Breadsall CE Primary School

Children Missing Education (CME) Policy

(Missing and whereabouts not known, destination school not known or missing out on education)

A policy written by Derbyshire County Council

1.0 Introduction

The Leader of the Council, Elected Members and Officers of the council are committed to ensuring children and young people are at the heart of everything we do and our aim is to be the best we can be and deliver the highest quality of services to the people of Derbyshire.

Our vision is:

"Working creatively together to inspire and empower children, young people and their families and communities to be the best they can be: safe, healthy, happy, learning and working."

Derbyshire County Council is extremely concerned about any child missing education, not only in the way that it impacts on the individual's potential achievement, but also in relation to their safety and welfare.

2.0 Legislative Framework

2.1 The Education Act 1996

436A Duty to make arrangements to identify children not receiving education.

(1) A [local authority] must make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area who are of compulsory school age, who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

2.2 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 can be found at:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751

2.3 The Children Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children and share information. In order to fulfil the requirements of the CME Policy, the authority has agreed to work in collaboration to ensure the early identification and intervention of children

who are not receiving a suitable education. All stakeholders have a responsibility for CME.

2.4 The Department for Children, Schools and Families (now Department for Education) document "Working Together to Safeguard Children" published in March 2010 (updated 2018) says: "There is a Children Missing Education

(CME) named point of contact in every local authority. Every practitioner working with a child has a responsibility to inform their CME contact if they know or suspect that a child is not receiving education. To help local agencies and professionals find children who are missing from education and identify those at risk of going missing from education, guidance was issued in July 2004".

2.5 Section 157 of Working Together 2013 places a duty on local authorities in relation to their education functions, the governing bodies of maintained schools and governing bodies of further education institutions (which include sixth form colleges); to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are either pupils at a school or who are students under 18 years of age attending further education institutions. The same duty applies to independent schools (which includes academies/free schools) by the regulations made under Section 157 of this Act.

2.6 Amendments to the above legislation were made in July 2016 and came into force as of September 2016. DfE Guidance regarding Children Missing Education (CME) was updated in September 2016. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education

3.0 The Meaning of 'Children Missing Education'

3.1 All children of compulsory school age, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

3.2 'Children Missing Education' (CME) are

- Those children who become missing from education and their whereabouts are unknown,
- those not registered at a school and
- are not receiving a suitable education otherwise (i.e. Elective Home Education or alternative provision),

- children on part-time timetables or those who cease to attend the school where they are a registered pupil.

3.3 These children can be at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation and in later life becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

4.0 Purpose

4.1 The purpose of the CME Policy is to establish a set of principles which all schools, services and partner organisations can sign up to in order to ensure that children living in Derbyshire are safely on roll at a school, placed at alternative educational provision or electively home educated at the parents request.

4.2 The policy has been designed to help the council meet its statutory duties in relation to the provision and the safeguarding and the welfare of children. It does not replace any of the current child protection procedures or existing safeguarding procedures and therefore this policy should be read in conjunction with existing safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.

4.3 There are certain vulnerable groups who are more likely than others to become children missing education. They are as follows:

- young people who have committed offences
- children living in domestic abuse refuges
- children of homeless families perhaps living in temporary accommodation
- young runaways
- children with long-term medical or emotional problems
- looked after children
- children with a Gypsy/Roma/Traveller background
- young carers
- children from transient families
- teenage mothers
- children who are permanently excluded from school
- migrant children whether in families seeking asylum or economic migrants
- children moving out of independent schools/academies/free schools
- children whose parent(s) are in the Armed Forces

4.4 We are committed to ensuring that:

- All pupils who may be missing from Derbyshire schools, including independent schools, academies and free schools, are located without delay
- Support is given to other Local Authorities to locate missing children who may have moved into Derbyshire
- Use is made of the DfE's central School2School (s2s) database
- Joint reasonable enquiries are made with schools and designated Local Authority (LA) staff to locate children who are missing from school as soon as possible
- All children living in Derbyshire are in receipt of a suitable education in accordance with their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have
- All children living in Derbyshire are safeguarded and their welfare promoted

5.0 Tracking and Monitoring

5.1 Guidance was introduced by the DfE, as of September 2016, to ensure Local Authorities and schools make procedures even more robust to prevent children becoming 'missing'.

5.2 Derbyshire County Council has effective tracking and enquiry systems in place and an appointed named person (CME Co-ordinator) to whom schools, other agencies and the public can make referrals regarding children who they believe are missing. Schools should refer children by day 11 at the latest and earlier if there are concerns identified.

5.3 Data regarding in-year admissions and leavers is collected from primary schools on a daily basis through school2school site and is transferred onto the LA's database (Synergy).

5.4 In the case of secondary schools including academies, independent schools and free schools, notification must be given to the local authority prior to removing a child from school roll either by 'phone or by sending a leaver form securely to the CME team. (*See form CME SR2a*), *(Appendix 1*).

Weekly returns regarding in-year admissions are required to be sent to the local authority CME team securely using the joiners' form. (S*ee form CME SR2b), (Appendix 2*).

5.5 Form CME SR1a *(Appendix 3*) should be completed and sent to the CME Co-ordinator for action to be taken to establish the whereabouts of children who cease attending and their whereabouts or destination school is not known.

Schools, the Local Authority (and other agencies where necessary) need to act as soon as possible to make reasonable enquiries. (See schools net CME missing) link.

5.6 Joint working arrangements are in place with services such as Children Services, Housing, Health, Police, Youth Offending Team, Probation and other Local Authorities.

5.7 The CME Co-ordinator can also access information through the CME database (Synergy) regarding children where a destination school is not known and take appropriate action.

5.8 The CME Co-ordinator will maintain the Synergy database for updating, reporting and review.

6.0 The Role of Access and Inclusion and the Multi-Agency Teams

The Access and Inclusion Team oversee Derbyshire's vulnerable groups (in respect of access to education) by collating data on children without a school place, children who have been out of education for more than 12 weeks and children on part-time timetables. The Multi-Agency teams work closely together to identify and support these children to ensure that appropriate support is given or that children return to school in a timely manner. The CME leadership team have oversight in relation to strategy and operational practice

6.1 The duties and responsibilities of these teams include:

- Tracking CME through a dedicated CME coordinator
- Ensuring all notifications of CME are recorded correctly on the relevant databases
- Investigate relevant databases e.g. S2S, Lost Pupil database
- Coordinating casework in relation to investigating CME including working closely with relevant services and agencies to determine appropriate provision for the child
- Ensuring admissions into school through the admissions process and the authority's Fair Access Protocol where required
- Reviewing and monitoring cases held until re-engagement in education is successfully secured through the Education Planning Group – Pupils Missing out on Education
- Providing relevant reports for the performance groups and relevant boards, including the Service Directors' CME "Line of Sight" meetings.
- Hold regular CME meetings to review complex and urgent cases

- Raise awareness of the CME Policy and practice including training events for schools, school governors and partner organisations

7.0 Children for whom there are Child Protection or other Serious Welfare Concerns

7.1 The school's designated safeguarding person for Child Protection will immediately contact the Children's Services through starting point and/or the Police if any of the below apply to a child who may become missing:

- has a Child Protection Plan
- is subject to serious concerns about their health, safety or welfare
- is living in a family where there are concerns about domestic abuse, substance abuse, mental health problems or learning difficulties
- may be in contact with a person who poses a risk of harm to children and young people
- may be at risk of criminal or sexual exploitation
- is subject to a Care Order
- is looked after by the local authority
- may be the victim of or involved in a crime
- may be taken out of the country illegally (e.g. abducted)
- may be taken out of the country for an illegal act (e.g. forced marriage, female genital mutilation, child trafficking)
- is privately fostered

7.2 A subsequent referral should be made to the CME Coordinator on the same day. The CME Coordinator will check that a referral has been made and if not should alert the relevant agency.

