



*The*  
**Hawthorns**  
Primary School

**Children Missing from Education  
(CME)**

Agreed and Adopted by the Governing Body on :11.7.19...

Signed : ... J Shepherd.....

The policy will be formally reviewed on: ... July 2022.....

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## 1. Definition

Wokingham Borough Council is committed to ensuring that all pupils who go missing from schools within Wokingham Borough or who move to other areas are quickly located, and that support is given to other local authorities to locate their own missing pupils. Wokingham Borough Council aim to have knowledge of all children living and being educated in the Wokingham area, of compulsory school age, and will ensure that they are receiving a suitable education.

The purpose of this document is to ensure robust procedures are in place to quickly identify children missing from education and effective tracking systems are in place to guarantee that appropriate action is taken

This document is intended to inform officers in the Local Authority (LA), Schools, Governors and other key partner agencies and the wider community about the procedures and processes to be followed in order to identify and maintain contact with Children Missing Education. This document should be read in conjunction with the Elective Home Education Policy 2016, current legislation and guidance (outlined in **Appendix 1**).

Children defined as Missing Education are:

- a. Children of Compulsory School Age who are not on a school roll
- b. Children who are not registered with the LA for Elective Home Education (EHE)
- c. Children of compulsory school age who have been out of education for a continuous period of more than four school weeks (20 school days).

Children can go missing from education for a number of reasons (this list is not exhaustive):

- a. Fail to start appropriate provision and, therefore, never enter the education system;
- b. Cease to attend following a period of official exclusion from school;
- c. Cease to attend because of unofficial exclusion
- d. Are withdrawn from school by their parents
- e. Fail to complete a transition between providers (e.g. being unable to find a suitable school place after moving to a new LA)
- f. Children subject to an EHC plan awaiting placement at specialist provision

The cost of children missing out on education can be substantial – to themselves, their families and society as a whole. Missing out on learning is linked to poor outcomes for children including:

- Unemployment
- Homelessness
- Risk of offending behaviours
- Risk of sexual exploitation
- Substance abuse
- Teenage pregnancies
- Mental Health issues
- Physical Health issues
- Forced Marriage

## 2. Risk and Identification

It is important that there are a number of procedures and strategies implemented in a systematic and methodical way to reduce the opportunity for children to go missing. In Wokingham Borough, there are already a number of these in place, such as:

- Fair Access Panel (and associated documents)
- Regular monitoring of school attendance and audit of school registers by school staff and the Education Welfare Service
- Ongoing monitoring and tracking of children excluded from school
- Monitoring of pupils' transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3
- Monitoring of children on the Elective Home Education register
- Monitoring of 'Looked After' children through the Virtual School
- Multi-agency meetings (FAP monthly, CME Meetings 1 x every ½ term, Early Help Hub weekly) to discuss pupils causing concern
- Education Welfare Service liaison with GRT Advisory Teacher
- Advice to schools about when a child's name can be removed from the school roll

## 3. Children at particular risk of missing education

There are many reasons why a child may become missing from education.

- **Pupils at risk of harm/neglect** – children may be missing education because they are suffering from harm or neglect. Where this is suspected, schools should follow Wokingham Borough Council's child protection and safeguarding procedures. If there is concern about the safety of a child contact numbers are in **Appendix 2**.
- **Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Families** – Research has shown that children from these families can become disengaged from education, particularly during Key Stage 3 & 4. It is therefore vital that schools notify the LA when a GRT pupil leaves the school without identifying a new destination school so that continuity of education can be facilitated. Wokingham Borough Council monitors the movement of GRT families through housing, tenant services, the police and TES (Traveller Education Support Services). Support to the families to identify and speed school applications including appeals is paramount to cause minimum disruption to GRT pupils' education. When possible dual registration with other schools will be used as will the use of electronic or distance learning packages where available.
- **Families of Service Personnel** – Families and members of the Armed Forces are likely to move frequently – both in UK and overseas and often at short notice. Schools and/or the Education Welfare Officer will contact the MOD Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) on 01980 618244 for advice on making arrangements to ensure continuity of education for children when the family moves.
- **Missing Children/Runaways** – children who go missing or run away from home or care may be in serious danger and are vulnerable to crime, sexual exploitation or abduction as well as

missing education. If there is concern about the safety or welfare of a child contact numbers are in **Appendix 2**.

