
WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, HEDGEHOGS NURSERY & SUNBEAMS CLUB



Children and Young People Missing in Education Policy

***CME Guidance and Procedures based on CHESHIRE WEST and
CHESTER guidance
People Directorate
Children and Young People Services***

***Updated: September 2026
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INTRODUCTION – OVERVIEW

Woodlands Primary School, Hedgehogs Nursery & Sunbeams Club (the school) recognises that children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, becoming victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and NEET (not in education, employment, or training) later in life.

The school recognises that effective information sharing between parents, schools and key partner agencies is critical to ensure that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving a suitable education.

This guidance in this policy follows the key principles as outlined by Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C) to implement their legal duty under **section 436A of the Education Act 2011**, to enable arrangements to identify, as far as is possible to do so, children missing education.

Children Missing Education are children of compulsory school age (5 – 16 yrs) who are not registered pupils at a school or setting and are not receiving a suitable education otherwise, and whose whereabouts are unknown.

It is intended that this document will be used as a point of reference by staff at our school.

This document provides a framework within which, consistent practices and procedures can be applied, in compliance with Department for Education Statutory CME Guidance 2025.

The school is committed to work with CW&C Children and Families Service who are committed to working with schools and settings and other key partners, to improve the monitoring and swift return of children and young people to a suitable education provision. Prompt action and early intervention are crucial when discharging this duty effectively to ensure that children are safe and receiving an appropriate education.

The school recognises that CW&C have effective tracking and enquiry systems in place and have a named point of contact to whom schools and other agencies can make referrals concerning children who are missing education. CW&C monitors the number of children/young people in the Local Authority area who are known not to be receiving a suitable education, including those reported to have newly transferred into the area. CW&C have clear access rules and procedures to ensure fair and safe data processing, in compliance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

In working with, the school recognises that adopting these procedures will also ensure that all Children's Services in CW&C maintain high standards of safeguarding and will:

1. Meet statutory duties relating to the provision of education and safeguarding the welfare of children & young people missing education.
2. Ensure that robust systems are in place within the Local Authority to identify and track children and young people missing from education, or who are at risk from doing so.
3. Ensure that monitoring and reporting systems are in place to identify, where applicable, any lead agency or key worker who may be involved in supporting a child or their family, who has been reported as a child missing in education.
4. Ensure all CW&C Schools, including our school, and Settings are fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to children missing education and will properly support and challenge, where appropriate, in meeting these responsibilities.

5. Support and assist other Local Authorities to locate their own missing/lost pupils.

This Guidance does not replace current Local and Pan Cheshire Safeguarding Procedures and mechanisms for reporting and recording child protection.

GROUPS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK

The school recognises that there are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, so it is vital we work with CW&C to ensure that judgements are made on a case-by-case basis.

Although not exhaustive, the list below presents some of the circumstances that Local Authorities should consider when establishing their CME policies and procedures:

- **Pupils at risk of harm/neglect** – Children may be missing from education because they are suffering from abuse or neglect. Where this is suspected, our school will follow local child protection procedures. However, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral must be made immediately to Children's Social Care (and the police if appropriate). Local Authority officers responsible for CME should check that a referral has been made and, if not, they should alert Children's Social Care. The Department's statutory guidance ***Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)*** provides further advice for schools and colleges on safeguarding children.
- **Children of Gypsy, Roma, Traveller families (GRT)** – Our school will inform the Local Authority when a GRT pupil leaves the school without first identifying a new destination school, particularly during the transition from primary to secondary, so that they can attempt to facilitate continuity of the child's education. The Local Authority Traveller Education Consultant and Education Welfare Service (School Attendance Support Team- SAST) can advise schools on the best strategies for ensuring the minimum disruption to GRT pupils' education, for example "dual" registration with other schools.
- **Children of Service Personnel** – The school recognises that families of members of the Armed Forces are likely to move frequently – both in the UK and overseas and often at short notice. The Local Authority CME and Tracking Officer will liaise with the MoD Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) to ensure safeguarding and continuity of education provision.
- **Missing children and runaways** – The school recognises that children who go missing or run away from home or care may be in serious danger and vulnerable to crime, sexual exploitation, or abduction as well as missing education. The CME and Pupil Tracking Officer will liaise with key partners to ensure appropriate safeguarding measures are followed.
- **Children who cease to attend a school** – The school understands that there are many reasons why a child stops attending a school. It could be because the parent chooses to home educate their child. However, where the reason for a child who has stopped attending a school is not known, the Local Authority will investigate the case and satisfy itself that the child is receiving a suitable education. In all cases the CME and Pupil Tracking Officer will liaise with relevant Local Authority Officers, where appropriate.
- **Children of new migrant families** – The school understands that children of new migrant families may not have yet settled into a fixed address or may have arrived in a Local

