

Children Missing From Education Policy and Procedure

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North Tyneside Council

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NORTH TYNESIDE LOCAL AUTHORITY

CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION (CME) POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1 INTRODUCTION

1.0 This document is intended to inform Local Authority (LA) officers, schools, governing bodies and other agencies and professionals about the policy and procedures to be followed in order to prevent children from going 'missing from education'. It should be read in conjunction with LA guidance on non-school attendance and Procedures for Locating Missing Pupils and the Removal of Pupils from Roll and the Child Protection Policy.

1.1 Children (a child) missing from education, in this document, refers to all pupils of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately, at home or in alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as four weeks or more).

1.2 North Tyneside LA acknowledges that "education protects" and that it is a key responsibility of the LA and its schools to safeguard all the children resident in North Tyneside or attending North Tyneside schools. The LA and its schools will protect the children in the borough by ensuring they are all on a school roll, or known to be home educated and that children do not get 'lost' off school rolls and become 'missing'.

1.3 The Children Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children and to share information. This principle underpins this policy and there is an expectation that all agencies will work together to ensure children are on school rolls. New statutory guidance for Children Missing Education (CME) was issued in September 2016. www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education

1.4 The most common reasons for children and young people being "missing from school are":

- fail to start appropriate provision and hence never enter the system;
- cease to attend as a result of exclusion;
- fail to complete a transition between providers (e.g. being unable to find a suitable school place after moving to a new LA);
- frequent moves of house, including periods of homelessness or periods in a refuge;
- family breakdown or bereavement;
- persistent truancy leading to non attendance;
- disaffection resulting in pupil and/or parent dissatisfaction with the school and the parent withdrawing the pupil or 'being asked to leave';
- young people who have committed offences;
- children living in women's refuges;
- children of homeless families; perhaps living in temporary accommodation;
- children who have run away from home;
- children with long term medical or emotional problems;
- unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees, or children of asylum seeking families;
- children from transient families;

1.5 It will be recognised that the factors listed above make children and young people 'vulnerable' in every sense and it is therefore particularly important they are not allowed to 'go missing' from education.

1.6 Research indicates certain groups of children are more likely to be affected by the factors listed above and include:

- i) Looked After Children (LAC);
- ii) refugee and asylum seeking children;
- iii) travellers;
- iv) children who have suffered bereavement, trauma, domestic violence or other adverse family circumstances;
- v) children with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

2 THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS

2.0 When a pupil is expected to join the school, either at a normal time of starting (e.g. Nursery, Reception or Year 7) or at any other time, and s/he does not arrive, the school must first try to make contact with the parents by phone or letter.

If, after **one week**, no contact has been made the school must inform the local authority Admissions Team to find out if the pupil has been registered elsewhere.

After **two weeks** the school must complete a referral to the Attendance and Placement Service who will follow the procedures for locating missing pupils. The pupil must not be removed from roll until the Officer responsible has ascertained the pupil's whereabouts and safety, and has confirmed that the pupil is registered at another school or is being educated otherwise.

2.1 If a pupil has unexplained absence from school for a prolonged period, or fails to return from a holiday, the school must follow the normal procedures for investigating pupil absence (ie telephone calls, letters, invitations to meetings at the school, etc). If, after two weeks, the pupil does not return to school the matter must be referred to the Attendance and Placement Service where the procedures for 'missing pupils', outlined in the Procedures for Locating Missing Pupils and the Removal of Pupils from Roll Guidance Document should be followed.

As above, the pupil **must not be removed from roll** until the Attendance and Placement Service has ascertained the pupil's whereabouts and safety, and has confirmed that the pupil is registered at another school or is being educated otherwise.

2.2 If a pupil 'disappears' without any warning the school must immediately notify the Attendance and Placement Service.

2.3 **All schools** (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under **any** of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulations.