- **Children and Young people supervised by the Youth Justice System** – Children who have offended or are at risk of doing so are also at risk from disengaging from education. The Youth Offending Service (YOS) is responsible for supervising those young people (aged 8-18). The TOS work with the named CME Officer to ensure that children are receiving, or return to, appropriate full time education. Where a young person was registered at a school prior to custody, the school may keep the place open for their return. The YOS have regular site of the CME register and inform the CME Officer of any children not at school or receiving an education. To tighten this process, the Education Welfare Service has a representative at the Risk Sharing Forum at the YOS to aid early identification.
- **Children who cease to attend school** – Where the reason that a child stops attending a school is not known, Wokingham Borough Council will investigate the case and ensure that the child is receiving suitable education
- **Children of new migrant families** – Children of new migrant families may not have a fixed address or may have arrived into a local authority area without the authority becoming aware, therefore increasing the risk of children missing education.

#### **4. Identification of Children Missing Education**

The Officer responsible for CME will maintain a list of children known to be missing from education. Children who are not receiving an education are normally identified in one of the following ways:

- Notification from an individual or an agency
  - o A referral is received by the LA from an agency or establishment advising of a child thought to be missing education. The form to be used is available on the school hub.
  - o Notification from EHE Officer that education is not suitable or there is no evidence of education
  - o Notification from another LA of a child or children who have moved into the area
  - o Contact from a member of the public
  - o Through requests from other LA's via S2S
  - o Monthly notification from the data team of S2S pupils with the code XXXXXX
- Reports from the LA's educational database, identifying those children known to the LA but without a school place as follows:
  - o Identification through the application process as part of the transition phase or first time admissions who have not started at the allocated school
  - o Where a school place has been refused and no alternative place has been requested

o Where parents have gone to appeal for a particular school place and no alternative is in place has been sought

- Schools and Education Welfare identify children who are removed from a school roll and who do not have a current educational placement
- Schools will identify pupils who have missed 20 consecutive days education without justifiable reason and notify the LA

## 5. Process of Referral

The Identification, Referral and Tracking Guidance (2003) requires all local authorities to have a named individual, responsible for receiving details of children found missing from education and for facilitating support for them through the most appropriate agencies.

Referrals are made using the CME referral form (**located on the Wokingham Schools Hub**) in conjunction with the Missing Pupil Form and School Exit Form, as appropriate. Further forms are available on the WBC School's Hub. Forms must be sent securely to [CME@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:CME@wokingham.gov.uk)

The named officer responsible for Children Missing Education in Wokingham Borough Council is:

Melissa Brotherton – [CME@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:CME@wokingham.gov.uk)  
Education Welfare Officer  
Brambles Children's Centre, Budes Gardens  
Wokingham  
Berkshire  
RG41 1PX

The chair of the CME ½ termly meetings is:

Shan Ratcliffe  
Virtual School Head teacher  
Highwood Annexe

Each case is looked at by the LA on an individual basis by the officer responsible for CME with case discussions at ½ termly CME meetings. An action plan template is located on the WBC school's hub.

- Make contact with the parent, relatives and neighbours using known contact details;
- Check local databases within the authority;
- Check School2school (S2S) systems;
- Follow local information sharing arrangements and where possible make enquiries via other local databases and agencies e.g. those of housing providers, school admissions, health services, police, refuge, Youth Justice Services, Children's Social Care and HMRC;
- Check with UK Visas and Immigration and Border Force;
- Check with agencies known to be involved with the family;
- Check with local authority and school from which child moved originally, if known;
- Check with any 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);
- Home Visits made by appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessment and if appropriate make enquiries with neighbours and relatives;
- Support for the parents to make an application for a school place;
- Referral to the FAP/Early Help Hub for support for the child;

- Issuing 15 day notice of 'suitable' education
- Use of enforcement measures for non-school attendance
- Work closely with EHE Officer and attend all RAG meetings

The role of the CME Officer is to:

- Work with partner agencies to identify, track and ensure children are receiving an education
- Work with families to improve attendance and access to education
- Make reasonable enquiries to ascertain the location of the pupil
- Administer 'school exit forms'
- Establish the identities of children who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise
- Partner in producing robust policies and procedures
- Review policy and procedures
- Communication with schools regarding new regulations and guidance
- Maintain the CME register
- Liaise with CME Officers in other LAs'
- Report to the LSCB and SLT once a year
- Attend and support chair at CME Meetings

## **6. Identification of available Provision and Places**

There are a number of panels and provisions available to discuss pupils who are missing education:

- FAP – see FAP protocol located on the WBC school's hub
- Escalation of individual cases to the CSSLT
- Pupil Referral Unit
- Neighbouring LAs
- SEND panel

## **7. Multi-Agency meetings**

The WBC EARLY HELP HUB is a multi-agency panel which meets weekly, usually on a Wednesday, to discuss assessments of children causing concern or in need of early intervention. The meetings are attended by representatives of the service areas listed below, as required:

- Education Welfare Service (EWS)
- Children Social Care which would include the early intervention social worker (CSC)
- Integrated Early Help
- Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Anti-Social Behaviour and families First
- Health (Health Visitor/Midwife)
- School representative as appropriate
- SMART (children and young person's substance misuse service)
- Police

## **8. Schools responsibilities**

Schools have a very important role in the prevention of children missing from education.

