FGM), honour-based abuse, child trafficking, and child sexual exploitation. However, its primary focus is to ensure that all reasonable enquiries and checks have been completed before a child is deemed untraceable. Where a child or young person cannot be located, a shared risk assessment will be undertaken by relevant partner agencies to inform the decision on whether a missing person report should be made to the police.

The Access to Education Service will undertake a weekly analysis of attendance data submitted by schools through Studybugs and the Base2Base (B2B) system. As a significant number of schools do not currently submit attendance data via B2B, it is expected that pupils attending these schools who demonstrate high levels of persistent absence will be referred to the panel by the Attendance Champion/Lead for consideration.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- **Identify, monitor and respond effectively to children who are missing, or at risk of becoming missing, from education** within the London Borough of Croydon, ensuring that concerns are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity.

- **Ensure that schools and education providers fulfil their statutory duties** when a child is absent, missing from education, or at risk of being removed from the school roll, and that all appropriate steps are taken to safeguard the child and secure their continued education.

- **Ensure the effective and consistent implementation of Croydon's safeguarding policies and procedures** relating to children missing from education, including clear escalation where concerns remain unresolved.

- **Ensure that appropriate safeguarding and child protection procedures are initiated** where a child or young person cannot be located, particularly following removal from the school roll or where their whereabouts and educational provision are unknown.

- **Establish and maintain accurate, timely and meaningful data** on children missing from education, enabling the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership and relevant agencies to understand the scale, characteristics and potential safeguarding risks associated with children missing from education.

- **Strengthen communication, information sharing and multi-agency collaboration** to ensure that schools and partner agencies are aware of their responsibilities and act promptly when a child is identified as missing or at risk of becoming missing from education.

- **Ensure that robust and consistent checks and enquiries are undertaken** across relevant partner agencies, so that all reasonable and proportionate efforts are made to establish a child's whereabouts, educational status and safeguarding needs.

- **Promote clear accountability and effective escalation**, ensuring that no child becomes lost between services and that responsibility for follow-up action is clearly identified until the child's education and safeguarding arrangements have been confirmed.

3. Referrals in scope

The panel will consider a maximum of 10 cases per week. Pupils to be considered are:

- Pupils with the highest levels of persistent absence
- Pupils who are currently out of provision or are out of education due to non-engagement following risk of exclusion, exclusion or FAP/SIPF placement offer
- Pupils who have been deleted from a school roll in the previous week
- Pupils known to children & social care CSC or Early Help
- Where there is any uncertainty or difference of professional opinion regarding the referral of a child to the police as a missing person, the matter will be considered jointly by the Service Manager for Safeguarding Children and Quality Assurance and the Borough Police Detective Chief Inspector, who will reach an agreed decision.

3.1 Referrals out of scope

- If any child or young person is missing from school roll but is reasonably believed to be living with his or her family, they will not be deemed a missing child under the terms of the missing children's procedures.

- Referrals for Year 11 pupils should be made no later than the end of the autumn term (December), as it is unlikely that legal proceedings will be completed before the pupil reaches the end of compulsory school age.

  Schools should proactively monitor attendance from at least the start of Year 11 and make timely referrals where concerns arise, rather than delaying action until the spring term.

4. Triage

Missing Monday cases will be triaged on a weekly basis prior to the panel meeting to ensure that referrals meet the agreed Missing Monday criteria and threshold for consideration. This triage meeting will be attended by the Strategic Lead for Early Help, Attendance and Inclusion and the Strategic Lead for Inclusion, Safeguarding and Behaviour.

5. Threshold Criteria for Attendance and Inclusion Officer Involvement

This section outlines the threshold criteria and referral AIO involvement. Its purpose is to ensure that:

- attendance concerns are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity,
- appropriate school-led interventions are implemented,
- referrals are made where additional targeted or statutory support is required.

The referral criteria also encompass pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion.

5.1 Croydon's Principles

- Attendance is everyone's responsibility.
- Permanent exclusion must always be used as an absolute last resort.
- Early identification and intervention are essential.
- Families should receive support before enforcement is considered wherever appropriate.
- Referrals should be evidence-based and demonstrate that school-led interventions have been exhausted or are insufficient.
- The child's voice should be considered throughout the process.

Referral Criteria Table			
Stage	**Threshold criteria**	**School Action**	**Referral to Missing Monday?**
Universal (95 – 100% attendance)	• No emerging concerns. • Occasional authorised absence only.	• Promote good attendance. • Celebrate and reward positive attendance. • Monitor attendance through routine processes. • Communicate attendance expectations with parents/carers.	No
Early Intervention (92 – 94.9% attendance)	One or more of the following: • Attendance falls below 95%. • Emerging patterns of absence. • Frequent lateness. • Several isolated illness absences. • Parent concerns impacting attendance.	• Telephone contact with parents. • Attendance conversation. • Monitor attendance over 4–6 weeks. • Offer pastoral support. • Identify barriers to attendance. • Agree an attendance improvement plan.	No referral unless significant safeguarding concerns emerge.
Targeted School Support (90–91.9% attendance)	Persistent decline in attendance. Examples include: • Attendance below 92%. • Repeated unauthorised absences. • Ongoing lateness. • Anxiety or emotional barriers. • Family difficulties affecting attendance.	• Attendance meetings held. • Attendance action plan. • Parent communication. • Early Help considered or initiated where appropriate. • Relevant pastoral interventions documented. • Support from SEND or safeguarding teams where applicable.	No referral unless significant safeguarding concerns emerge.

Referral Criteria Table			
Stage	**Threshold criteria**	**School Action**	**Referral to Missing Monday?**
Persistent Absence (below 90% attendance)	Child meets the definition of persistent absence. School interventions have not secured sustained improvement.	The school should have: • Held formal attendance meetings. • Produced and reviewed attendance plans. • Completed home-school communication records. • Offered Early Help where appropriate. • Explored medical evidence where relevant. • Considered SEND, mental health and safeguarding needs. • Completed risk assessments if required.	No **Referral for school EWO** Child meets the definition of persistent absence. School interventions have not secured sustained improvement.

Referral Criteria Table			
Stage	**Threshold criteria**	**School Action**	**Referral to Missing Monday?**
Severe /Critical Attendance concerns (below 80% attendance)	• Attendance below 80%. • Child Missing Education concerns. • Extended unauthorised absence. • Repeated refusal to engage. • Elective Home Education concerns (where appropriate). • Complex safeguarding concerns. • Significant risk of exploitation or harm. • Multiple failed interventions.	The school should have: • Held formal attendance meetings. • Produced and reviewed attendance plans. • Completed home-school communication records. • Offered Early Help where appropriate. • Explored medical evidence where relevant. • Considered SEND, mental health and safeguarding needs. • Completed risk assessments if required.	Yes Immediate referral to the Attendance Inclusion Officer/or Pathway to prosecution via our court team Where safeguarding concerns exist, follow safeguarding procedures immediately and make referrals to Children's Social Care where required. Attendance referrals should not delay safeguarding action.