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

Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register as listed in the statutory guidance are shown below:

1	8(1)(a) - where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.
2	8(1)(b) - except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school.
3	8(1)(c) - where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.
4	8(1)(d) - in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.
5	8(1)(e) - except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.
6	8(1)(f) - in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that — (i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted; (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
7	8(1)(g) - that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
8	8(1)(h) - that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and (i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2); (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
9	8(1)(i) - that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.
10	8(1)(j) - that the pupil has died.
11	8(1)(k) - that the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and— (i) the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school; or (ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.
12	8(1)(l) - in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school.
13	8(1)(m) - that he has been permanently excluded from the school.
14	8(1)(n) - where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.
15	8(1)(o) where— (i) the pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or an Academy; (ii) charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the pupil; and (iii) those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.

2.4 When adding or removing a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include:

- (a) the full name of the pupil and date of birth.
- (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides
- (c) at least one telephone number of the parent
- (d) the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable
- (e) the grounds in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (see Annex A).

It is important to notify the Attendance & Placement Service if the child's previous school **should not be notified** of the destination school (for example, when a family is escaping domestic violence).

Schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register.

If the child is subject of a Child Protection Plan or should the school have particular child protection concerns, the school should immediately notify the Front Door on 03452000109

All schools must also notify the local authority **within five days** of adding or removing a pupil's name to / from the admission register at a non-standard transition point. When a child is removed from a school roll the school must inform the Attendance and Placement Service by including the pupil on the weekly return.

In the event of a pupil moving to another school the name of the school must be indicated and the pupil's records must be sent to the new school within **15 days**. If, for any reason, a child's name is removed from the school roll the LA must be informed immediately.

2.5 In the event of a parent informing the school that s/he is removing the pupil to educate him/her at home, the Officer with responsibility for Elective Home Education, who can be contacted through the Attendance and Placement Service, must be informed. The pupil's details will be recorded and arrangements will be made by the LA to advise the parent / carer of their responsibilities and to make every effort to gather information to confirm that the child is receiving suitable education.

2.6 If the pupil has moved or transferred and is known to be on roll at another school, the Admissions Service and the Attendance and Placement team should be notified.

2.7 If there is no trace of the pupil, the Attendance and Placement Service must be notified prior to deletion and given time to make appropriate enquiries about the pupil's whereabouts. The Attendance & Placement Service should be notified using Appendix CME1 form. They will work with schools to make reasonable efforts to try and identify the child's current whereabouts or destination. Appendix CME 2 provides a checklist of enquiries to locate children who may no longer reside in North Tyneside.

2.8 Pregnancy is not a reason for a pupil to be removed from the school roll.

2.9 Schools must monitor all deletions from school rolls by race, ethnicity, gender, SEN and disability to ensure that they are fulfilling their obligations under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001).

2.10 If a school learns of a school aged pupil without a school place (eg a sibling or friend of a current pupil, or a child on its waiting list) the school must inform the LA of the pupil by completing as much of (Appendix CME 1, attached to this Policy) as possible and returning it to the Attendance and Placement Service.

2.11 If a pupil is a resident of another Local Authority it is the school's responsibility to notify the 'home' Authority of any of the circumstances above, in line with North Tyneside's Protocols that cover cross-borough issues with pupils.

2.12 Removal from roll for any reason other than those specified above is **illegal**.

2.13 Link Inspectors and Ofsted will monitor schools' compliance with legal requirements.

3. THE USE OF SCHOOL TO SCHOOL (S2S) AND THE LOST PUPIL DATABASE (LPD).

3.0 In all cases, reasonable efforts must be made to find a child. Should such efforts prove to be unsuccessful and confirmation has been received from the Attendance and Placement Service, the school can remove the child's name from their roll and create a "lost" Common Transfer File (CTF) with XXXXXXXX as the destination. This must then be uploaded onto the secure site – this information will be held in a secure area of S2S known as the Lost Pupil Database.

This is a statutory requirement under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The CTF should be immediately uploaded onto the DFE s2s secure site where it will be held in the Lost Pupil Database. This file must hold information on one pupil only.

3.1 A flowchart is provided to assist schools to use the appropriate destination code when uploading a CTF to the DFE s2s site (Appendix 5).

Should a child join a North Tyneside school without that school receiving a CTF from the child's previous school, then the receiving school should contact the Attendance & Placement Service and request that a search is made of the Lost Pupil Database for a matching record.