Authority area without that Authority becoming aware, therefore increasing the risk of the child missing education.

NOTIFICATIONS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE NOT IN EDUCATION AND REFERRAL ROUTES

The school recognises that notification of children missing in education can be received from internal partners, multi -agency professionals, other Local Authorities or from any other person who comes into regular contact with a child or young person.

The school recognises that Cheshire West and Chester work in partnership with key stakeholders and partner agencies and any other professional who frequently comes into contact with school aged children and young people. All staff in the school understand that **it is an expectation that any professional who becomes aware of a school aged child missing education will make enquiries concerning their educational status.**

In the event of a child not being on the roll of a School or Setting, or is Electively Home Educated, it is the responsibility of that professional to contact the **CME & Pupil Tracking Officer, Jen Simms**, email jennifer.simms@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk; Tel 01244 973333 to report the situation.

PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOLS AND SETTINGS

The school will promptly make “**reasonable enquiries**” as set out in the **DfE Statutory CME Guidance (Sept 2025)** to contact the parent or carer in instances where a child leaves or ceases to attend a CW&C education provision:

- without the school previously being advised by the parent/carers of an intended change of home address, or new school or setting at which the child is to attend.
- where the child has not returned from leave of absence from a holiday, within two weeks of the expected date of return.
- when a child fails to attend school after having accepted a place.

Following 10 days of non-school attendance **or** when the school or Setting have completed all reasonable checks, as set out in the DfE Statutory CME Guidance September 2025, (to include attempts to contact parents/carers, other emergency contacts etc), the School or Setting must refer to the Education Welfare Service (SAST) using the following link:

<https://earlyhelpandpreventiononline.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>

The school understands that the Education Welfare Service (School Attendance Support Team) will then undertake further enquiries to try to identify the child’s current whereabouts. This will include:

- complete a home visit within 5 working days of receipt of the referral, to make enquiries at home or with known contacts and neighbours, as appropriate.
- reference to local databases available within the Local Authority.
- contact with any other agencies or key partners known to be involved with the family.

If, at any point in this process, the child is located, the school must complete a Pupil Tracking Notification form, submitting to cmeandpupiltracking@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk ensuring that all required mandatory forwarding information, is provided.

However, if after undertaking all “**reasonable enquiries**” and following completion of the CME process (previous **CME2 Referral** to EWS/SAST), where the child’s location remains unknown, following 20 consecutive school days of unauthorised absence, the school or setting may remove the pupil’s name from school roll, ensuring completed **CME3 Notification** is submitted securely to: cmeandpupiltracking@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

The schools will then subsequently upload the CTF via s2s in accordance with the DfE guidelines.

The school understands that upon receipt of the **CME3 Notification** form, the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will investigate further with local and national key partner agencies. These enquiries may include liaison with and reference to:

- Health Agencies
- DfE data systems
- ESCR (social care) database
- CW&C Housing Benefits Agency and Council Tax
- Any other relevant government agencies
- Other Local Authorities where it is suspected the child may be living or have previously resided.

If the child’s whereabouts remain unknown after all enquiries have been exhausted, the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will post a national missing children alert via the DfE s2s Missing Pupil database.

