

Children missing from and missing out on education policies and procedures

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Children missing education background

The Council has a statutory obligation to ensure that children and young people in its area are receiving a suitable full-time education. For most children this will be in a state school unless the parent has elected to educate them at home or in the private sector. Children not receiving education are at a high risk of underachieving and are also more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

This document sets out the LAs strategy and action plan to promote and safeguard the interests of children and young people. **Nothing in this document replaces the Council's safeguarding policies and referral arrangements where an organisation, school or member of staff has concerns about the safeguarding of children.**

Current Arrangements for CME

According to the DfE [Children missing education Statutory guidance](#) for local authorities last updated September 2016, local authorities should:

- Have robust policies and procedures in place to enable them to meet their duty in relation to these children, including ensuring that there are effective tracking and enquiry systems in place, and appointing a named person to whom schools and other agencies can make referrals about children who are missing education.
- Undertake regular reviews and evaluate their policies and procedures to ensure that these continue to be fit for purpose in identifying children missing education in their area.

Ealing's policies and procedures in accordance with the [Children missing education Statutory guidance](#), that local authorities may wish to use to satisfy themselves that they have effective systems in place, as follows:

Strategic management and leadership checklist

Does the local authority have a written policy - covering objectives, procedures, roles and responsibilities - agreed with partners concerning children not receiving a suitable education?

Are there arrangements to identify and provide the full range of services for children not receiving a suitable education and are they embedded? Are they translated into effective operational arrangements?

The authority has robust procedures to track children missing education (CME) including

- Those who have never accessed education;
- Leave education without a confirmed education destination
- Fail to transfer between key stages; or
- Have been withdrawn by the parent/carer from education.
- Fail to take up a school place once accepted
- Fail to engage with Elective Home Education.

Current guidance and policy documents on attendance and CME can be located on the Ealing Grid for Learning at www.egfl.org.uk/services-children/attendance-and-cme

CMOE

Data collection will be co-ordinated and analysed by the Schools Research and Data Team who collect data from all schools and academies on 1st Thursday of November and the last Thursday in April. Children under-going an education, health and care plan assessment or with a plan in part time provision or awaiting a placement will also be reported.

The data will be matched to relevant datasets including MOSAIC and the YJS Integrated Youth Support System (IYSS) case lists and the latest school census.

To supplement the two fixed data collection points, arrangements are in place to enable schools to notify us of children coming on or off part-time or alternative provision between the full collections. The data should be submitted online through the [part time / alternative provision survey](#) which is secure.

Risk assessment

An initial risk assessment will be made on the data. A child or young person will be considered at risk of being vulnerable if one or more of the risk factors are present:

- unauthorised absence of 10% or more
- Provider is not known to the LA and monitoring arrangements by the school are not yet confirmed
- a case is open on MOSAIC or YJS IYSS
- Part-time or no provision is recorded for those with SEN being assessed for or in receipt of an EH&C Plan
- from the GRT community.

Where there is a lead children's service, the Research and Data Team will feedback to that service that individuals have been identified as potentially vulnerable on one or more of the above factors. It will be the responsibility of that lead service to consider whether further action needs to be taken in the light of the information.

The child or young person's school is responsible for ensuring that there are adequate monitoring and evaluation arrangements of part-time provision or alternative providers and the educational progress and attendance of the child or young person.

All Ealing schools are required to confirm to the LA that they have robust arrangements in place to monitor and quality-assure any commissioned Alternative Provision placements made.

The LA asks every school to return a form confirming whether they make any placements, how many if any and that they are satisfied with the quality of the provision, with regard to the quality of the education and to safeguarding; that there are arrangements in place to monitor each pupil's attendance and progress; that the school is regularly monitoring and reviewing the need for, and appropriateness of, each placement; that the parent/carer(s) of pupils in alternative provision placements are fully informed and that the pupil's views have been heard. This is circulated in the second half of the Autumn term each year and responses followed up and recorded. Guidance on QA good practice is provided.

Children with 10% or more of unauthorised absence, are reported to the School Attendance Team at regular link meetings and are reviewed with schools annually through the Service Level Arrangement in conjunction with Attendance Benchmarking Data.

We also have an Automatic Pupil Feed (APF) system in place with some schools, which is also providing data on attendance and our leavers and Joiners.

Is there regular monitoring of the processes/numbers by senior management and lead members? The following arrangements have been agreed by the Children's Services Leadership Team. These arrangements are meant to complement and strengthen the existing responsibilities of all professionals have towards children in their care.

The Assistant Director Schools Planning & Resources will meet termly with the CME Officer and CME Team Manager to review numbers, trends, arrangements and processes to ensure appropriate measures are in place to ensure that children are safeguarded and attending appropriate education provision. The focus of the meeting will be on outcomes and mitigation of any risk identified on open and recently closed CME cases.

