Potters Green School

nurturing bright futures

Children Missing from Education Policy

September 2023

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Definition

The definition of a child missing education is:

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.
(Children missing education, DFE Statutory Guidance for local authorities in England, September 2016)

This definition includes children:

- Who are not on a school roll or being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision)
- Who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (twenty consecutive school days without provision of reasonable explanation)
- Who have not returned to education 10 days after and authorised absence.
- Children who do not apply at the point of transfer

A child who is on roll at a school and who goes missing during the school day is not classified as 'missing education' and the procedure outlined in the guidance on children who go missing from home, care or education should be followed in these circumstances.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education.

A child missing from education is not in itself a child protection matter, and there may be a suitable explanation for this. Regular school attendance, however, is an important safeguard and unexplained non-attendance can be an early indicator of problems, risk and vulnerability.

Legislation and Statutory Guidance

Children Missing Education: Statutory guidance for local authorities, September 2016:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

Risks and indicators

Children missing education can be particularly vulnerable; it is essential that all services work together to identify them and re-engage them back into appropriate education provision as quickly as possible. It is important to establish the reasons for the child missing education at the earliest possible stage.

Children who remain disengaged from education are potentially exposed to higher degrees of risk such as anti-social behaviour and/or exploitation.

Possible reasons that should be considered include:

- Failure to start appropriate provision means that the pupil never enters the system;
- Stopped attending, due to illegal exclusion, withdrawal by parent/carers or, for example, being young carers;
- Illegal removal from the roll after absence;
- Permanent exclusion from school;
- Failure to complete a transition between schools;
- Children who are victims of bullying or discrimination;
- Children from new migrant families or refugee and asylum seeking families;
- Children who are unaccompanied asylum seekers;
- Children who are teenage parents;
- Children from families who are highly mobile, e.g. Gypsy Roma Traveller families or children of service personnel;
- Children living in temporary accommodation or who are homeless;
- Children at risk of a forced marriage;
- Children at risk of honour based violence*;*
- Children at risk of being trafficked;
- Children at risk of sexual exploitation;
- Girls at risk of female genital mutilation;
- Children at risk of radicalisation*;*
- Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice System
- Children affected by substance or alcohol abuse;
- Children experiencing abuse and neglect, including domestic abuse;

- Children whose parents have mental health problems or learning difficulties*;*
- Children who go missing from home or care*;*

Families moving between local authority areas can sometimes lead to a child becoming 'lost' in the system and consequently missing education. Where a child has moved, local authorities should check with other local authorities - either regionally or nationally - and share information in order to ascertain where a child has moved. Once the location of the child is established, the relevant local authority must ensure that the child is receiving an education either by attending a school or otherwise.

Actions to be taken

Parents

Parents have a duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age are receiving suitable full-time education. Some parents may choose to educate their children at home and may withdraw them from school at any time to do so, unless they are subject to a School Attendance Order. Where a parent notifies the school in writing that they are home educating, the school must delete the child's name from the admission register and inform the local authority. If parents verbally indicate their intention to withdraw their child to home educate the school should consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

Schools

Potters Green School have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences.

Potters Green School notify the local authority whenever a pupil is added to their roll or removed at a non-standard transition point. This is to ensure that children do not leave schools without a known destination or without authorities being informed.

Potters Green School enters pupils on the admissions register on the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. As a school we then monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register and address poor or irregular attendance (see the attendance policy). Potters Green School do not remove a child's name from the register if a child has failed to attend as school despite the start date being agreed and will continue to follow attendance procedures.

At Potters Green School we carry out daily calls to the parents of children not attending without a reason in order to address longer term disengagement.

As a school we endeavour to deal with the issue of a child missing from education in three ways:

- by preventing poor school attendance and truancy;
- by acting once absence has occurred to establish children's safety and try to get them back to school; and
- by taking action to trace children whose whereabouts are not known.

If a child has been missing from education for ten days a CME referral (Children Missing from Education referral – see appendix A) will be completed and shared through a secure email address: CME@coventry.gov.uk.

Anyone with a concern that a child is missing from education can make a referral.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised extended leave or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register. The Local Authority and School are expected to work jointly together to establish a child's whereabouts, through making reasonable enquiries, prior to the school removing the name from the register.

Guidance on what constitutes reasonable enquiries is located in **Children Missing Education: Statutory guidance for local authorities, September 2016**

Where a child's name has been removed from a school's register and the child has not secured a provision and/or their whereabouts are unknown the child's name is kept on a register held centrally by the local authority, and should be clearly identified as missing education.

The Head Teacher should remain alert for local information about the whereabouts of the child. Where the child's name has been removed from the school roll, but s/he has not been located, the Head Teacher should ensure the pupil's records are retained until the child is located.

Where a Head Teacher has been notified by a parent/carer that a pupil is receiving education other than at school, and has removed the child's name from the school roll, notification must be given to the Elective Home Education service without delay. The school must retain the records.