8.0 Children moving in or out of Derbyshire Schools

8.1 Procedures are in place for local authority staff, schools and other agencies in circumstances where:

- a child moves from a Derbyshire school and a destination school has not been identified i.e. the child may be missing education
- Another local authority (LA) contacts Derbyshire County Council to establish if a missing child from their area has moved into Derbyshire
- A child is referred by school, another agency or by a member of the public (anonymously or not) because there is reason to believe that the child is not receiving a suitable education

- Children missing should not normally be removed from the school roll until they have been continuously absent for at least 20 school days **and** both the school and the LA have made joint reasonable enquiries to locate them.

9.0 When a Child Leaves a Derbyshire School to be Home Educated

9.1 If a parent/carer informs a Derbyshire school, in writing, that they are removing their child in order to home educate, the school should inform the LA's Elective Home Education Team (EHE) prior to removal.

9.2 Where a child is in their last year of school (year 11), school should allow the Elective Home Education Team to consult with the parents prior to removal. See EHE policy.

10.0 When a Child Moves Outside of England

10.1 It is our duty, whenever possible, to confirm that a child who has left a Derbyshire school has arrived at a new school safely. When a child moves outside of England, the school the child is leaving should obtain both a forwarding address for the child and the name and address of the child's new school. If this information cannot be obtained within a reasonable timescale following the move, child should be referred to CME.

11.0 Contact Details:

Any concerns about children missing education should be referred to:

Marilyn Simcock or Shell Briddon: Children Missing Education (CME) Co-ordinator
Tel: 01629 536520
Email: CS.CMECordinators@derbyshire.gov.uk

For advice:

Vincent Hendrickson: School Attendance Advisor
Tel: 01629 535756
E-mail: vincent.hendrickson@derbyshire.gov.uk

Sue Bettney: School Attendance Advisor
Tel: 01629 536521
E-mail:sue.bettney@derbyshire.gov.uk

12.0 Appendices; Terms of Reference

12.01 Children Missing Education Leadership Team

Schools and Learning
Children Missing Education Leadership Team Terms of Reference

Purpose
• To provide multi-service strategic direction in relation to Children Missing from Education and Children Missing Out on their educational entitlement.
• To determine policy and operation delivery of the strategic direction and monitor actions and impact in relation to Children Missing from Education and Children Missing Out on their educational entitlement.
• To have oversight of CME self-evaluation and CME Strategic Plan.

Attendees
Deputy Director Children's Services, Service Director Schools and Learning
Assistant Director – Learning, Access and Inclusion
Head of CME
School Attendance Advisors
Principal Educational Psychologist
Head of Behaviour Support
EHE Manager
Inclusion Team Manager
(Other strategic officers attend as invited to address specific agenda items.)
Frequency
Six weekly.

12.02 Education Planning Group Agenda

Education Planning Group

Standing Agenda

1. Welcome and apologies.

Children without a school for more than 12 weeks

2. Update on specified actions relating to children without a school place identified at previous meeting.
3. Consideration of children referred without a school place.
4. Monitoring of the list of children waiting for a school place and service comments.

Children not accessing their full-time educational entitlement (part-time timetables)

5. Update on children identified at the last meeting.

6. Monitoring of current children identified from school returns prioritised as follows:
• no service involved;
• with less than 12 hours per week;
• no plan to return.

(These will be monitored in the following order by service: SEND; Virtual School; Support Centre; OOST; IPT; BSS; EP; MAT.)

7. AOB.

12.03 CME Service Director “Line of Sight” Meeting Agenda

CME Service Director
“Line of Sight” Meeting

Agenda

1. Apologies.

2. Matters arising.

3. Monitoring of children without a school place (WASP).

4. Children not accessing 20 hours education for more than 12 weeks – EHCP, LAC, YOT

5. Children missing (from) education; including appropriate sign off and closing of cases.

6. AOB.