- It is the responsibility of schools to ensure that the School Admissions Team is advised of starters and leavers (posted to S2S) and by using the 'School Exit Form' sent to [cme@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:cme@wokingham.gov.uk) at non-standard transition points. An electronic

Common Transfer File (CTF) of the pupil's records should be generated and sent to the new school within 15 days via S2S. This does not apply to pupils transferring between Wokingham LA Schools which is monitored by Admissions.

- **All schools** (including academies and independent schools) must notify the LA 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 (Annex A, **See Appendix 3**). This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points.
- When removing a pupil's name, the notification to the LA must include: (a) the full name of the pupil, (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, and (e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (ANNEX A, **See Appendix 3**).
- Schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the LA, before deleting the pupil's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii) (Annex A, **See Appendix 3**).
- **All schools** must also notify the LA **within five days** of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school – unless the LA requests that such returns are to be made.
- When adding a pupil's name, the notification to the LA must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil.
- Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.
- Schools must monitor attendance through their daily registers and will inform the LA of pupils who fail to attend regularly or have missed 10 days or more without permission
- Schools must arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion

The Criteria for schools making a CME referral are:

- Have the school exhausted initial investigations and enquiries?
- Have the school notified EWS of the pupil?



- Have the school completed a CME Referral Form and a Pupil Missing Education Form and emailed to CME@wokingham.gov.uk?
- Where a pupil has a statement of special educational needs or an EHC Plan the SEN Team must have been notified?
- Have Children's Social Care been made aware if actively involved?

**Failure to register following enrolment** – When a child is expected to attend at point of transition or at any other time but does not attend the school should attempt contact with the parents by telephone and letter in the first instance. If after 5 days no contact has been made, the school should then check with WBC Admissions Department to ascertain if the child has been registered elsewhere. If the child has not been registered elsewhere, after 10 days the school should inform the Education Welfare Officer and the Officer for Children Missing Education to obtain advice and work jointly to ascertain the education provision of the young person. The pupil **SHOULD NOT BE REMOVED FROM ROLL** until it has been established with the CME Officer or Education Welfare that the criteria have been met.

In the event of parents informing the school, in writing, that they are removing the child to educate at home the school should contact Alison Pennicott who will take appropriate action as set out in the Elective Home Education procedure. (See **Appendix 4** for contact details and Policy & Procedures for EHE)

## 9. The s2s and Lost Pupil Database

The School to School (s2s) website is a secure website, which is operated by the DfE on behalf of all maintained, academies and independent schools in England and Wales. Advice about the s2s and CTF system can be obtained from Wokingham Borough Council's schools administrative support and ICT service. Model policy for school reporting and recording pastoral Information and the S2S website is available at: <https://securedatatransfer.teachernet.gov.uk/sdtlive/asp/Login.asp> and <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmin/ims/datatransfers/s2s/a0064650/school-to-school-s2s>

LA access to the S2S website requires a Username and Password.

For Wokingham LA Schools, forgotten usernames and passwords are available from Children's Services on 01189746075 and/or by email to: [perf.data@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:perf.data@wokingham.gov.uk).

See **WBC schools hub** for details on CTF and for the S2S guidance.

## 10. The role of the Education Welfare Service

- Follow up referrals regarding children who may be missing from education or who are failing to attend an educational placement regularly;
- Follow up on information on children in entertainment or employment who may not be licensed and may be being exploited as well as missing out on their education;
- Provide advice to parents/carers about education other than at school (Elective Home Education) and maintain records of those students including commissioning checks to ensure the education being provided is satisfactory;
- Follow up and/or liaise with partner agencies on all children that are recorded on the database as missing;
- Issue a School Attendance Order (SAO) where children are not on a school roll and receiving an appropriate education;

- Prosecute or issue penalty notices to parents who fail to ensure their child attends school regularly
- Issuing of FPNs
- regularly check and update the CME register and take the appropriate action as required to the circumstances;
- Attend the CME panel meetings.

