

‘Children Missing Education’

Guidance for Schools, Academies, and Other Agencies

AUGUST 2016

Review August 2017

Introduction

The Education and Inspections Act 2006, Part 1, Section 4 places a statutory duty on all local authorities to make arrangements to identify all children of compulsory school age missing from education in their area.

The DfE CME Statutory Guidance issued January 2015 states

'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. Children missing education (CME) are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse and becoming NEET (not in education, employment and training) later on in life.

Local authorities should have robust procedures and policies in place to enable them to meet their duty in relation to these children, including appointing a named person that schools and other agencies can make referrals to. Local authorities should undertake regular reviews and evaluate their processes to ensure that these continue to be fit for purpose in identifying and dealing with CMEs in their area.

The local authority must have arrangements in place to identify those children who are not registered at a school and are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than at school (i.e. Elective Home Education). The local authority should have procedures in place to return such children to full time education either at a school or in alternative provision

The local authority has a responsibility to support, protect and safeguard vulnerable young people.

The nominated CME officer for Middlesbrough is:

David Lister
CME Manager
PO Box 505
Civic Centre
Middlesbrough
TS1 9FZ

Tel. 01642 729286 david_lister@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Tracing and recording of Children Missing from Education (CME)

N.B. This is the procedure when a pupil fails to arrive at school or fails to return after a leave of absence or ceases attending and their whereabouts is not known. It is not for those cases where the pupils are on roll but have low attendance or are refusing to attend which should be dealt with through school attendance procedures.

ACTION REQUIRED

Any partner agency or School is required to submit details regarding any new CME cases using the form included at Appendix A. Forms should be sent to the CME Manager either by e-mail or through the post. Any document sent by email should be sent utilising the local authority cryptshare system where available or if not with the document password protected. The use of Fax transmission is not advised.

The category of cases for CME recording are as follows:

A - Children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, and who are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at school (for example, at home, privately, or in alternative provision)

U – Yr 7 Pupils failed to arrive at Secondary in the Autumn Term

V – Yr 1 Pupils failed to arrive at Primary School in the Autumn Term

X – Pupils believed to have left the area - Destination unknown

Guidance for completing CME form at Appendix A

Schools are required to complete **ALL** parts of the form contained at Appendix A.

The CME Manager may be unable to process a form where information is missing or sections are incomplete. In this instance, the form will be passed back to school with a request for further information or a recommendation that further action be taken by school, before the child can be recorded as missing education.

1. In all of the above cases it is the schools responsibility to investigate the circumstances of the absence and make all reasonable enquiries to establish the pupil's whereabouts. Those enquiries should include telephone calls, letters and home visit enquiries made by the appropriate school attendance staff. For example it would be expected that the school should enquire of school friends, neighbours and extended family to establish the whereabouts, welfare and intentions of the family. Schools should be vigilant around school holiday periods when it is very important to seek to establish the date when pupils have left the area, in some cases it would be appropriate to seek the support of the

Ethnic Minority Achievement Team (EMAT) to enquire within their networks or any other appropriate source the school may be aware of.