3.2 If a child leaves the school to go to an independent school, or a school outside England, then the destination code MMMMMMMM must be used – this file will be held in a secure database which can be searched by the Local Authority.

3.3 If a CTF is rejected schools should recode the file MMMMMMMM.

3.4 Schools must check S2S regularly to look for the CTFs of newly admitted pupils. If a new pupil is admitted, and the CTF is not available, schools should notify the Attendance and Placement Service who will search the lost Pupil Database for the pupil's CTF, which can then be forwarded to the school.

North Tyneside Council recognises that these procedures will only function effectively if all North Tyneside schools are committed to adhering to the principle that:

WHENEVER A PUPIL JOINS OR LEAVES A SCHOOL, A COMMON TRANSFER FILE MUST ACCOMPANY HIM/HER.

The LA will therefore ensure that all North Tyneside schools:

- Are made fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to missing pupils.
- Are properly supported to meet these responsibilities.

4. EXCLUDED PUPILS

4.0 The Attendance and Placement Service must be informed of all exclusions from school (both permanent and fixed term). It is expected that all schools will follow statutory Guidance on Exclusion from School. Schools are specifically supported through this process by the School Support Service (SST) .

4.1 In the event of a pupil being excluded for a fixed term, work must be provided by the school, and if the exclusion is for more than 15 school days full time education will be provided. If a school is imposing an exclusion of more than 15 school days, the Attendance and Placement Service must be informed of the arrangements that are being made for the pupil's education during the exclusion from the fifteenth day.

5. THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY (LA)

5.0 The Attendance and Placement Service under the direction and supervision of the Senior Manager for Facilities and Fair Access and the Head of, Commissioning and Investment is the LA designated officer for children missing from education. This officer is responsible for the tracking and tracing of all pupils notified as being without a school place, and for liaising with other authorities.

5.1 It is the LA responsibility to ensure that all school aged children are in receipt of suitable and efficient education, appropriate to their age, aptitude and ability, whether at school or otherwise.

6. THE ROLE OF THE ATTENDANCE AND PLACEMENT SERVICE

6.1 The Attendance and Placement Service has a statutory duty to inspect school registers and ensure that they are being kept in accordance with regulations. This will include regular monitoring of pupils who have been removed from roll to ensure that the procedures and regulations described above are being followed and that no pupil is allowed to 'disappear' from a school roll. The Attendance and Placement Service will regularly check on the attendance of pupils where there is a high level of unauthorised absence. Any concerns will be followed up with schools and other linked professionals.

7. THE ROLE OF THE ADMISSIONS SERVICE

7.0 The Admissions Service has responsibility for:

- i) The co-ordination of admissions to reception classes, ensuring, in co-operation with primary admission authorities, that no more than a single offer of a reception class place is made to applicants for North Tyneside Schools;
- ii) the co-ordination of admission arrangements for pupils transferring from primary to secondary school, ensuring, in co-operation with secondary admission authorities and other Local Authorities that North Tyneside-resident pupils receive no more than a single offer of a secondary school place;
- iii) processing requests for mid-year admissions and school transfers,
- iv) identifying through the Authority's data systems and other agencies those children who require the allocation of a school place (for the major intakes at reception and secondary transfer but, also, in respect of other school years);
- v) the allocation of LA nursery places as required .
- vi) ensuring parents are aware of other educational establishments with atypical admission points.

7.1 To contribute to the work of ensuring that all pupils are on a school roll and attending school, the Admissions Service works as follows:

- i) Prioritises work on the allocation of school places for Children in Public Care/LAC;
- ii) ensures that advice about admissions and support with the application procedure is readily available for families new to the area;
- iii) carefully considers each request for a transfer of school, ensuring that parents are aware of the implications of a change of school and discouraging the request where appropriate;

- iv) ensures, at every opportunity, that parents are advised not to withdraw their children from school without first having secured an alternative school place;
- v) identifies pupils who are out of school and unable to readily benefit from a mainstream school placement so that consideration may be given to other appropriate placement;
- vi) contributes to the maintenance of an efficient pupil database which, following liaison with schools and parents as necessary, records the school places offered and those taken up or declined;
- vii) shares information with other LAs and admission authorities regarding individual pupil placements within their schools;
- viii) investigates, with parents, schools and the Attendance and Placement Service as necessary, those cases where pupils fail to take up school places or where it becomes evident that a pupil is out of school;
- ix) follows-up and monitors the outcome of admission referrals made to the Authority's schools.