#### **11. The role of Special Educational Needs team**

- Work to ensure that children and young people with education, health and care plan (EHCP), are found an appropriate placement to meet their needs in a timely manner;
- Ensure that pupils don't become missing from education and follow procedures if they do;
- Ensure that the team has a representative who attends the CME Meeting;
- Work closely with the CME officer (s) and update them regularly;
- Regularly check, and update CME register and take the appropriate action as required

#### **12. The role of the School Admissions Team**

- The allocation of school places for the residents of Wokingham Borough for starting school for the first time; transferring to junior school and transferring to secondary school;
- The allocation of school places to all children moving into Wokingham Borough.
- The allocation of school places when children are transferring from one school to another
- Ensuring children who have not been offered a place at their preferred school are offered an alternative school place and parents are given the right of appeal;
- Supporting and advising families on the process involved when applying for school places. Providing annual information sessions for parents for all of the transfer processes.
- Working with any other relevant professionals to ensure that all known children are offered a school place.
- Monitoring of applications, identification of vulnerable applications.
- Where children start school for the first time or transfer school ensure that the school is aware of those children they expect to receive and to report those who do not attend to the EWS.
- Referring to the EWS where it appears that a child of statutory school aged is not receiving education.
- Where there are no vacancies and a child is not in education, advice parents of the right to appeal.
- Advice to families on the enrolment process into WBC schools and liaison with schools to ensure that the accurate information required for the child/young person's entry is forwarded.
- Refer to the EWS if it appears that a child/young person is not attending an educational provision or has stopped during a transfer process.
- To regularly check and update CME register and take the appropriate action as required to the circumstances.
- To attend CME meetings.
- Update CME Officer on appeal outcomes, where appropriate.

#### **13. The role of the GRT Advisory Teacher**

- Identify Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller children that may be out of education.

- Assist parents, where necessary, to complete application forms and liaise with School Admissions in order to obtain a school place;
- Work with schools in order to challenge the stereotyping and raise cultural awareness;
- Work closely with the transient community (e.g. circus/showpeople) in order that children are able to access education;
- Offer training to agencies within the authority to raise cultural awareness
- Work with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children on roll to plan 'short term intervention' Support (for newly arrived pupils and those significantly behind their peers)
- Liaise with the Education Welfare Service where it is been identified that children of statutory school age are not in education

#### **14. The role of Children's Social Care (CSC)**

The CSC teams, for children and young people who meet the threshold for intervention

- Ensure that care plans include education
- Ensure that Social Workers inform CME officers, or the allocated EWO, if the child is not in education
- Ensure the attendance of a Social Care representative at CME panel meetings
- Liaise with School Admissions and CME re: advice concerning the possibility of a child missing in education.

#### **15. Moving on from CME and at risk of NEET**

The current officer with responsibility for NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) is Charmain Shute. Charmain.shute@wokingham.gov.uk

- During the summer term any CME pupils reaching the end of their statutory schooling will be identified and referred to NEET by email.
- Ideally a meeting will be held with the officer responsible for NEET, CME officer and the family to put plans into place for post 16 and offer options.
- The CME officer will dispatch the CME register to NEET once every ½ term and when appropriate, the NEET officer will attend the CME meeting when appropriate.
- The NEET officer will refer to EWS any pupil that their destination is unknown for follow up with the school or update on known interventions

Where appropriate, moving on plans will include SEN

#### **16. APPENDICES**

##### **Appendix 1**

Legislation and Guidance Children Missing education refers to.

- Section 436A & s437 of the Education Act 1996 (added by section 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- Education Act 1996 (Section 7, 8, 13 and 19)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (section 4 and 38)
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2016
- Children Missing Education – Statutory guidance for LAs September 2016
- Elective home education: guidelines for local authorities

- Children Act 2004
- Every Child Matters
- S175 of the Education Act 2002

## Appendix 2

- Referral and Assessment Team (Children's Safeguarding and Social Care Team: telephone 0118 908 8002 FREE or email: [triage@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:triage@wokingham.gov.uk). The referrer will also need to complete a multi- agency referral form.
- Emergency Duty Team - out of office hours: telephone: 01344 786 543 FREE
- Thames Valley Police: telephone 0845 8505 505 FREE
- NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) 24 Hour Helpline: 0800 800 5000 5000 FREE
- Call 999 in an emergency if a child is in immediate danger

## Appendix 3

Annex A: Grounds for deleting a pupil from the school admission register	
Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended	
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. 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.
<b>7</b>	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.
<b>8</b>	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.
<b>9</b>	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.
<b>10</b>	8(1)(j) - that the pupil has died.
<b>11</b>	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.
<b>12</b>	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.
<b>13</b>	8(1)(m) - that he has been permanently excluded from the school.
<b>14</b>	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.
<b>15</b>	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 4

EHE Policy and Procedure can be found on the WBC school's hub

Contact: Sian Biddlecombe – EHE Officer

Alison Pennicott - Administrator

Brambles Neighbourhood Team

Budges Gardens

Wokingham, RG40 1PX

Tel: 01189746193