The school recognises that children missing education may raise potential safeguarding concerns. If Schools or Settings believe a child or family have gone missing, they should NOT remove that child’s name from their school roll without first following the CME Guidance and Procedures, ie ensuring all reasonable enquiries have been made as referred to on the CME1 Checklist, referring to the Education Welfare Service (SAST) using CME2 Referral form, and upon completion of the CME process, subsequent submission of CME 3 Notification form, which must be submitted securely to:
cmeandpupiltracking@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

REMOVAL FROM SCHOOL ROLL

The school will notify the Local Authority CME & Pupil Tracking Officer when a pupil’s name is to be removed from the admissions register at a non-standard (In year) transition point under any of the fifteen grounds set out in the regulations (**Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulation 2006**) and Annex A of the **DfE Statutory Children Missing Education Guidance (September 2016)**.

The school recognises that removing a child from from school roll for any reason other than those specified above is illegal.

Using the **Pupil Tracking Notification** form, the school **must** notify the Local Authority via cmeandpupiltracking@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk **each time a pupil’s name is removed from school roll at both “in year” transfer and during primary transition to secondary education**, to report transfers to a non-maintained school (Independent); moves abroad or change of home address out of the Local Authority area; or withdrawal to be become Electively Home Educated.

Notification form CME3 must only be completed and submitted to report children and young people whose names have been removed from school roll, following 20 consecutive school days of unauthorised absence, where their current whereabouts are unknown, and when all “reasonable enquiries”, as clearly set out in the DfE Statutory CME Guidance (Sept 2025), have been undertaken by Schools or Settings, and the required Local Authority CME process has been completed ie CME2 Referral previously submitted to Education Welfare Service/School Attendance Support Team (SAST).

Additional advice can be sought from Education Welfare Service/School Attendance Support Team or CME & Pupil Tracking Officer.

TRACKING AND CROSS BOUNDARY ARRANGEMENTS

The school recognises that CW&C have in place arrangements to enable joint working and information sharing with other local authorities and key partner agencies, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (**Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026**).

If a child becomes missing from a CW&C school, but resides in another Local Authority, the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will contact the Designated Lead in the child’s “home” Local Authority to alert them of any change in the pupil’s CME status, providing key information in a timely manner.

Similarly, if a child or young person leaves Cheshire West and Chester, the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will notify the “receiving” Local Authority to report the transfer into area, and will request confirmation of arrival, to ensure appropriate safeguarding of the child or young person.

COMMON TRANSFER FILE (CTF)

The school recognises there is a statutory requirement for all Schools and Settings to transfer specified information about a pupil moving School, to the “receiving” School. Since June 2002, this information has been transferred through the electronic common transfer file (CTF) via DfE’s s2s secure system.

Common Transfer Form (CTF)

The school understands that it is required to ensure that CTF data is sent to a pupil’s “new” maintained school by the former school within 15 days after the pupil ceases to be registered at the “former” school. The unique pupil number (UPN) must be included in the CTF as a unique identifier for the pupil and each UPN should only contain information regarding **only one pupil**.

Briefly, when uploading a CTF, if the current school is unaware of where a child has moved to (home address or new school), then a transfer file using XXXXXXXX as the destination must be created and uploaded to the secure s2s site.

When a pupil moves abroad (including to Scotland, Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland), becomes Electively Home Educated or transfers to a non maintained (Independent) school, code MMMMMMMM must be selected to upload the CTF. This enables the CTF to be stored securely and is available if the child returns to a maintained school in England or Wales.

Files coded as XXXXXXXX and MMMMMMMM are uploaded to the DfE s2s in the same way as transferring files to other schools – these files must only contain the details of one pupil to enable individual pupil information to be stored or retrieved in compliance with GDPR.

The school understands that in the unlikely circumstance of a pupil joining a Cheshire West and Chester school without the school first receiving a CTF from the child's previous school, or where a parent/carer is unable or unwilling to provide information about the child's previous school, the "receiving" school can contact the Local Authority CME & Pupil Tracking Officer, at jennifer.simms@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk telephone 01244 973333 or mobile 07879 113 368, to request assistance with a view to identifying any previous education provision.