2. The CME Manager would be available to contact for advice and guidance during those school led enquiries.
3. In any case where there are grounds to believe there are risks or concerns about the pupil's safety or well-being the school should consider making an immediate referral to the relevant agency such as Social Care or the Police.
4. In most cases during the first 10 school days of an unexplained absence the school is expected to make all the relevant and appropriate enquiries to trace the pupil and following this period submit the CME referral form. It is essential that all relevant information and action taken is fully described on the form to afford the CME manager the maximum opportunity to continue effective enquiries to trace the pupil. Frequently not recorded information includes sibling details particularly where they attend another school, full parental details, ethnicity, 1st language and extended family contacts.
5. The CME Manager will consider the actions taken by school and may suggest other enquiries which the school should undertake.
6. The CME Manager will add the child's name to the CME database in accordance with the relevant categories. It is essential that schools ensure that there is a vigilant and timely approach to securing information regarding a child's destination as tracking of destinations becomes more difficult over time after a child has departed.
7. The CME Manager will initiate and pursue appropriate enquiries to trace the pupil and regularly review the case until the pupil is re-engaged in education. Information regarding CME pupils will be shared with partner agencies at the regular CME and Vulnerable Pupils Operational Group to ensure all available information and where appropriate risk assessments and escalations can be agreed.
8. Ofsted research has shown that in some instances schools are deleting pupils from their registers without establishing critical information such as their new address, new school and the person(s) with parental responsibility. Recent examples of this continue to be discovered in some Middlesbrough Schools.
9. The rules regarding CME and deletion of pupils from the school admissions register can be summarised as follows:
10. The school can delete a pupil from their admissions register when the pupil has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than 20 school days **and** at no time was the absence during that period authorised by the school **and** the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any avoidable cause and both the school **and** the local education authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is.
11. The school can delete a pupil from their admissions register when the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the period of granted leave **and** the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any avoidable cause and both the

school **and** the local education authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is.

12. The school cannot remove the pupil from the attendance register until they have been deleted from the Admissions Register.
13. **In July 2016 the Government passed amendments to the Pupil Registration Regulations which are applicable from 1st September 2016. The local authority will shortly provide a template for the returns all schools must make to their Local Authority each time a pupil is entered or removed from their admissions register.**
14. **Separate guidance will be issued from the local authority highlighting the responsibilities of schools and the local authority with regard to Pupils Missing Out On Education (PMOOE)**

Referrals and Tracking Progress

The model which will operate in respect of receiving information, investigating and tracking cases is detailed in Figure 1.

A school or other agency completes and submits to the CME manager the CME referral form

The CME manager will consider the information in the referral and will record the referral on both the Capita 1 system and the CME spreadsheet on Objective. The CME manager may request further information from the referrer.

The CME manager will initiate all appropriate local checks .e.g. Housing, EMAT, School Health. If the pupil is traced and confirmed accessing appropriate Education Provision the Capita 1 system and the CME spreadsheet will be updated and the enquiry closed.

If the child is not traced the CME manager will regularly review the case and pursue wider appropriate lines of enquiry such as 'Key to Success'. The case will remain a live case until the pupil is traced or is beyond compulsory school age

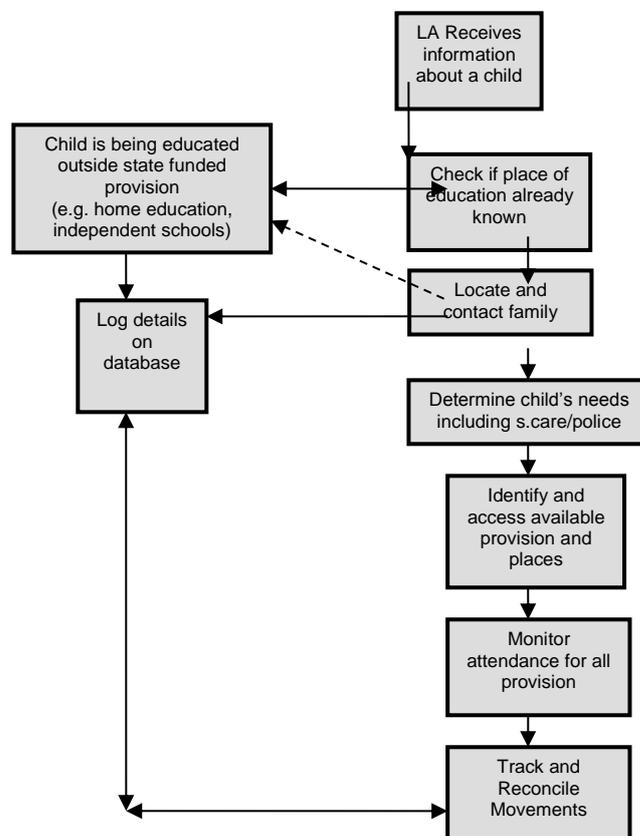


Fig. 1

If you have any queries regarding completion of referral forms please contact CME manager David Lister: Tel. (01642) 729286.