6. Providers should ensure the following Required documentation is presented:

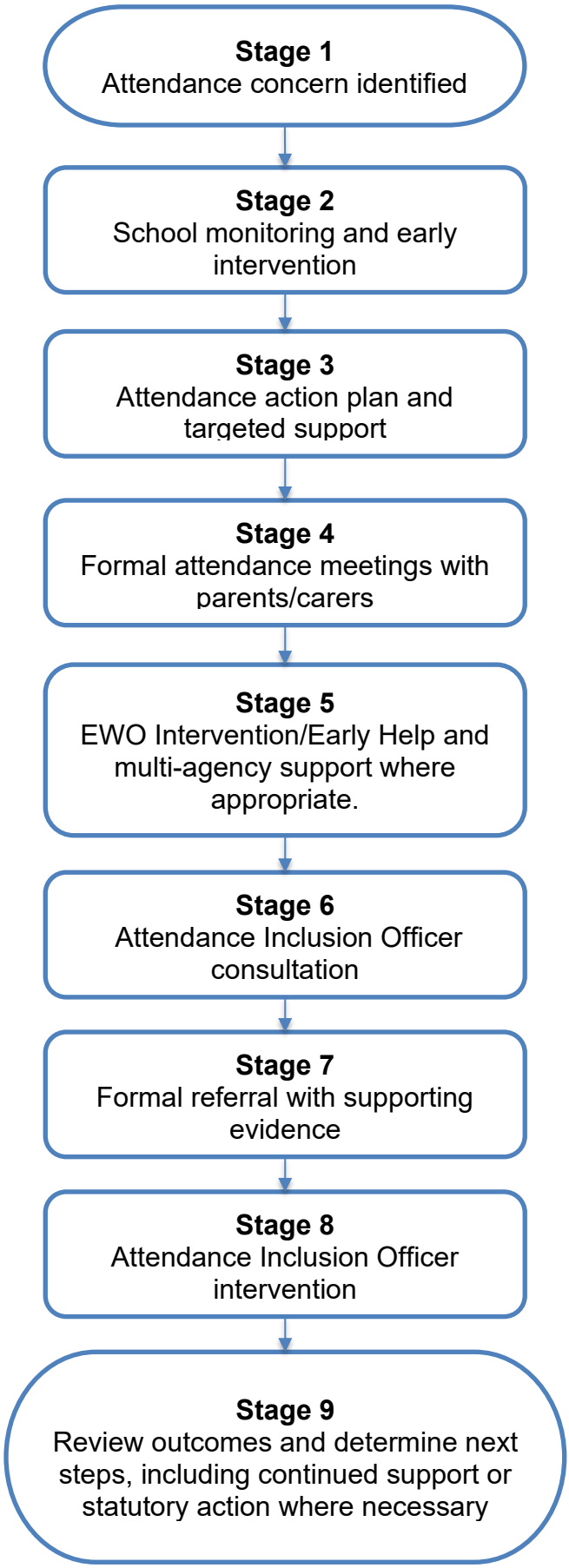
- Attendance data.
- Chronology.
- Meeting notes.
- Copies of correspondence.
- Action plans.
- Early Help documentation.
- Relevant safeguarding information.
- Medical evidence (where applicable).

6.1 Attendance Inclusion Officer Responsibilities

Following referral, the Attendance Inclusion Officer may:

- Review referral evidence.
- Meet with parents/carers.
- Complete attendance assessments.
- Coordinate multi-agency planning.
- Advise schools on statutory duties.
- Support reintegration planning.
- Consider legal intervention where appropriate.
- Monitor progress through agreed review periods.

Referral Pathway



7. Evidence Checklist for Referral

The following should normally accompany a referral:

- Attendance report.
- Attendance history.
- Registration codes.
- Chronology of concerns.
- Parent correspondence.
- Attendance meeting records.
- Attendance action plans.
- Education Welfare Officer Intervention
- Early Help assessment (where applicable).
- Medical information (where relevant).
- SEND documentation (where applicable).
- Safeguarding information.
- Child's views.
- Professional reports from partner agencies

8. Membership

- Strategic Lead Early Help Attendance Exclusions and Inclusion (Chair)
- Strategic Lead SIPF Safeguarding and Behaviour
- Children Missing Education (CME) Lead & / or CME Officer
- Early Help
- Attendance Inclusion Officers
- Schools Admissions Officer
- Elective Home Education Lead (EHE) / EHE Monitoring Teacher
- Schools Admissions representative
- Youth Justice Service Officer (YJS)
- SEND representative

9. Frequency Of Meetings

The panel will meet on weekly basis in term time.

10. Governance

The panel will ultimately be linked to the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership. The Terms of Reference will be agreed by the Head of Access to Education and reviewed as and when required.