Further guidance regarding creating and transferring CTFs is available and can be found via the internet site "school to school service: how to transfer information - GOV.UK" via the following link: [Common Transfer File 20 Guide \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

ADDITIONAL PUPIL TRACKING NOTIFICATIONS

The school understands that it is **not** required to report in year transfer to other Local Authority Schools and Academies that are located **within** Cheshire West and Chester Local Authority area, as this information is collected via other systems and processes.

However, the school understands it **must** complete the **Pupil Tracking Notification form** during "in year" transfer and at "primary to secondary transition" to report the following.

- admission to Independent Schools
- moves abroad or out of area (away from Cheshire West & Chester)
- withdrawal from school roll to become Electively Home Educated.

CME3 forms are only to be completed to report Children Missing from Education, where their current **whereabouts are unknown**, and must only be submitted following previous submission of **CME 2 Referral** to Education Welfare Service (School Attendance Support Team- SAST) and subsequent completion of the CME process.

The current DfE CME Statutory Guidance, which can be accessed via the following link, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>, makes it very clear that there is an expectation on all schools/settings to '**make reasonable enquiries**' to establish the whereabouts of a child, prior to referral to the Local Authority.

Notification of pupil transfers (PTNs) **must** include the name and contact details for **at least one** parent or carer with whom the child is expected to reside with, together with full details of the current and new home address, and where known, the name of the new school or education provision where the child is to attend, even for those children moving abroad.

Schools and Settings must ensure that CME and Pupil Tracking Notification forms are submitted securely to the Local Authority using the secure email addresses detailed on each of the respective CME and Pupil Tracking Notification forms, no longer than the agreed 20-day process.

For further information and assistance, please contact Jen Simms, CME & Pupil Tracking Officer on telephone 01244 973333 or email jennifer.simms@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

What Legislation does this guidance refer to?

- Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (added by section 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- Education Act 1996 (section 7, 8, 14 and 19)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (section 4 and 38)
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2016
- Section 10 of the Childrens Act 2004

Documents/Information Supporting Guidance Procedures Relating to Children Missing Education as follows:

Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance 2026

[Working together to safeguard children 2026: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115614/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2026-statutory-guidance.pdf)

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2026

[Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115614/keeping-children-safe-in-education-september-2026.pdf)

Department for Education Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance September 2025