Termly CME/CMEO Forum meetings will be held to review, patterns, trends and arrangements to ensure appropriate measures are in place to ensure that children are safeguarded and attending appropriate education provision. The focus of the meetings will be on the data returns made by schools, in-year admissions, SEN, EAP (EOTAS) and the Attendance Service.

The CME/CMOE Forum group is made up of the following: SEN Assessment Service Manager and senior SEN practitioner, Principal Research and Statistics Manager, Head of Behaviour Strategy and Inclusion & Head Teacher, Ealing Virtual School, Attendance and CME Officer and Team Manager and the Assistant Director Schools Planning & Resources to review trends.

CME and CMOE will share reports annually with Children's Leadership Team (CLT), which is made up of: The Executive Director Children Adults and Public Health, Director of Children's Services, Director learning standards and school partnerships, Assistant Director Schools Planning and Resources, Assistant Director Social Care/Youth Justice Services and Commissioning, Assistant Director Children's Services, Strategic coordinator Brighter Futures, HR representative

Has the local authority identified the key stakeholders (both statutory and non-statutory) to provide information about children without suitable educational provision in the local authority area?

- Maintained, Academies and Independent Schools and Colleges
- Parents/Carers
- School Attendance Service
- School Admission Service
- Elective Home Education
- Ealing Alternative Provision
- Other Education Providers
- SEND
- Social Care
- Data Team
- Behaviour & Inclusion Teams
- Virtual School CLA
- Legal
- LAC
- Health
- CAMHS
- Police
- School Governing Bodies
- Out Borough Schools
- Other Authorities
- Border Force
- Public.

Networks and points of contact

Has the local authority identified the key stakeholders (both statutory and non-statutory) to provide information about children without suitable educational provision in the local authority area?

As above

Has the local authority provided and publicised notification routes for all key stakeholders?

There is a clear CME referral process for unknown leavers which is followed by schools and other agencies. This is published on EGFL and in our annual Service Level Agreement with schools. Referrals are recorded and actions logged on the Synergy database and monitored via an excel spreadsheet, which is held in a shared folder within School Attendance. Know leavers and Joiners returns from schools are also monitored and serve as a cross reference.

Does the local authority have a named contact point to receive details about children not receiving suitable education?

Claire Hooper CME@ealing.gov.uk

Are there clear responsibilities for this role or those to whom the duties are delegated?

Role profile is specific to the CME Officer

Information systems

Does the local authority maintain a database of children not currently in suitable education?

CME referrals are recorded, and actions logged on Synergy database and monitored via an excel spreadsheet, which is held in a shared folder within School Attendance.

CMEO cases are monitored via separate sheet shared by CME, SEN, Behaviour & Inclusion Service and the Data Team.

Does the local authority monitor the numbers of children/young people in the authority area who are not receiving suitable education, including those new to the area or the country?

Numbers are updated from all schools and academies on first Thursday of November and the last Thursday in April. Schools are encouraged to submit updates between these dates. This list is reviewed termly by the CME/CMEO Forum.

Children not in education are monitored by Admissions, CME, Behaviour Service and SEN; records are held on Synergy database and on shared excel spreadsheets.

Where we are notified of children arriving in the country who have not made applications (referrals either directly to CME from the Home Office or from other internal and external agencies) the parents/carers are supported to do so via partnership working with internal agencies including Social Care and the Admissions, School Attendance and CME Team.

Are there clear access rules and procedures to ensure fair and safe data processing?

We have an agreed Privacy Notice for our Service Area. Egress is used for all CME email transactions with schools and out of borough CME and admissions contacts. We have a sharing protocol internally with our revenue and benefits team. Where we cannot use Egress, we use a password protect system to exchange information with approved parties.

Re-engaging children into suitable education

Does the local authority have clear processes for securing the support of other agencies where it is needed e.g. for welfare or health reasons?

We hold a list of support agencies and contacts including Social Care, School nursing team, Family information service, Ealing Alternative provision (inc home tuition on medical grounds), forensic CAMHS. These agencies are available by phone, email and or referral form.

Does the local authority have an agreed process for securing suitable educational provision for children once found?

Children out of school are referred to the School Admissions Team to secure applications; where this does not result in a school place being accepted, the School Attendance Team Issue School Attendance Orders. Where a child requires SEN assessment or alternative provision, they are referred to those services. Elective Home Education are notified where a parent elects to home educate. If a child is located outside of Ealing, the CME officer refers into that borough.

Does the local authority monitor the pace at which children move into provision?

Admissions have clear and published timeframes for school offers and follow- ups including referral to CME where accepted places are not taken up or applications are withdrawn with no named provision in place.

Does the local authority have the information systems in place to allow access to up to date information concerning availability of school places and availability of places with alternative providers?

The Admissions Team hold information on Ealing maintained schools and academies and liaise with some alternative providers on availability. The Authority has arrangements to secure provision for children excluded from school or require alternative provision through its Education Otherwise than at School (EOTAS) service. Provision is provided through the primary and high school pupil referral units. There are also arrangements to commission alternative provision from other providers on the Council's approved list. *(Annex B checklist questions 1 – 9)

Effective child tracking systems

Does the local authority have systems in place to keep children engaged in the education that is suitable for them?

