

## Position statement: Off Rolling

- Off-rolling has been defined in the [Timpson Review of School Exclusion](#) (May 2019) as where children 'are made to leave their school and are removed from the school roll without a formal permanent exclusion or by the school encouraging the parents to remove their child from the school'. Ofsted has adopted a similar definition, noting also that this would apply 'when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil' ([School Inspection Handbook](#), 2019). This could include unlawfully removing child from register without proper grounds, but could also include cases which may be technically legal but not in the child's interests – such as encouraging a parent to remove their child to home educate. Where inspectors determine a school to have been engaged in off-rolling, the leadership and management of the school are likely to be judged inadequate.

## Notifications from schools

- Schools have a duty to notify the Local Authority when a child is removed from the school register. In Southwark, schools are required to use an online form for this purpose and they cannot submit this form without stating a valid reason for removing child from roll.
- In 2018-19 school year, Southwark received notifications from local mainstream secondary schools of 527 children being removed from register. The reasons given were as follows:

### ***Reasons for child being deleted from register, 2018-19 school year***

Reasons for children being deleted from register : Year 10 – Year 11, 2018 - 2019	Number	%
Moved school (including end to period of dual registration)	288	54.7%
Moved out of area	76	14.4%
Permanently excluded [1]	39	7.4%
Withdrawn for elective home education	48	9.1%
Unauthorised absence for more than 20 days, whereabouts unknown	55	10.5%
Not attending and no longer compulsory school age before school next meets	5	0.9%
Medically unfit to return to school	3	0.6%
Child detained in custody	1	0.2%
Child died	1	0.2%
Pupil at school other than maintained or academy ceased to attend [2]	11	2.1%
Total	527	

[1] Final number of confirmed permanent exclusions may vary as a result of exclusions being rescinded

[2] code used incorrectly – this should only be used by independent schools.

- We require schools to provide copies of letters from parents choosing to home educate and we can also ask schools put a child to place child back on register if information is incorrect (e.g. if school states child's whereabouts are unknown but we are able to confirm that they remain at Southwark address).

## **Southwark audit**

- As part of its efforts to challenge off-rolling, Ofsted is undertaking regular data analysis to identify schools with exceptional levels of pupil movement and using this data to prioritise inspections. One such exercise has involved comparing child level Spring term school census data for children in Year 10 with data for children in Year 11 in the following school year to identify pupils who are no longer on school register. Criteria for 'exceptional pupil movement' include schools where more than 5 children and more than 5% have left school in this period (Ofsted, [Off-Rolling: an update on recent analysis](#), 2019).
- Following a similar methodology, we have compared Year 10 census data in Spring term 2018 with Year 11 census data in Spring term 2019 for all Southwark mainstream secondary schools (i.e. excluding special schools, SILS/PRU and independent schools). We have also compared this data with the number of 'Change to School Admission Register Notification Forms' submitted by schools in order to audit compliance with statutory duty to inform the local authority of children being deleted from school registers.
- This exercise identified that between the Year 10 (2018) and Year 11 (2019) Spring census, 85 children left Southwark secondary schools – amounting to 3.3% of the 2576 children on roll in Year 10. The % leaving per school ranged from 0.7% to 10.4%. Five out of 19 schools appeared to meet the criteria of more than 5 children and 5% of roll leaving [details of schools at Appendix A]
- In terms of compliance with duty to inform LA of children being deleted from school registers, forms had been submitted for 74% of children leaving Southwark schools in this Year 10/11 cohort. There were 22 children leaving Southwark Schools for whom forms appeared not to have not been received – 11 of these were from one school, with no other school having more than two.
- The results from this exercise were shared with senior managers and a letter sent to heads of all schools in January 2020 providing details of the findings for their school. In addition the Assistant Director followed up directly with the Headteacher of the school where 11 children had left the school without the LA being notified. The school has now provided details for all these pupils.
- The letter has opened up a further dialogue with schools, with meetings arranged to date with senior leaders from two schools to ensure data held by LA is consistent with schools own data and to discuss related issues of children missing education and elective home education.

## **Ofsted activity**

- In October 2019, Ofsted undertook a monitoring visit at a Southwark school, Harris Academy Bermondsey during which they 'considered information about pupils leaving the school, particularly in Year 10 and Year 11'. Inspectors contacted Southwark's Pupil Tracking and Licensing Team and confirmed information received by the LA from the school about children leaving. The inspection concluded safeguarding was effective that 'Leaders have detailed information about each pupil who has left the school through elective home education, permanent exclusion, re-location or to another provider such as alternative provision. There are systems in place to ensure that relevant evidence is sought before removing pupils from the school roll. Leaders' record keeping is comprehensive and well organised' (source: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50127519>).

## Conclusion

- There is no evidence of systematic off-rolling in Southwark secondary schools. The Local Authority has systems in place to ensure that schools provide a valid reason when removing a child from school register, and carries out audits to ensure that we are being informed of children leaving schools.
- Managers and staff in Education and Family Early Help service are very aware of the risk of off-rolling and provide appropriate challenge to schools. As a result of this, and of Ofsted's increasing focus on this issue, school leaders appear to be becoming increasingly vigilant about ensuring that there are clear and valid reasons for children to be removed from school registers.

## Appendix: Pupil movement in Southwark secondary schools between Year 10 (Spring Term 2018) and Year 11 (Spring Term 2019)

School	On roll Y10 2018	On roll Y11 2019	Number of pupils leaving	leavers as % of 2018 roll	Notified to Local Authority	Not Notified to LA
1	119	115	8	6.7%	7	1
2	116	113	3	2.6%	1	2
3	169	168	4	2.4%	4	0
4	174	167	5	2.9%	4	1
5	177	169	7	4.0%	7	0
6	238	236	3	1.3%	2	1
7	67	60	7	10.4%	6	1
8	133	136	1	0.8%	1	0
9	114	101	8	7.0%	7	1
10	138	138	4	2.9%	4	0
11	135	133	1	0.7%	1	0
12	248	237	12	4.8%	1	11
13	125	122	7	5.6%	5	2
14	134	134	1	0.7%	1	0
15	131	131	1	0.8%	1	0
16	120	117	8	6.7%	7	1
17	124	122	1	0.8%	0	1
18	99	99	4	4.0%	4	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2561</b>	<b>2498</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>63 (74%)</b>	<b>22 (26%)</b>

*Service Development Lead  
Education, Access & Statutory Services  
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