



Children and Family Services

Children Missing Education (CME) Policy & Procedures

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CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION – Policy & Procedures

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

From 2007 there is a statutory duty on all local authorities in England and Wales to have systems and procedures in place to monitor Children Missing Education (*DCSF Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities in England to Identify Children Not Receiving Education – February 2007*). A key aspect is about encouraging relevant agencies to work together to design and deliver integrated services. The new duty to identify children who are not receiving a suitable education should be a key part of these arrangements.

Statutory Guidance defines 'suitable education' as follows:

..... this means efficient full-time education suitable to a child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have.

2.0 Duty to Identify Children Missing Education

The duty applies in relation to children / young people 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).

The duty does not apply in relation to children / young people who are registered at a school who are not attending regularly. The new duty complements and reinforces duties that already exist for schools to monitor attendance.

The duty does not apply to children / young people who are being educated at home. Monitoring arrangements already exist for children being educated at home.

2.1 **Local authorities are responsible for**

Local authorities are responsible for meeting the new requirements under section 436A (inserted before section 437 in Chapter 2, Part 6 of the Education Act 1996.) They also need to put in place arrangements for joint working and appropriate information sharing with other Local Authorities and relevant partner agencies which come into contact with families and children. The new duty should strengthen and compliment existing duties under the Children Act 2004.

Relevant partner agencies include:

- All Schools and alternative providers
- Children's Social Care
- Adult Social Care
- Health
- Police
- Youth Offending
- Housing

Other key partner agencies include:

- Inland Revenue
- Prospects
- Youth Services (Statutory & Voluntary)
- UK Border Agency
- Voluntary & Community Organisations

3.0 IMPLEMENTING THE NEW DUTY

The purpose of the new duty is to ensure that children missing from education are identified quickly and that effective tracking systems are put in place to enable effective action to be taken to provide them with suitable education.

The key processes for tracking children missing education are:

- receive information about a child / young person
- check if place of education is already known
- log / record details
- locate and contact family
- conduct a home visit, if appropriate
- determine the child / young person's needs – if appropriate
- identify & access available provision & places
- monitor attendance
- track child / young person

4.0 WHY CHILDREN GO MISSING FROM EDUCATION?

Children/young people fall out of education in a number of ways:

- Fail to start appropriate provision and hence never enter the system;
- Cease to attend, due to 'illegal' exclusion or withdrawal; or
- Fail to complete a transition between providers (e.g. being unable to find a suitable school place after moving to a new local authority area, or after leaving a custodial establishment)

Some children/young people who experience certain life events could be more at risk of not receiving education. These include children and young people who:

- have committed offences
- live in women's refuges
- from homeless families, perhaps living in temporary accommodation, house of multiple occupancy or Bed and Breakfast
- Young runaways
- with long term medical or emotional problems
- affected by substance misuse
- who are unaccompanied asylum seekers
- who are from refugee and asylum seeking families
- are in new immigrant families, who are not yet established in the UK and may not have fixed addresses
- have been trafficked to, or within the UK

- are in public care
- are privately fostered
- are Young carers
- are Teenage mothers, and
- are permanently excluded from school, particularly those excluded illegally, e.g. for problematic behaviour or offending.

4.1 Other vulnerable groups include:

Service children	They are likely to experience high mobility both in and outside the UK.
Traveller children	At times the high mobility of these children means they can be at risk of going missing from education.
Excluded pupils	Due to the new regulations made under the Education & Inspection Act 2006 education has to be provided for pupils from the sixth day. Some pupils may be unofficially excluded which is illegal and this will need to be challenged by the Local Authority.

There are some circumstances when a registered pupil of statutory school age is absent without explanation. Most cases are relatively minor whereby a child / young person returns home quickly or is not believed to be in any serious danger. However there are more serious cases when a child / young person may become a victim of crime, such as being abducted. Schools should contact the parents on the first day of absence without explanation (First Day Contact.)

5.0 HOW AND WHEN TO CONSIDER POLICE INVOLVEMENT?

There may be some occasions when a child/young person not receiving education may have been a victim of a crime.

If the answer to any of the following questions is YES then a referral to the Police should be made.

Have there been suspicions in the past concerning this child / young person & family which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying?

Have there been any past concerns about the child / young person associating with significantly older young people or adults?

Was there a significant incident prior to the child / young person's unexplained absence?

Is there a good reason to believe that the child / young person's absence may be the result of being the victim of a crime?

For example:

- *Is this very sudden & unexpected behaviour?*
- *Has the child / young person gone missing with their family?*

- *Has the child / young person gone missing without their family?*
- *Is there any health, religious or cultural reason to believe that the child / young person is at risk of harm?*

6.0 HOW AND WHEN TO CONSIDER SOCIAL CARE INVOLVEMENT?

If the answer to any of the following questions is YES then liaison and/or a further referral to Children's Social Care (Access Team) should be made.

1. Is the child/young person the subject of a child protection plan (on the child protection register)?
2. Is the child / young person in the care of the local authority?
3. Is there social care involvement?

7.0 REDUCING THE RISK OF CHILDREN NOT RECEIVING EDUCATION

There are a range of systems, processes and procedures currently used by local authorities to reduce the risk that children / young people fall out of the education system and go missing. Existing good practice broadly falls into the following categories where the Local Authority introduces measures to:

1. Reduce the likelihood that children / young people fall out of the education system, such as audits of the rolls and registers of schools;
2. Identify and locate children / young people who are not receiving education, such as via truancy sweeps and the provision of named points of contact to receive notification of children from other agencies, and
3. Re-engage the children / young people with appropriate educational provision, for example via multi-agency panels to broker admissions.

8.0 CHILDREN WHO DO NOT HAVE AN EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT

8.1 Identification

Children/young people who are not receiving an education are identified in one of two ways:


- i. Notification from an individual and/or agency
- ii. Reports from the pupil database, identifying children known to the Local Authority without a school place

8.2 Notification Route

Local authorities are required to have a named individual responsible for receiving details of children found missing from education and for brokering support for them through the most appropriate agencies.

The named person for Leicestershire Local Authority is:

JoAnne Rees
Pupil Services Manager
Leicestershire County Council
Room 100b
County Hall
Glenfield
Leicester LE3 8RF

 0116 3052071
07966 111081

E-mail cme@leics.gov.uk

Stakeholders and partner agencies are made aware of how to contact the named person if they become aware that a child/young person may be missing from education.

8.3 Responsibility of the CME Team

The named officer has responsibility for:

- Receiving notifications of an individual child/young person missing from education
- Receiving & producing reports from the Local Authority's database giving details of children of statutory school age, living in Leicestershire, who do not have a school place
- Establishing why a child/young person (identified by notification and reporting process) does not have an educational placement
- Acting as lead professional to ensure that the child / young person is able to re-engage with education
- Conducting home visits as appropriate
- Referring the child/young person to relevant services or agencies as appropriate
- Arranging multi-agency meetings as necessary
- Maintaining a central record of children/young people to enable effective monitor/tracking to take place

The record is saved monthly to provide ongoing access to statistical information.

9.0 MONITORING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Departmental Management Team receives regular reports regarding CME statistics via quarterly reporting and as part of the wider Pupils Missing out on Education work.

In addition, Leicestershire CME Team chairs the Midlands Regional CME Consortium Meetings, which are held termly.


10.0 COMPLAINTS

Should you have concerns or complaints on any aspect of the procedure outlined above, you should contact pupil services in the first instance.

If you are still unhappy, please contact:

*Pupil Services Manager
School Admissions & Pupil Services
County Hall
Glenfield
Leicestershire
LE3 8RF
0116 3052071*

Appendix A

Referral Checklist for Children Missing out on Education (CME)			 Leicestershire County Council
Name of Pupil (s)		Address <i>(Last Known)</i>	
AKA		Parents'/Carers' Names	
Date of Birth		Telephone No.	
Gender		Email	
Ethnicity		School/College	
SEN & Disability			
Child in Care?		Date Last Attended	
Any Additional Information <i>(E.G. additional addresses, information surrounding SEN/Care etc)</i>			
Action to be Taken by Referrer			
<i>Action</i>	<i>Outcome (Include date completed)</i>		
Check possible whereabouts with staff, siblings, friends & other pupils			
Contact any known extended family and/or emergency contact numbers			
Complete a visit to last known address <i>(Check visible signs of property being occupied, checks with neighbours etc)</i> Please include any additional & relevant information about the child or family <i>(E.g known agencies with involvement & names of contacts)</i>			

Please complete the table below. Indicate as appropriate and mark whether the indicators are current or historic

No	Vulnerabilities, Warning Signs & Risk Indicators (for the child and/or family)	Yes or No?	Current / Historic (C/H?)
1	History of Local Authority Care (LAC)		
2	Goes Missing from Home/Care		
3	Exclusion and/or unexplained absences from school (or not engaged in education, employment or training)		
4	Social and/or Learning difficulties		
5	Low self-esteem / Self-harm requiring medical treatment / Eating Disorders / Emotional Health Issues (Including anxiety related issues, suicidal thoughts)		
6	History of Being Bullied or Being a Bully		
7	Drug and/or Alcohol Misuse (or a history of)		
8	Involvement in Criminal Activities (Possible offending patterns in the family)		
9	At Risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) (known or suspected)		
10	Whereabouts Unknown (or unclear) - whether day or night		
11	Displaying Inappropriate Sexualised Behaviours		
12	Aggressive Behaviour Towards Others (sometimes leading to fixed term exclusions)		
13	Breakdown of Living and/or Family Relationships (sometimes leading to staying out overnight)		
14	Gang Member or Association		
15	History of abuse/neglect		
16	History of domestic abuse/violence		
17	History of mental health difficulties		
18	History of sexual, physical and/or emotional abuse		
19	Isolated from peers/social networks (not mixing with their usual friends)		
20	Evidence of Poverty and/or Deprivation		

Based on the above indicators, if there are any safeguarding concerns or worries, have you considered a referral to Social Care? Yes/No

If so, have you gained consent from parents? Yes/No

Referrer Assessment

(The Vulnerabilities, Warning Signs & Risk Indicators above should help inform your professional judgement when completing the final section of this referral form)

What do you think is working well?

Include protective factors:

- *People, situations & actions that contribute to the wellbeing of the child & to plans about how they could be made safe*
- *Actions already being taken to make sure the child is safe*

What are you worried about?

Include risk factors, whether they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

- *Harm – actual hurt, injury or abuse (likely) caused by adults in the past or present*
- *Risk taking behaviour by the child*

Professional Judgment

Please use your professional judgement to reflect upon the indicators you have ticked above and consider the health, welfare and safety of the child in question

What do you think needs to happen next?

This is the initial plan and should include what outcomes you are hoping are achieved and by when

Referrer's Details

Name		Position/Title	
Contact Details		School/College or Agency	
Signature		Date Completed	

Please password protect the completed form and email to cme@leics.gov.uk