If a school receives a new pupil without receiving information about them from his or her previous school, the school should contact the previous school. If this does not result in transfer of the pupil's file then the school should follow the school's complaints procedures. If a school fails to share information that leads to a safeguarding issue that school must be held accountable.

If a child who is subject to a Child Protection Plan or looked after by the local authority is missing education the Head Teacher will inform the local authority and the child's social worker immediately.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Links with other policies

This children missing from education policy is linked to our:

- Attendance policy

Appendix A

Coventry City Council – Children Missing from Education Referral Form

https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/27065/cme_referral_form

Children Missing from Education (CME) School Referral Form
Please provide as much information as possible in order to assist with our further investigations.

We will use the information within this form to record, give advice and follow the Children Missing Education, statutory guidance for local authorities**.** As part of this, the local authority may need to share your information provided with other Local Authorities and services. Any other information provided subsequently, whether by meeting, phone, fax or mail, might also be used for this purpose. More information on how we handle personal information and your rights under the data protection legislation can be found in the local authority's Privacy Notice.

Section 1

Name of School	Contact person in school	Position
Contact details:		
Date form completed:		

Section 2

Pupil Details:	Address:
Forename	
Middle Name(s)	
Surname	
DOB	Last known address
Alias	
Unique Pupil Number	
Unique Identification Number	
Gender	Previous Addresses
Year Group	
Ethnicity	

Date child last attended school:	
Does the child speak English?	

Sibling details:			
Name	DOB	Address	School
Do you consider these children to be CME cases as well? YES / NO			

Section 3

Parent/carer details: (Please include all contact information held by the school) **Name:** **Relationship to child:**	
Contact details:	
Landline:	
Mobile:	
E-mail:	
Family's first/home language:	
Is an Interpreter required?	

Parent/carer details: (Please include all contact information held by the school) **Name:** **Relationship to child:**	
Contact details:	
Landline:	
Mobile:	
E-mail:	
Family's first/home language?	
Is an Interpreter required?	

Other contact information held by School: Relatives etc	
Contact 1: Name, Address & telephone number	
Contact 2: Name, Address & telephone number	
Other Agency Details:	

Section 4

Is this child:	
A Looked After Child?	YES/NO
Gypsy, Roma or Traveller?	YES/NO
A Refugee or Asylum Seeker?	YES/NO
Living in temporary accommodation	YES/NO

Subject to a Child Protection Plan? YES/NO An open case to Children's Social Services YES/NO Name of Social Worker:

Section 5

What are your concerns for the welfare of this child as a result of this referral including attendance and behaviour?

Do you have any reason to be concerned that any of the following may be relevant in this case? (If answered Yes please give details)
Risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) YES/NO
Risk of child being missing/running away from home. YES/NO
Risk of child trafficking. YES/NO

Section 6

What is the primary reason for referring this child to your CME?	**Please indicate as appropriate.**
Child has failed to take up a place at your school	
Child's whereabouts are unknown	

Parent is fleeing domestic violence	
Child/ family is reported to have left the area	
Child is reported to have left the UK with/without parents / carers (please complete section 8)	
Child has failed to return from an agreed holiday in term time	
Child has failed from an unauthorised holiday in term time	
Parents have taken child out of school for an extended period without school agreement	
Child has failed to return after summer holidays and whereabouts are unknown.	

Section 7

Prior to submitting CME paperwork, School to:	**Please indicate as appropriate.**
Ask the friends of missing pupils for any current information	
Check emergency contact number	
Check free school meals database	
If a voluntary aided school, check with the priest	
Check records to see if there are siblings at another school - ring school	
Check with the School Nurse	

A home visit must be undertaken before this form is submitted. Please provide full details of any contact/attempted contact with the family.

Section 8

Information required for children leaving / left the UK
Please try and provide as much of the following information as possible, especially in cases where you have an indication of an intention for the family/child to leave the UK. Please give

consideration to the possibilities of forced marriage, that those presenting themselves as parents/family/carers are not genuine, child trafficking, child sexual exploitation or that the child (ren) may not be leaving the country as reported.	
Proposed date of departure from UK	
Actual date of departure (if already left)	
Point of departure- airport, coach station etc.	
Time of departure	
Flight numbers and name of airline	
Have you seen copies of the tickets?	
Please attach copies of tickets if possible	
What country are they returning to?	
Who is leaving the UK (please tick all that apply)	
Mother	
Father	
Other siblings that are not part of this referral	
Extended family (please give details)	
If child (ren) is not leaving with parent(s) who is accompanying them?	
What is their relationship to the child?	
Why is / are the parent (s) not leaving with the child (ren)?	
Who will be caring/ responsible for the child (ren)	
Please obtain	
Name	
Relationship to the child:	
Address:	
Contact number:	
Email:	

Details of school(s) child (ren) will be attending or applying to	
Address:	Email:
Contact Number:	Website:
Do you have any concerns re any of the following;	
Safety of the child(ren): YES/NO	
The reason given for leaving the UK: YES/NO	
That the information given is not accurate YES/NO	

Please submit this form to: CME@Coventry.gov.uk

Education Entitlement

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