8. THE ROLE OF OTHER AGENCIES

8.0 Other agencies, especially Social Services, Health, Police, Housing and the Connexions Service, frequently come into contact with school-aged pupils. It is an expectation of the LA that any professional coming across a school aged child will ask where that child is registered at school and contact the Attendance and Placement Service if they have information on a child who may be missing education.

8.1 In the event of a pupil being 'missing' the Attendance and Placement Manager will liaise with all agencies including, Police and Social Services and follow the Child Protection Procedures.

8.2 As appropriate, the Attendance and Placement Service Manager will liaise with all agencies including, Police and will follow any protocols established with regard to cross border issues.

Appendix CME1

Children Missing Education Referral Form

For completion by professionals in both statutory and voluntary sector who in the course of their work establish that a child of school age is not registered at any school or educational establishment

Child's forename:	Child's last name	
Date of birth:	Also known as:	
Name of Parent/Carer:		
Address:	Pupil's Emergency Contact Numbers	
	Mobile:	
Referred by:	Year group:	
Name of referrer:	Agency:	
Date of referral:	Contact no:	
Additional Information:		
Please provide information (if known) of other agencies involved with the family: Is the child looked after or do they have a Child Protection Plan?		
Contact name:	Agency	Telephone no

If, having completed the above-mentioned checks the child's whereabouts have not been determined, please complete Appendix CME2 and forward to the Attendance & Placement Service.

The Attendance & Placement Service, Floor 3, Quadrant East, Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY.

Email: sara.irving@northtyneside.gov.uk

Appendix CME2

CHECKLIST FOR CHILDREN THOUGHT TO HAVE LEFT THE AREA

This checklist is to be completed by the Attendance and Placement Team in all cases where it would seem that a child has moved from the area, and the school at which the child is currently registered has not been informed of either a new address or school.

Name of child

.....

School

.....

Action Taken	Date(s) time	Action by	Response/result (Where appropriate name person(s))
Check the possible whereabouts with staff and pupils?			
Check the pupil's emergency contact numbers?			
Follow local information sharing arrangements and check with all agencies with known involvement for example housing providers school admissions health services police refuge youth justice services children's social care HMRC			
Check with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and/or the Border Force			
Check with local authority and school from which child moved originally, if known			
Check with any local authority and school to which a child may have moved			
Check with the local authority where the child lives, if different from where the school is			
In the case of children of Service Personnel, check with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS)			
Undertake a home visit(s) made by appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessment and if appropriate make enquiries with neighbour(s) and relatives.			

Appendix CME 3

Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from a school register

1	8(1)(a) - where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.
2	8(1)(b) - except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school.
3	8(1)(c) - where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.
4	8(1)(d) - in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.
5	8(1)(e) - except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.
6	8(1)(f) - in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that — (i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted; (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
7	8(1)(g) - that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
8	8(1)(h) - that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and (i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2); (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
9	8(1)(i) - that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.
10	8(1)(j) - that the pupil has died.
11	8(1)(k) - that the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and— (i) the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school; or (ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.
12	8(1)(l) - in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school.
13	8(1)(m) - that he has been permanently excluded from the school.
14	8(1)(n) - where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.
15	8(1)(o) where— (i) the pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or an Academy; (ii) charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the pupil; and (iii) those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.

Appendix CME 4

WEEKLY RETURN FOR PUPILS ADMITTED TO AND REMOVED FROM SCHOOL ROLL

NAME OF SCHOOL..... WEEK ENDING.....

Children admitted

Name	DOB	New Home Address	Previous home address & School

Children transferring out of school

Name	DOB	New Home Address and New School	Previous home address

Headteacher..... Date.....

Please return to:

The Attendance & Placement Service, Quadrant East, Silverlink North,
Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY.

Email: sara.iring@northtyneside.gov.uk

Appendix CME 5
Locating Missing Pupils Flow Chart

Pupil Leaving North Tyneside