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2016/792/contents/made>

Regulation 4 of the Education (Pupil Registration)(England)Regulations 2006

Regulation 12(3) of the Education (Pupil Registration)(England)Regulations 2006

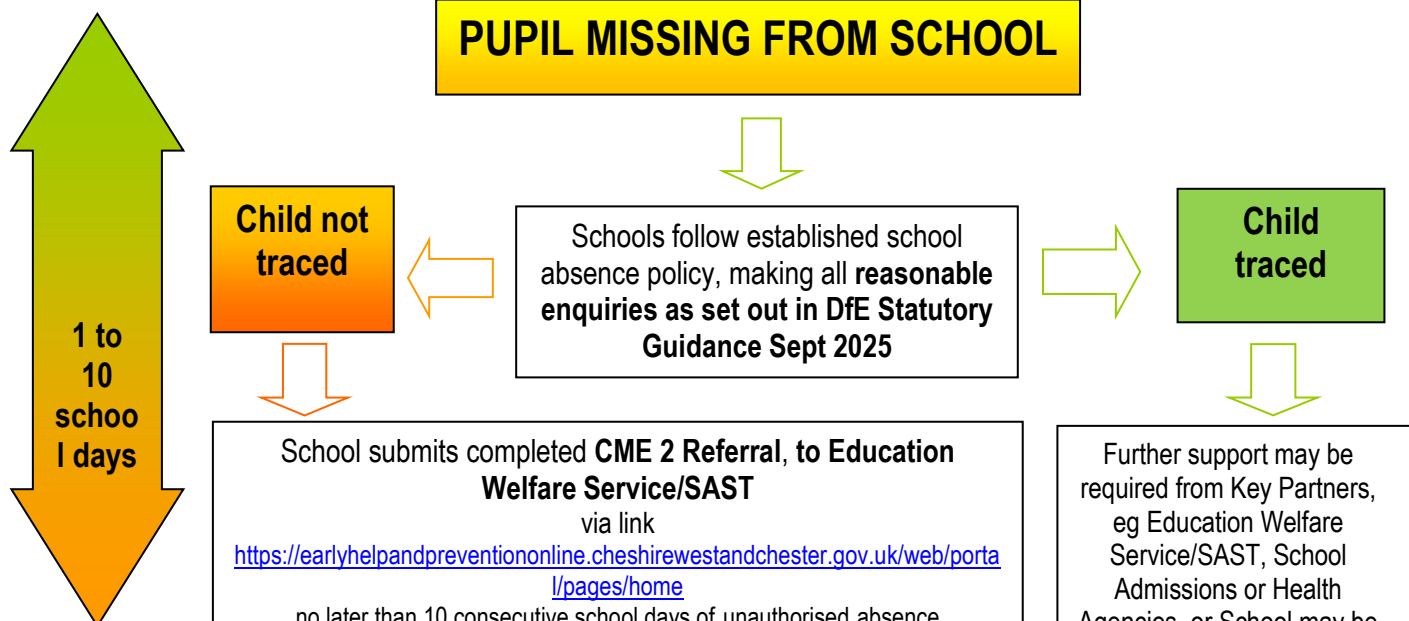
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/pdfs/uksi_20061751_en.pdf

The Prevent Duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers – October 2023

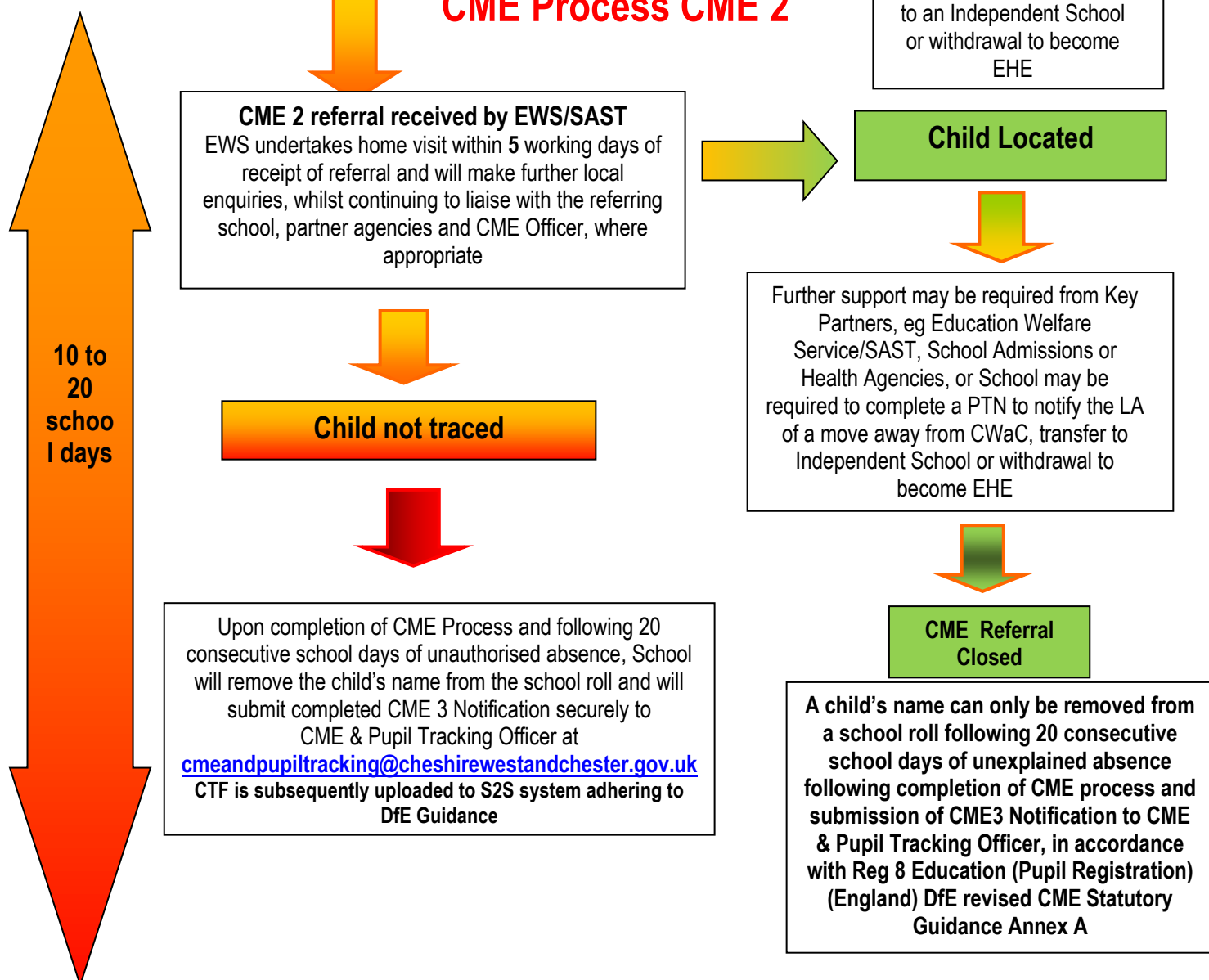
[Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115614/prevent-duty-guidance-england-and-wales-2023.pdf)