Attendance guidance for schools

Current guidance for schools on [policy and procedure for attendance and CME](#) (EGfL)

CME guidance for schools

Current guidance for schools on [policy and procedure for attendance and CME](#) (EGfL)

Fair access protocol

In 2014 the Council introduced a revised Fair Access Protocol to ensure that children without a school place are allocated a place as soon as possible. The FAP is chaired by the head of the high school pupil referral unit selected by high school heads. Here is the [Fair Access Protocol](#).

Alternative provision

The Authority has well established arrangements to secure provision for children excluded from school or require alternative provision through its Alternative Provision Provider. Provision is provided through the primary and high school pupil referral units. There are also arrangements to commission alternative provision from other providers on the Council's approved list. <https://www.egfl.org.uk/services-children/exclusions>

Elective home education (EHE)

In 2020, new EHE/CME (including SEN EHE) procedures were put in place for pupils who fail to respond to polite enquiries and are therefore deregistered as EHE.

Does the local authority keep a record of children who have left educational providers (school, custody and alternative provision) without a known destination?

- Schools report their Leavers and Joiners via regular returns through S2S, secure email or through the Automated Pupil Feed
- 6th Forms and Colleges report their leavers to Connexions
- Pupils with no known destination are reported via Reasonable Enquiry form to CME. They are added to the CME database and recorded on Synergy Pupil Database.

RISK- where all efforts to confirm details of school placements abroad have been exhausted, cases are closed as unresolved (termly sign off) – they are uploaded to the lost pupil's database – S2S by the schools and lists are checked periodically for new information. A note is also added to the Admissions Synergy database in case there is an application in the future.

Does the local authority keep a record of children whose parents or carers, fathers as well as mothers; it considers are not providing them with a suitable education and a note of action it has taken to address these concerns?

Parental data is captured by Admissions at the point of application. Parent records are held and regularly updated by schools and all responsible parents are engaged where rereferrals are made and details are known.

EHE - In 2020, new EHE / CME arrangement re. pupils who have failed to respond to polite enquiries. Actions are recorded on the CME Database and on the Synergy Pupil Database.

Part-time provision - Schools make regular returns to advise of their pupils on part-time provision plans or in alternative provision. The CME/CMEO Forum meets termly to review these returns. Actions are recorded on the Synergy Database.

Attendance - Referrals are made to the School Attendance Service and data is also captured through school link meetings. Records of low attenders (including Persistent Absentees) are added to the Synergy Pupil Database and case work is managed by the School Attendance Service. Our annual benchmark data reports on our Persistent Absentees by school. These lists form part of our future planning with schools at the beginning of each academic year. (Awaiting APF full launch for additional data capture and reporting).

Does the local authority follow up children at regular intervals until they are registered with a new school?

- When moving out of borough the CME Officer refers to CME in new borough and closes case once referral is accepted.
- When moving into borough or from school to school within borough, CME track child into new school OR into the Admissions application process which will then be tracked by admissions OR into EHE which is tracked by EHE.

Where a parent has not named a destination school when moving abroad, and their current setting has not been able to establish their whereabouts, they are referred to CME who carry out further enquiries. This includes consultation with social care and partnership agencies.

Where their new provision cannot be established, cases are held separately, and regular follow-ups are made via the lost pupil database in case new information can be uncovered or they have returned to Ealing. An alert is also added to our Admissions Database (and where there have been welfare concerns, social care is advised) in case of the family making contact.

Does the local authority have an agreed system with schools concerning children leaving schools that maximises the contribution schools can make to preventing children not receiving a suitable education?

We provide schools with detailed guidance on procedures for known and unknown leavers and admissions no-shows. We also provide them with templates for a reasonable enquiry form, a leaving school form for parents and letters for each stage of the CME process. These processes are reviewed annually with schools through our Service Level Agreement in

conjunction with the Benchmark Data; school improvement actions are agreed, recorded and targets set.

Does the local authority have in place arrangements to share information with other local authorities concerning children who move between areas?

When moving out of borough, we refer to CME in other boroughs and close cases once the referral is accepted. We hold a list of active national contacts and relevant staff

Information is sent securely via Egress. We have an agreed Privacy Policy.

Does the local authority support and encourage schools to transfer files via s2s?

This advice is given in the following guidance:

Attendance Guidance for Schools

Current guidance for schools on [policy and procedure for attendance and CME](#) (EGfL)

CME guidance for schools

Current guidance for schools on [policy and procedure for attendance and CME](#) (EGfL)

Does the local authority have an identified officer as database administrator for s2s?

Our current Principal Research and Statistics Officer, Kim Price is the database administrator for S2S.

Does the local authority upload to and download from the searchable area of the s2s website?

We use the searchable area weekly to upload and download data and messages