


## Children Missing In Education (CME) Policy

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## 1. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline what is meant by a child missing in education (CME) and the steps which will be taken by academies in the Trust to ensure that children who fall into this category are dealt with in the correct way according to National legislation and local procedures.

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with:

- Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Academy Site Specific Safeguarding Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Supporting learners with medical conditions policy
- Learners not attending regularly due to medical conditions policy

## 2. The Law and the National Framework

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2018) 'Working together to safeguard children'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2020) 'School attendance'
- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2016)
- The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005 (as amended in 2018)
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2008 (as amended in 2018)
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended in 2014).

## 3. Definitions

For the purpose of this document a Child Missing Education is defined as:

- Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is not attending school, not placed in alternative provision by the Local Authority, and who is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere suitable to their needs, that is, their age, ability, aptitude, SEND.

- And any child who is not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, privately, or in alternative provision) and who has been out of any education provision for a substantial period of time (practice nationally is four weeks).

For the purpose of this document a Child at Risk of Missing Education is therefore defined as:

- Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is on roll of a school but has less than 50% attendance in a school term
- Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is subject to a modified/reduced timetable for more than one school term (six weeks)
- Children on reduced timetables.

## 4. Why Children miss education

Children go missing from education for a variety of reasons.

The most common ones are:

- Failing to register at school at age five
- Unsuccessful transition from nursery to primary and primary to secondary
- Cease to attend, due to exclusion (formal withdrawal)
- Child not attending following mid-year transfer of school
- Parent/carer unable to find a school place after moving into the Local Authority
- Parent/carer failing to provide adequate learning whilst home educating.

Often families become disengaged from the education system as a whole, with the main factors leading to this being:

- Child being a victim of bullying
- Frequent moves of house including periods of homelessness or periods in a refuge
- Transience/family mobility
- Child experiencing family breakdown
- Frequent absence leading to low attendance (particularly Year 10 and Year 11)
- Disaffection resulting in parents withdrawing the learner
- Involvement in youth offending
- Child being a victim of exploitation.

There are particularly vulnerable groups, who have been identified as being more likely to become children missing education. Those are:

- Young people who have committed offences
- Children who are being exploited
- Children living in women's refuges
- Children of troubled families i.e. suffering bereavement, trauma, domestic abuse, homelessness etc
- Young runaways
- Children with special educational needs
- Refugee and asylum-seeking children
- Children who are new to the country
- Travelling families
- Looked after children
- Teenage parenthood
- Children with mental health issues
- Young carers
- Children who are permanently excluded from school
- Young people being forced into marriage
- Young people victims of female genital mutilation
- Child trafficking
- Young people involved in substance misuse.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

### The Academy

- The academy will enter learners on the admissions registers at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the academy, or the day that the academy has been notified, that the learner will attend.
- In the event that a learner fails to attend the academy on the agreed or notified date, the academy will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the reason for this absence, and will notify the Local Authority at the earliest opportunity, typically within 5 working days

- The academy will hold more than one emergency contact number for each learner.
- The academy will keep an accurate and up-to-date admissions register by encouraging parents to inform them of any changes.
- The academy will monitor learners' attendance through a daily attendance register.
- The Academy will continue to make reasonable enquires following a child being logged as CME with the local authority.
- The academy will remove learners, after or before 20 consecutive school days, from the roll and cease the CME process once they have sufficient evidence of the child leaving the area and being educated elsewhere.
- The academy will remove learners from roll after 20 consecutive school days if they have had no further confirmation that they are living in the area and therefore should be attending the academy.
- Complete a leavers file (CML) for the local authority so that they can be tracked until they have arrived at their destination school.
- Remove learners from the admissions register, where they have been absent for 10 consecutive school days following an authorised absence, or where they have been absent for 20 consecutive school days without authorisation (in accordance with Regulation 8 (1), paragraphs f and h (iii) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016.)
- Notify the local authority of pupils removed from the admissions register as per Regulation 8.
- Arrange appropriate full-time education from the 6<sup>th</sup> school day of any fixed term exclusion.
- Be alert to learners who may require Early Help because they are frequently missing or go missing from home or care.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the academy procedure for when children go missing from education or at risk of missing education and unauthorised absences.
- Ensure all staff are aware of their professional duty to escalate concerns about children who are missing from education or potentially missing education.

#### Parents/ Carers

- Will ensure that their children, who are of compulsory school age, are in receipt of appropriate full-time education
- Provide the academy with more than one contact number and ensure that this is updated as appropriate

- Notify the academy, at the earliest opportunity when their child will be leaving the academy and ensure a leavers form is completed with as much information as possible
- Notify the academy of any absences, planned or otherwise at the earliest opportunity
- Notify the academy at the earliest opportunity, in writing, where they plan to home educate their children so that they can be removed from the admissions register.