CME Process - CME1

PUPIL MISSING FROM SCHOOL



CME Process CME 2



CME Process CME 3

APPENDIX 2

CME 3 Notification received by CME & Pupil Tracking Officer

- CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will
- Review and confirm all information received is correct.
 - Review all available data systems, to include ESCR/eTAF, CYPD, DfE GIAP, CTF etc
 - Liaise and pursue enquiries with relevant Local and National Key Partner Agencies etc

If Child Located

- CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will:
- Liaise with School and all relevant professionals to advise them with relevant information.
 - Update appropriate systems with outcome of enquiries.
 - Where applicable, liaise with a "receiving Local Authority to ensure "safe" arrival of pupil.
 - Ensure school have uploaded CTF to appropriate destination.
 - CME referral closed.

If Child Not Found

- CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will:
- Discuss with relevant Local Senior Leads and if aware of any previous or current social care or safeguarding concerns, will liaise with Local Safeguarding Manager
 - Update relevant systems with known information.
 - Ensure CTF has been uploaded to Missing Pupil data system via DfE s2s system.

If Child Found

If Child Not Found

Pupil's name will remain on the CME cohort and will be subject to ongoing review until subsequently located.
Missing Pupil Alert posted via DfE s2s system

20
School
Days

CME1 Check List

For school use only

To be used for pupils who have become 'missing' in education, where their current whereabouts are unknown.

If there are any safeguarding or welfare concerns or the family are already known to social care, school must contact Integrated Access And Referral Team (i-ART) to report immediately via

i-ART@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
or telephone 0300 123 7047

Full Legal Name of Child/ren and any aliases					
Date of Birth		Gender		Ethnicity	
Last Known Address (whilst residing in Cheshire West and Chester)					
Parent/Carer Names, telephone nos & email addresses					
Name of any sibling(s) & their dates of births who may be attending other schools (if any):					

Reasonable enquiries (as set out in the DfE CME Statutory Guidance 2016) must include the following:

- Refer to internal school records and contact any other Agencies known to the child/family.
- Following attempts of contact with Parents/Carers, make telephone enquiries to all emergency numbers, sending letters and emails where required/applicable and where possible, home visit by staff member.
- If there are any known siblings at another school, check with that school to gain any possible additional information.
- Attempt contact with friends and relatives of the pupil.