Completed forms can be e-mailed to: david_lister@middlesbrough.gov.uk (the forms must be protected by an appropriate encryption process or password protected) or by post to:

David Lister
 CME Manager
 PO Box 505
 Civic Centre
 Middlesbrough
 TS1 9FZ

Check List

WEEK 1

- Reasonable checks to ascertain the whereabouts of the child and/or their family. That means that you should:
- Check all listed contact and emergency contact numbers linked to the child
- Check whether school records or staff members have any information regarding the possible whereabouts of the child and follow up, where appropriate
- Check with friends, siblings and relatives of the child attending your school
- Check with any schools known to have siblings or relatives on their roll
- Contact any other agencies known to be involved with the child or their family

WEEK 2

- Inform the parent/carer of the child in writing that you are concerned about their unexplained absence from school and that a referral to CME may be required if no contact is made.
- Conduct a home visit if any of the above has not successfully located the child's whereabouts.
- Make enquiries of neighbours etc to establish if the occupiers are still living at the premises
- Submit the fully completed referral to the CME Manager outlining all the actions taken and ensuring any relevant information to assist the CME manager to trace the pupil is included.

REFERRAL TO OUT OF SCHOOL REGISTER OR REGISTER OF PUPILS AT RISK OF GOING MISSING FROM EDUCATION

When completed this form should be sent to:

CME Manager,
 PO Box 505, Civic Centre, Middlesbrough, TS1 9FZ
 Fax. No. (01642) 201905
 If you have any queries regarding completion of the form: Tel. (01642) 729286
 Completed forms can also be e-mailed to: david_lister@middlesbrough.gov.uk

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Added to S2S	

NAME OF REFERRER:		DEPT	
TEL. No		SERVICE/ SCHOOL	

PARENT:		AKA:			
NAMES OF CHILD(REN)		DOB	YR	Social Care Involved?	EHCP?
1					
2					
3					
4					

ADDRESS OF CHILD(REN) & PARENT:	
TEL No:	

POSSIBLE DESTINATION: (LA or new home address if known)

PREVIOUS SCHOOL(S) - MOST RECENT FOR EACH PUPIL LISTED ABOVE
1.
2.
3.
4.

IS/ARE THE PUPIL(S) OUT OF SCHOOL NOW? YES / NO
 IF SO, HOW LONG? _____

IS/ARE THE PUPIL(S) AT RISK OF GOING MISSING FROM EDUCATION? YES / NO

REASON FOR REFERRAL: SEE CRITERIA FOR REFERRAL AND PLEASE TICK EACH RELEVANT CRITERIA REFERECE. (Copies of relevant case notes and other relevant supporting information should also be attached)

A	U	V	X

Please complete the checklist below, describing the action taken by school

ACTION TAKEN		Date	
<p>1. Attempted contact with parents/ family members</p> <p>Please provide details of the date[s] of attempted contact with parent/family members, describing the action taken by school and the outcome of this action.</p> <p><i>Example: Attempted to contact family member/s by mobile telephone, mobile switched off.</i></p>			
<p>2. Home visit completed</p> <p>Please provide details of the date[s] of the home visit, the action taken by school and the outcome of this action.</p> <p><i>Example: School EWO visited family property on 16/4/14, the property was empty and a TO LET sign outside, they contacted the letting agent and they confirmed that the property has been empty for three weeks, no forwarding address was available.</i></p>			
Details of any other action taken:			
Please provide details of School Attendance Contact/Officer		Please list involvement of any other agencies (e.g. Social Services):	
<p>Name: Tel No. E-mail address:</p>			
SIGNED:		DATE:	
Office Use Only			
Date received		Outcome:	