#### Trust Board

- Ensure that all academies have effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place

#### The Executive Team

- Gather assurances from academies that they keep admission and attendance registers in line with regulations
- Ensure that academies hold more than one contact number for each child on the admissions register.
- Ensure that procedures are followed for removing children from the school admission register including where they are logged as a Child Missing Education

#### Local Authority

- Respond to notifications of children missing education
- Ensure that the process is followed for children missing education
- Track children logged as missing education
- Carry out necessary investigations with other agencies including the Home Office, Ministry of Defence etc
- Carry out investigations necessary to ensure the safety of children missing education

## 6. Reasonable Enquiries

For the purpose of this policy, reasonable enquiries are defined as limited, investigative powers that the academy may action to determine a child's whereabouts and whether they may be in danger.

In line with the Children Act 2004, the academy will follow appropriate procedures when carrying out reasonable enquiries, such as the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) conducting discussions with neighbours, relatives or landlords, to determine whether a child may be at risk of harm

Where the whereabouts and safety of a child is unknown, the academy, in conjunction with the Local Authority, may carry out the following actions:

- Make contact with the parent/carer, relatives and neighbours using all known contact details
- Follow local information sharing arrangements and making enquiries via other local databases and agencies where possible
- Check with agencies known to be involved with the family
- Check with the Local Authority and school or academy from which the learner moved originally
- Check with the Local Authority where the learner lives, if this is different to where the school is located
- Conduct home visits and make enquiries with neighbours or relatives, if appropriate
- This list is not exhaustive – the academy and Local Authority will use their judgement towards what reasonable enquiries are appropriate, once all the facts of the case have been taken into account.

## 7. Outcomes

### Children that are found but not in education

Most children are found through the investigations outlined above. When a child is found, and they are not in education, the Local Authority will support the parents/carers to get the child back into education. This is usually achieved by asking parents to submit a School Admission form. If however, the parent/carer does not fulfil their legal duty to ensure their child receives an education, the Local Authority may commence a School Attendance Order.

It is possible that the child has not been to school for a significant period of time and therefore they may be placed in a school using the Fair Access Protocol. Children who have been out of school for a lengthy period of time will potentially need more support than a usual in-year admission. The academy



may need to consider completing appropriate assessments to establish needs and ensure that the reintegration into education is successful.

#### Children who are not found

A small percentage of children who are reported to the Local authority as CME are not found following the investigations. This does not necessarily mean that the child is at risk, as the child is assumed missing with their family. The risk assessment that is completed by the academy will help to determine the level of concern.

If it is suggested that the family have moved out of the county and the CME Tracker knows which authority they have moved to, the Tracker will contact this authority to notify them. The Local Authority may use School2School to send out an email to all local authorities as a response to a child missing education.

If the family leaves the country without informing the school of their location and the school have notified the Local Authority of this child as a CME as they have concerns, the Local Authority SEWO will check with the school and other agencies as to the nature of the concerns. The Local Authority may check with Immigration and Border Force depending on the level of concern.

Children who are not found at the end of all investigations are reported to HMRC, by the Local Authority, who may be able to provide them with a forwarding address or confirm that the family is still residing at the current address.

Further investigations will be carried out by the Local Authority on children who remain missing. This will be more regularly with newer cases moving to twice a year for older cases. These investigations will continue by the Local Authority until the child is no longer statutory school age.

# Children Missing Education Risk Assessment

Child's Details			
Full Name		DOB	
UPN		School	
Year Group		Traveller	
Gender		Ethnicity	

Child's Address	
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Parent's Details			
Relation		Full Name	
Telephone		Email Address	

Home Visit			
Date of Home Visit		Date Last Attended School	
Who Completed the Visit			
Outcome of Home Visit			

Home Visit Detail			

Additional Information to Help Locate the Child			


<b>Risk Assessment</b>	
Is there good reason to believe that the child may be the victim of crime?	
Does the child have a child protection plan?	
Is the child in care i.e. looked after by the local authority?	
Is the planned or current LA children's social care or LA adults' social care services involved?	
Is there a person present in the home or visiting the family who poses an on-going risk to children, or who is suspected of previously harming a child?	
Is the child at risk of sexual exploitation?	
Is the child at risk of radicalisation?	

Has there been LA children's social care or LA adults/social care or Criminal Justice System	
Does the child have an EHA or TAC?	
Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk?	
Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family?	
Is there any known history of domestic violence?	
Is there concern about the parent/carer's ability to protect the child from harm?	
Was there any significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence?	
Has the child been a victim of bullying?	
Does the child need essential medical or health care?	
Was the child noted to have a change in behaviour or mood -prior to the child's unexplained absence?	
Has the child ever gone missing without their family?	
Is there a history of poor attendance?	
Does this child have any Special Education Needs?	
Does this family have English as an additional language and does this make communication difficult?	
Does this child have a history of behavioural needs?	
Is this young person a young carer?	
Are there any parental vulnerabilities we should be aware of?	
Has there been any change in the child/family's financial circumstances?	

