Morley Primary Weekly Safeguarding Bulletin

Theme: Missing Children & Absenteeism Risks
Week Beginning: 3rd December 2025

Why this theme matters

Missing children, unexplained absences, and patterns of low attendance can be indicators that a child may be experiencing difficulties at home, online, socially, or in the community. In Derby and Derbyshire, safeguarding partners continue to highlight the link between non-attendance and heightened vulnerability to harm.

At Morley, keeping children safe begins with excellent attendance and early action when concerns arise.

Understanding the risks: Missing Children & Absenteeism

Children who frequently miss school—whether through unexplained absence, lateness, or being unaccounted for—may be at increased risk of:

- County lines exploitation (a key risk across Derbyshire)
- Online contact/grooming
- Emotional or mental-health difficulties
- Family stress, domestic challenges, or hidden needs
- Lack of routine and supervision
- Falling behind academically, which reduces confidence
- Reduced connection with trusted adults

Government stance on attendance

The Department for Education is clear:

• Good attendance is essential for safeguarding.

• Parents have a legal duty to ensure regular school attendance.

• Schools must challenge absence and secure swift improvements.

• Attendance below 90% is classed as persistent absence and monitored nationally.

At Morley, our aim is simple: Happy children, attending every day, thriving in school and showing the Morley Feeling.

Routine appointments

Routine dentist appointments should not be taken during school time. These should be booked in school holidays or after school so learning time is not lost.

What parents can look out for

If your child becomes reluctant to attend school, consider whether any of the following may be affecting them:

• Friendship issues

• Online worries or secretive device use

• Bullying or unkind behaviour

• Anxiety or emotional strain

• Feeling behind in their learning

• Tiredness from late-night gaming or irregular routines

Early conversations help us put support in place quickly.

Local Derby & Derbyshire guidance

• Derbyshire Police highlight that missing school increases vulnerability.

• Safer Derbyshire and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership offer guidance on attendance and child exploitation.

• Derby City and Derbyshire Children's Services emphasise the protective power of strong routines.

Useful links:

Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership – https://www.derbyshirescb.org.uk/

Safer Derbyshire – https://www.saferderbyshire.gov.uk/

Derby City Early Help – https://www.derby.gov.uk

How Morley keeps children safe

• Daily attendance checks and follow-up calls

• Tracking patterns of lateness and absence

• Support for families experiencing challenges

• DSL review of concerns linked to absence

• Partnership work with ISAT, Education Welfare, and locality teams

Reporting concerns in our community

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

You can report worries via our My Concern Community tool:

https://www.morley.derbyshire.sch.uk/can-i-talk-to-you-safeguarding-concerns/

Designated Safeguarding Leads:

• DSL: Mr Taylor

• Deputy DSLs: Mrs Taylor, Mrs Richards, Miss Smith

Key Websites

• Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership https://www.ddscp.org.uk/

• Safer Derbyshire – Missing Children & Exploitation https://www.saferderbyshire.gov.uk/what-we-do/safeguarding-children/child-exploitation/child-exploitation.aspx

• Early Help https://www.morley.derbyshire.sch.uk/early-help-offer/

• NSPCC https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection

• GOV.UK School Attendance Guidance for Parents https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence