

Children Missing Education Policy

A child missing from education is a child or young person of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll and who is not receiving a suitable education otherwise.

Children missing from education fall into 2 broad categories:

- CME – WASP (Without a school place) - those whose whereabouts and circumstances are known to the local authority but who have, for whatever reason, been out of education for 4 school weeks or more.
- CME - Missing - those who are 'lost' - children who have apparently disappeared, usually with their families, and the local authority knows neither where they are, nor anything of their circumstances.

Both categories of young people are at risk of not achieving their educational potential and could be placing their safety and welfare at risk.

If The Willows Primary School identifies a child who is missing from education, staff will follow the guidance offered by the Local Authority. The procedures below are extracted from the Local Authority CME Policy.

1. It is understandable and appropriate that schools should be concerned about revealing personal information about pupils. However, all information held by SCC is processed in accordance with the [Data Protection Act 1998](#). Under Paragraph 5(c) of Schedule 2 to the Act, personal information can be disclosed where necessary for the exercise of any function given to any person under an enactment. [As noted in 3](#), SCC has a duty to ensure that children within its boundaries are being appropriately educated, and it is necessary for this function that we obtain this information.
2. When a child is expected to join a school and does not arrive, for the first 10 school days the school should make their own enquiries. This should include trying to contact the parents/carers by telephone or letter. School may also wish to contact the School Admissions Team to establish if the child has been registered elsewhere.
3. For absence of between 10 and 20 school days, schools may request EWW support (if eligible) to establish the reason for the unknown absence and lack of information. The request must include a record of the reasonable enquiries made so far (see CME “Reasonable enquiries” for more details).
4. If after 20 school days (four school weeks) the child has not been located, the school should complete and submit a CME Referral Form to cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk and it is at this point that the Headteacher should take the child off the school roll.
5. If a child is absent, or fails to return from an agreed holiday, the school should follow their normal procedures for investigating the absence, using “Reasonable Enquiries” (see [CME webpage](#)).
6. If a child is absent from school because they are believed to have moved away, school are still required to keep the pupil on roll whilst making reasonable enquiries, and only remove from roll after 20 school days have elapsed. It is at this point that a referral to CME should be made.

7. When the school and EWW have investigated, but not located the child and 20 school days have elapsed, schools should follow the procedure outlined in 4.4.
8. If there is a concern regarding the immediate safety of the child First Response must be contacted (see 1.4). Dependent on the level of concern, the Education Safeguarding Advice Service can also be consulted by emailing esas@staffordshire.gov.uk or telephoning 0800 13 13 126 (option 3).
9. It is the decision of the Headteacher of the school as to when to remove a child from roll; however, deletions from a school roll can usually be made after four school weeks (20 school days) continuous absence where all reasonable attempts have been made to trace a child and the CME team have been notified. In these circumstances the child's details should also be uploaded onto the Teachernet s2s lost pupils' database.
10. There is statutory guidance governing when schools can delete children from their admissions register. These are outlined in Regulation 8 of the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#).
11. When a child is deleted from the school's admissions register, the school must update their school management information system and clearly indicate the date and the reason for removal from roll. On the "i" tab next to "Reason for Leaving" the new school's name should be given together with its seven-digit school identifier number (schools in England and Wales) or the school name and locality (schools in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man, Channel Islands, Gibraltar or Armed Forces Schools abroad).
12. When a pupil leaves a school for a known destination, the school should upload the child's records to s2s – a secure national database. This generates an email to the receiving school which then downloads the information.
13. In February 2018 all schools in Staffordshire were issued with "Deregistration Guidance". This is a quick reference sheet which lists all the reasons why a pupil can be taken off roll. Schools are asked to refer

to this guidance (see [CME webpage](#)) and notify the LA accordingly depending on the reason.

14. When a pupil is taken off roll due to their having been admitted to a new school, the school the pupil is leaving should complete an OR.1 (off-rolling) form which they should then send to schools.capitadatateam@staffordshire.gov.uk.

This will then ensure that the pupil is recorded as being at the new school and will avoid unnecessary investigation.

15. Where a pupil leaves a school without a known destination, (which will have been referred to CME see 4.4.) the school should also upload the child's records to the secure area of s2s known as the Lost Pupils Database. Any school then admitting the child without previous school history can request their LA to search the Lost Pupils Database for the child's records.

16. For those pupils mentioned in 4.14 above, the "Reason for Leaving" on the school's management information system should be amended to show "Unknown Destination". The Common Transfer File must also be completed, and coded XXXXXXXX (destination unknown) or MMMMMMMM (moved to independent sector or out of England and Wales). It can then be emailed to It is understandable and appropriate that schools should be concerned about revealing personal information about pupils. However, all information held by SCC is processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Under Paragraph 5(c) of Schedule 2 to the Act, personal information can be disclosed where necessary for the exercise of any function given to any person under an enactment. As noted in 3, SCC has a duty to ensure that children within its boundaries are being appropriately educated, and it is necessary for this function that we obtain this information.

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51. Important – Please note that new Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities was issued by the DFE in September 2016. This makes specific reference to schools’ responsibilities around CME and sets out the correct reporting mechanisms to ensure that these often-vulnerable children are accurately monitored.
52. Schools should pay particular attention to the section entitled “School Responsibilities” regarding notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity for those children who move onto and off school rolls at non-standard transition points. Please also give regard to the section entitled “Making reasonable enquiries”.
53. All relevant documentation is available on the CME webpage, however if schools have any queries they should contact the CME team for advice.
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57. 5: Elective home education [Back to top](#)
58. If a parent wishes to EHE his/her school educated child, the school must deregister the child at the point written notification is received from the parent stating that the child is now in receipt of home education. Deletion from the admissions register should take place as soon as such notification is received, and schools should follow the aforementioned “Deregistration guidance”.
59. Schools must inform the EHE team when a pupil has been removed from their roll to be home educated. They should do this by

forwarding a copy of the parent's written correspondence (this can be a letter or email) together with a completed School Exit Form to the Elective Home Education team at electivehomeeducation@staffordshire.gov.uk.

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61. It is imperative that this is done at the time of removal from the school roll because unless the EHE team are notified, the pupil will remain the safeguarding responsibility of the school.

62. Information is cross-referenced at regular half-termly liaison meetings between CME and EHE, to ensure that home educating families are identified, contacted and support is offered.

63. If the EHE team has concerns that the child is not being provided with a suitable education, then the matter will be referred to an Education Welfare Worker. If the EWW is not able to establish that a "suitable education" is being provided, they may seek a legal remedy, i.e. a School Attendance Order (DFE "School Attendance – Statutory guidance and departmental advice", August 2013).

64. EHE legislation currently states that the only obligation for parents to notify anybody is at the point they withdraw their child from school (see 5.1). This is when they must give written notification to the Headteacher of the school. If a family has never enrolled their child in a school, there is no obligation to notify the LA.

65. If the LA has reason to believe that a child is not receiving a suitable education, there is an expectation that this will be investigated. In the case of children previously unknown to the LA this may simply be confirmation that the child is being EHE rather than missing education.

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