<b>Further Risk Assessment Information</b>			
<b>Referer's Detail</b>			
<b>Name</b>		<b>School</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>		<b>Email</b>	

## Appendix 2 – Lincolnshire County Council Children Missing Education Flow Chart

A child/young person is on roll of a school but not attending	A child/young person moving out of county	Family indicate they are moving to another country	School Admissions
<p>School attempts to contact parents. Good practice is to contact from day 1 of absence but no later than day 3</p> <p><b>The school must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make on-going attempts, beginning on the first day of any unexplained absence, to contact the pupil's parents/carers either by telephone ,or text messaging</li> <li>• make further attempts to contact the parents, either by letter or by home visiting</li> <li>• contact any other schools where the pupil or their siblings are known to have been pupils</li> <li>• check with the pupil's peer group to ascertain if they are aware of any change in the pupil's place of residency</li> <li>• contact any relevant agency, for example, the family welfare officer in the relevant armed forces in the case of a service child.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>School should be following their school attendance and safeguarding procedures If no contact is made with parents/carers, complete home visit</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>School/Academy should continue to make an effort to engage the family using e-mails telephone and other contact methods. Records of each attempt to contact must be made, ensuring there is a complete and comprehensive record of the steps taken including dates, actions and outcomes for each step</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>If there is confirmation that the child is at the place of residence known to the school but not attending, the school continues to follow their non-school attendance procedures Do not remove from roll After 10 days of unauthorised absence inform the local authority through the Pupil Not Attending Regularly (PNAR) notification survey</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>If there is confirmation that the child is no longer at the place of residence known to the school but can still attend the school, make amendments to child's file and continue with non-school attendance procedures</p>	<p>Check that the contact details for the parent(s) are/is correct. This includes the family's new address, name of new school (if known), leaving date, email addresses of family and new school (if known)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>The new school should make contact. If not, make contact with the school given to confirm that the child is on roll. If confirmation received that child is attending, take child off roll and complete CML file.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>If no new school is given or child is not attending new school and that school does not have a start date, after 5 days from leaving date, report the child as CME through the notification survey. Do not take off roll After 20 days, if no further information following joint investigation between school and local authority, remove from roll and complete CML file.</p>	<p>Check that the contact details for the parent(s) are/is correct. This includes the family's new address, name of new school (if known), leaving date, email addresses of family and new school (if known)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>If the information is provided, remove child from roll and complete the CML file within 5 days of leaving date</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>If the information is not provided complete the CME notification survey</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>After 20 days, if no further information following joint investigation between school and local authority, remove from roll and complete CML</p>	<p>If a school place has been allocated. (reception, transfer from infant to junior or year 6 to 7) and there has been no acceptance/agreed <b>start date</b>, by parent/carer, school should make attempts to engage (telephone, texts, e-mails letters and home visit)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>If a child has been allocated a place and they do not arrive on the expected day i.e. start of term, the school must follow non-attendance procedures (see column one and follow same procedure). Do not assume that child is at another school.</p>
	<b>Health Related Absence</b>		<b>Mid- year application</b>
	<p>If a child has been out of school for 15 days or more (consecutive or cumulative) due to health reasons and there is robust medical evidence to support the absence, school can follow the process of referral to the Local Authority for alternative provision as outlined in the LA Policy on Education for Children with Medical Needs.</p>		<p>If application is to transfer schools, the leaving school should keep on roll until it has been confirmed by the new school that they have been put on roll of that school. A child should be placed on roll at the point of acceptance by parent/carer.</p> <p>If there is no confirmation, the leaving school must follow non-attendance procedures (see column one)</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>If there is confirmation that the child is no longer at the place of residence known to the school and will not be attending the school, check that the child is attending the new school if known before removing from roll. Once confirmed remove from roll and complete CML file.</p> <p>If a new school is not known, report the child as child missing education (CME) notification survey. Do not take off roll. After 20 days, if no further information following joint investigation between school and local authority, remove from roll and complete CML file.</p>	Child who is not in receipt of full time education	Looked after Children (LAC)	Traveller Children
	<p>A child not in receipt of full time education (usually 25 hrs) must be entered on the Reduced Timetable notification survey</p>	<p>If a LAC child is moving placement and no longer attending the same school, the current school needs to liaise with social worker and virtual school. Do not remove from roll until directed by Virtual School</p>	<p>If a parent notifies the school that they are travelling, the school should ask the parent for a return date and contact details. The family should notify the school if there is any change to the return date and provide a new date. If the child does not return to school on the agreed date and is not able to confirm or approve the alternative, the school follow the non-attendance procedures (see column one)</p>