After **no longer than 10 school days**, or when all enquiries have been exhausted by Schools and Settings, and the whereabouts of the child remains unknown, please refer to the Education Welfare Service, by completing CME 2 Referral form via the below link:

<https://earlyhelpandpreventiononline.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>

For schools in other Local Authority areas, please email Education Welfare for a CME2 form to complete:
educationwelfare@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

CME3 Notification

(Sept 2025)

Notification of Removal from School Roll

The Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) Regulations 2006

Please ensure this form is completed in full and emailed securely to the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer, at cmeandpupiltracking@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

To be completed each time you a pupil's name is removed from school roll when reporting a child or young person missing from education. Only to be completed where their current whereabouts remains unknown, following 20 consecutive school days of unauthorised absence, where all "reasonable enquiries" have been made and a CME2 has been sent to Education Welfare and they have completed their enquiries and advised to progress to CME3.

(PLEASE ENSURE ALL INFORMATION IS ACCURATELY RECORDED AND IS TYPED ON THIS FORM TO PREVENT ERRORS OCCURRING THAT MAY ULTIMATELY LEAD TO A BREACH IN GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION)

Name of last known school					
Full Legal Name of Child/ren and any aliases					
Date of Birth		Gender		NC Year Group	
UPN		Ethnicity			
Last Known Address (whilst residing in Cheshire West and Chester)					
Parent/Carer Names, telephone nos & email addresses					
Date of last attendance		Date removed from school roll			
Name of any sibling(s) & their dates of births who may be attending other schools (if any):					

Please indicate if child/ren is/are known as, or currently subject to:	Education Health Care Plan (SEN)	Child Looked After (CLA)	Known to Children's Social Care	Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT)	Free School Meals (FSM)	English as an Additional Language (EAL)
	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No

Please record any additional information you believe may be helpful below:

If the pupil's current location is unknown, previous submission of CME 2 Referral to Education Welfare Service/School Attendance Support Team and completion of the CME process **MUST** have been completed, prior to removal of child's name from the school roll, following 20 consecutive school days of unauthorised absence

Please ensure CTF is uploaded via S2S website, referring to Department of Education Guidance using appropriate coding XXXXXXXX

Name:

Designation:

Date:

Pupil Tracking Notification

Notification of Removal from School Roll

The Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) Regulations

2006

Please ensure this form is emailed **securely** to the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer, at
cmeandpupiltracking@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

*This form must **only** be completed to report when a pupil's name is removed from school roll following transfer to attend a school located in another Local Authority area; has withdrawn from school to become Electively Home Educated; has transferred to attend an Independent school; where there has been a change of home address to a different Local Authority area or has moved abroad.*

(PLEASE ENSURE ALL INFORMATION IS ACCURATELY RECORDED AND IS TYPED ON THIS FORM TO PREVENT ERRORS OCCURRING THAT MAY ULTIMATELY LEAD TO A BREACH IN GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION)

Name of School	
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The name(s) of the following child/ren has/have been removed from the school roll:

Full Legal Name of Child/ren and any aliases					
Date of Birth		Gender			
UPN		Ethnicity			
Last Known Address (whilst residing in Cheshire West and Chester)					
New Home Address - please indicate "N/A" if unchanged					
Parent/Carer Names, telephone nos & email addresses					
Details of new education provision					
Reason for removal (please tick <u>one only</u>)	☐ Moved to a school in another LA (home address unchanged) ☐ Moved home address to another LA ☐ Moved abroad ☐ EHE ☐ Moved to/from an independent school				
Date child's name added to School Roll		Date last attended School		Date removed from School Roll	

Please indicate if child/ren is/are known as, or currently subject to:	Education Health Care Plan (SEN)	Child Looked After (CLA)	Known to Children's Social Care	Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT)	Free School Meals (FSM)	English as an Additional Language (EAL)
	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No

*If new school is known, where possible, please upload the CTF directly to the new school via the DfE S2S website.
 However, if the new school or education provision not known, or are unable to receive CTFs, please upload CTF via S2S website referring to DfE Guidance for appropriate coding, eg MMMMMMMM, XXXXXXXX or 896LLLL*

Name:

Designation:

Date: