

Children Missing Education

Policy and Procedures

Guidance and supporting information for schools, Academies, Free Schools and partner agencies within Peterborough City Council

Updated
Issued **January 2025**

Contents

Introduction	Page 4
Children Missing Education (CME) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is a child missing in education? (CME) • Reasons why children are missing education • Children most at risk of missing education • Migrant worker and Asylum children 	Page 5
Identifying children missing education and at risk of becoming CME <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is responsible? • Who might report a child as CME? • Responsibility of the Local Authority • Role of the CME Strategic Officer • Role of the CME Tracking Officer • Role of the CME Monitoring Officer • Role of the School Admissions Team • Other duties and powers of the Local Authority • Responsibility of Schools • Responsibility of Parents 	Page 7
Notification and Referral <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of Referral • Procedures in response to a CME referral • Referrals from Schools • Referrals from other Local Authorities • Referrals to other Local Authorities • Cases where tracked children have not been found • Working with stakeholders and Information Sharing 	Page 12
Movement of Children	Page 16
Common Transfer File (CTF)	Page 16
Registers: circumstances for removal from school roll <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deletions from registers • Long Term Absence 	Page 17
Definitions	Page 19
Useful contacts	Page 20
Letters 10 Day After Offer Letter 20 Day After Offer Letter 20 Day Absence Letter	CME Letter 1 CME Letter 2 CME Letter 3

INTRODUCTION

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a good education which will help them shape their own futures. Children Missing Education (CME) are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse and exploitation, and becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) later on in life.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on all Local Authorities to make arrangements to identify Children Missing Education in their area. The duty applies to all children and young people of **compulsory school age** who are not on a school roll and who are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than at school. This includes children and young people who are educated at home, in private education, or in alternative education provision. It does **not** apply to children and young people who are registered at a school but failing to attend. The duty to identify children missing education reinforces existing duties placed upon schools to monitor attendance for pupils registered at their school.

If a child or young person is receiving an education, not only do they have the opportunity to fulfil their potential, but they are also in an environment that enables local agencies to safeguard and promote their welfare. If a child goes missing from education they could be at risk of significant harm.

This policy sets out how the Local Authority (LA), schools and other partner agencies will ensure that all children and young people who are deemed to be missing from, or at risk of going missing from, education are identified, tracked and supported back into education quickly. Local circumstances and the structure of the LA dictates how functions are delivered and these procedures have been written to assist all professionals who work with children and families in meeting their responsibilities with regards to children missing from education.

The Children Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children and to share information. This principle underpins this policy and there is an expectation that all agencies will work together to ensure that all children are safeguarded and do not “slip through the net” and become missing.

In order to safeguard children it is important that all practitioners understand the procedures and their responsibilities regarding CME. The document will be made available to all professionals and agencies, placed on the Council Intranet and Websites. All staff will be encouraged through training and briefings to implement the procedures into everyday working and seek advice where needed. An effective CME strategy will be an important contribution towards meeting the needs of the diverse local community. Resolving children out of education situations will enable them to have access to universal services and increase opportunities for them to realise their potential

The policy does not replace any part of the existing Child Protection or Safeguarding procedures that already exist within PCC. All existing procedures and reporting, referral and recording mechanisms in relation to child protection must be followed at all times

If, at any time in the procedures detailed in this document, a child is considered to be at risk of harm, the person with the concerns **must** make an **immediate** referral to Children's Social Care in line with Peterborough Safeguarding Board Procedures.

These can be found at:

<https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/>

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION (CME)

Who is a Child Missing in Education?

A child is classed as CME if he or she is;

- Of compulsory school age **and**
- not on a school roll **and**
- not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at school, eg, at home, privately or in an alternative provision.

This might be;

- a child who has arrived at PCC from another LA, another country or after leaving a custodial establishment;
- a child who has left private schooling or Elective Home Education (EHE) and wishes to enter the school system;
- a child who is deemed not to be receiving a suitable education whilst EHE.
- a child who has de-registered without providing a forwarding education provision.

CME also includes those children who are **missing** (family whereabouts unknown) and are usually children who are registered on a school roll/alternative provision but not attending.

This might be:

- a child who has not taken up an allocated school place as expected;
- a child who is not at their last known address;
- a child who has left school suddenly and the destination is unknown.

Reasons why Children are Missing from Education

Children only go missing if there is no systematic process in place to identify them and ensure that they re-engage with appropriate provision.

It is acknowledged that PCC experiences high mobility amongst its population. Consequently, without an appropriate local authority intervention there is the potential for significant numbers of children to be at risk of becoming CME or disappearing all together from education provision and contact with the professionals able to support them. Our aim is to ensure that these children and young people continue to have access to universal services and remain safe.

There are a number of reasons why a child or young person ceases to engage with or goes missing from education. Below are some examples. This is by no means an exhaustive list.

- Failure to start appropriate provision and therefore never enter the educational system (children who leave a pre-school provider but give no destination school may be particularly difficult to locate owing to the fact that they are not of statutory school age);
- Ceasing to attend educational provision, for example exclusion or withdrawal from school;
- Failing to complete transition between phases of education e.g. Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 or entry into Secondary school;
- Being part of highly mobile families;
- Personal reasons including disengagement on the part of pupils or parents/carers.

- Having a family/carer that does not alert the local authority to the fact they are resident in Peterborough or do not know how to access education provision
- Being placed in Peterborough by other local authorities without notification e.g. temporary housing, safety move and witness protection schemes
- Parents who are offered a school which is not a preference and decline the offer of the school

In addition to the above there are groups of children/young people who are deemed to be vulnerable and therefore could be at increased risk of missing education.

Children most at risk of missing education

Some children who experience certain life events may be more at risk of being missing from education. These might include:

- Children of homeless families, perhaps living in temporary accommodation, houses of multiple occupancy or Bed and Breakfast accommodation;
- Children living in women's refuges;
- Children with a history of poor attendance/behaviour;
- Children in new immigrant families who are not yet established in the UK and may not have fixed addresses;
- Children from families who are highly mobile i.e. who have experienced high levels of mobility between different education providers;
- Young people known to Youth Justice;
- Children who have a history of running away from home;
- Children with long-term medical or emotional health problems;
- Unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees, or the children of asylum seeking families;
- Young carers;
- Teenage parents;
- Children who have been identified as at risk of sexual and/or criminal exploitation;
- Children who have been identified as at risk of becoming radicalised

Migrant Worker and Asylum Children

In Peterborough we have significant numbers of EU migrant worker children. These families are highly transient, therefore comprehensive information, including accurate contact information, about the child and parent/carer should be maintained for every child. Any Children Missing Education referral should include all information held about the child and parent/carer.

IDENTIFYING CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION AND AT RISK OF BECOMING CME

Who is responsible?

There is a fundamental principle that all officers of the Local Authority and other partner agencies have a level of responsibility around the issue of children missing education. If anybody is aware of any child, or young person, who does not appear to be accessing education appropriately they should make a CME referral. This may result in referrals being made for children and young people already known and on a school roll. However, given concerns around the safeguarding and welfare of this group of children, this is more beneficial than not receiving notification.

It is important that all agencies and practitioners working with children recognise their responsibilities regarding CME and the implications for safeguarding children. It is the responsibility of each and every individual to ensure that children are re-engaged in education provision as a matter of priority. The cost of not identifying a child as CME or notifying the appropriate professionals and responding quickly can be very high.

There is a network of professionals and interested parties who can contribute to the identification of this potentially extensive group of children who might end up CME. Colleagues in agencies working with children and families should be alert to any children of statutory school age (5-16) who appear to be out of education.

Who might report a child as CME?

Anyone concerned that a child is missing from education can make a CME referral to the CME Tracking Officer.

Most referrals come from:

Schools:

- If a child has failed to register following an offer of a school place
- If a child has missed 10 or more days of school without suitable explanation; or,
- If a child has suddenly disappeared and attempts to contact the family have failed (phone calls, emails, texts and home visits (where possible))
- If a parent refuses an offer of a school place and access to no alternative educational provision is identified for the child.

CME Officer from another LA:

If it is believed a child has moved to PCC from their LA.

Parent/carer:

If their child has been permanently excluded and is not receiving alternative educational provision; or
Permanent exclusion where the offer of alternative provision or managed move has been refused.

Social Worker:

If a child is new to the area or presents with concerns around education or non-engagement in education provision and there are concerns about the family's ability to secure suitable education provision.

Peterborough NHS Trust:

If a child is treated and no educational provision is indicated by the parent/carer.

Police:

- If a child has been involved in criminal activities and identified as not accessing education.
- If a child is at risk of significant harm and identified as not accessing education.

Other professionals:

If a child is registered as Elective Home Education (EHE) but not accessing education or engaging.

Responsibility of the Local Authority

All Local Authorities must have: *'A named individual responsible for receiving information about children of compulsory school age in their area who may not be receiving a suitable education at school or otherwise...'*

PCC has a named Children Missing Education Officer who has responsibility for carrying out the Local Authority duties in accordance with S436A of the Education Act.

The CME Team maintains a list of Children Missing Education.

PCC employs officers whose responsibilities include the identification and support of children missing from education.

These officers include:

- Admissions & Attendance Manager
- CME Tracking Officer
- CME Monitoring Officer

The CME officers also work proactively with parents, internal and external professionals and other relevant bodies to identify those children not in receipt of a suitable education and to identify additional support to assist in securing a suitable education for these children. This may include identifying and securing alternative education provision and/or referrals to:

- Early Help Services
- Children's Social Care Services
- Other Local Authorities and external agencies

The Local Authority MACE and NEET/CME Operational Groups, meet on a monthly basis to review/share information about individual children and to identify any policy and procedural issues arising.

Role of the Admissions & Attendance Manager – CME

- To lead on all areas of Children Missing Education
- To develop policies for CME in the Local Authority.
- To manage & provide supervision including meetings to discuss caseloads of the CME Officers

The role of the CME Tracking Officer (where child's whereabouts unknown)

The CME Tracking Officer:

- Maintains a list of all children in the authority who are known not to be on a school roll or whose whereabouts cannot be established;
- Tracks all statutory aged pupils who leave a PCC maintained school and do not automatically transfer to another school;
- Liaises with partner agencies (e/g. health, housing, DWP, HMRC etc.) other LAs and schools across and beyond the UK to track pupils who may be missing from education;
- Acts as the first contact for all schools in respect of all children not known to be on a school roll or whose whereabouts cannot be established.
- Prepares CME reports including analysis of referrals by source, gender, age etc. along with outcomes of CME casework and presents to the Admissions & Attendance Manager and the relevant Head of Service on a monthly basis. Reports may also be required to be presented to Children's Services Departmental Management Team, Service Director for Education and / or Peterborough Safeguarding Children's Board as appropriate

The role of the CME Monitoring Officer (where child's whereabouts are known)

The CME Monitoring Officer:

- Is responsible for engaging parents of children whose whereabouts are known but are missing from education, e.g. not yet taken up a school place offered by the school admissions team identified through fortnightly reporting; and also supporting children that have been tracked back to education quickly;

- Deals with all declined offer of places referred by the schools/education provision or Admissions or EHE Teams where the whereabouts of the children are known and maintains a list of known children database;
- Carries out home visits, where appropriate, in order to ascertain the authenticity of families and the family unit or to establish whether the family are still residing at the address;
- Maintains regular contact with the parents/carers and monitors those children until they are registered on the roll of a new school or alternative provision;
- Makes appropriate referrals to other agencies to support the family and get the children in school.
- Is the point of contact for all Gypsy, Roma and Traveller cultural and community enquiries regarding school places
- Notify the NEET team about Year 11 pupils who are CME so that they can offer careers guidance and post 16 information, advice and guidance to those children

Set of Actions by CME Officers

The following actions will be completed and recorded by the CME Team and will be subject to half-termly audit, for each child/young person who leaves the area without a known and confirmed address, or new school:

- Open an “involvement” on the CME database;
- Liaise with the referrer;
- Check local databases within the LA
- Use protocols to allow searches to be made on other local databases e.g. housing, health, police and social care, Notify, DWP, HMRC etc.
- Check with agencies known to be involved with family
- Check with LA from which child moved originally
- Check with any LA to which a child may have moved (see below)
- Make a home visit(s) and make enquiries with neighbour(s)
- Feedback enquiry outcome to school & inform the Admissions Team
- If appropriate, agree off roll procedures with the school including S2S CTF, Lost pupils database.

Where a school name is provided it is the responsibility of the local authority to contact the school or ask the school to make contact with a potential new school.

A case is closed when the relevant CME Officer has confirmation that the child is in receipt of a suitable education or, in cases where it has been confirmed, a child has moved out of the area. The CME Tracking Officer will refer to the CME Officer of that authority either by phone or secure email.

Other Duties and powers of the Local Authority

The local authority can use other duties and powers to support their work on CME. These include:

- Providing suitable full-time education to permanently excluded pupils from the sixth school day of exclusion;
- Safeguarding children's welfare, and discharging the duty to cooperate with other agencies in ensuring children's safety;
- Serving notice on parents requiring them to satisfy the LA that their child is receiving suitable education when it comes to the local authority's attention that a child might not be receiving such education;
- Issuing School Attendance Orders (SAOs) on parents who fail to satisfy the LA that their child is receiving suitable education, and in the opinion of the local authority it is appropriate that the child/young person should attend school;
- As a last resort, following legal processes as set down in Section 437 (Education Act 1996) for those parents/carers that do not comply with an SAO issued by the LA;
- Prosecuting or fining parents who fail to ensure their school-registered child attends school regularly;
- Applying to Court for an Education Supervision Order (Section 36, Children's Act 1989) for a child who is not receiving a satisfactory education.

Responsibility of Schools

Schools are key players in reducing the number of children missing education and enabling all partners to respond to those at risk of becoming CME. Schools safeguard children from harm and ensure they remain engaged in education provision with access to universal services and support by;

- following the regulations relating to admission and attendance registers;
- completing off roll procedures in line with guidance & procedures;
- ensuring absences are promptly followed up;
- ensuring education provision is prioritised during admission arrangements;
- developing reintegration strategies following long term absence or exclusion.

New Department for Education CME regulations issued in September 2024 require all schools (including academies and free schools), in addition to existing duties, to:

1. Notify the Local Authority **when they are about to remove a child's name from the register** other than at the end of its final year (Y2, Y6, Y9, Y11, as appropriate).
Notifications 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) Parent/carer date of birth or national insurance number, where possible;
 - (e) the pupil's future address and destination school;
 - (f) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admissions register.
2. Make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 9.

In the view of the authority, the following actions completed, recorded and audited would contribute to a reasonable school enquiry if a child/young person is absent from school without an explanation and believed to have left their last known address:

It is reasonable to expect that School staff will:

- Check with all members of staff who the child/young person may have had contact with;
 - Check with the pupil's friends, siblings and known relatives at this school and other schools;
 - Make telephone calls/texts/emails to any contact numbers held/identified;
 - Send a letter to the last known address;
 - Use school based staff who do home visits;
 - Consult with LA staff and refer to CME for a Contact Visit;
 - Consult with school nursing records where possible;
 - Alert school designated officer for Child Protection & Safeguarding;
3. Notify the Local Authority Admissions team **within two working days** of adding a pupil to the register at a non-standard transition point (in-year), giving all the information in the register relating to the pupil.

Responsibility of Parents

Parents have a duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age are receiving suitable full-time education. Some parents may elect to educate their children at home and may withdraw them from school at any time to do so, unless they are subject to a School Attendance Order.

Where a parent wishes to elect to home educate, they should notify the school in writing and the school must notify the LA before deleting the child's name from the admissions register.

Where the child that is to be home educated has an EHC plan, and the EHC plan names a school but the parent chooses to home educate, the local authority SAM Team must assure itself that the provision being made by the parent is suitable. In such cases, the local authority SAM team must review the plan, annually to assure itself that the provision set out in it continues to be appropriate and that the child's special education needs (SEN) continues to be met.

NOTIFICATION AND REFERRAL

It is important that staff in each agency are aware of referral procedures to the CME Tracking Officer, should they believe that a child is missing from or at risk of going missing from education. Referral is the act of notifying the CME Tracking Officer about a named person who is missing from education or at risk of missing education. The CME Tracking Officer can be contacted on cme@peterborough.gov.uk for advice and support.

The CME Tracking Officer will receive referrals where the whereabouts of children are unknown and liaise with stakeholders as necessary to ensure children missing education receive suitable educational provision at the earliest opportunity.

The CME Tracking Officer will only accept referrals after the relevant checks have been completed by the referring agency.

Types of Referral

There are two types of referral

1. Referral where the child's whereabouts are known
2. Referral where the child's whereabouts are unknown

Referrals from Schools

Child is on a school roll and has:

- stopped attending and no contact can be made with the parent to establish a reason for the absence;

OR

- ceased to attend the school and the forwarding address/new school is not known;

OR

- not returned from holiday within 10 school days of the expected date of return;

OR

- informed the school that they are leaving the city.

The school should try to establish the family's whereabouts within 5 school days and carry out all actions in section 1 of the CME referral form **before** making a referral to the CME Tracking Officer.

The school should ask parents, wherever possible to complete a 'Leaving City Form', complete CME referral form and attach Leaving City Form (LCF). Where it is not possible to get parents to complete online LCF on Learn Together.

Child has not registered at a school following an offer of a place:

There are two separate issues regarding the non-attendance following an offer:

- Non-appearance at allocated school following a transition, or in year offer – Please complete a CME referral form and place on your leavers list/pupil update form and inform the Admissions team.
- Parent has refused place offered to their child - Please complete a CME referral form and place on your leavers list/pupil update form and inform the Admissions team.

Referrals from other LAs:

When another LA contacts PCC believing a child has moved into the authority, the CME Tracking Officer will:

- Open an involvement on the database;
- Check social care database;
- Check to see if an application for a school place has been submitted to the Admissions Team or a school place has been offered.

If the child is known to be accessing education or an application has been received the CME Tracking Officer will inform the referring LA who can remove the child from their CME database.

If the child is not known to the Admissions Team, but an address has been given indicating that the family is in the authority, the CME Tracking Officer will liaise with the Admissions Team to ensure that the family knows how to apply for a school place. Unless concerns justify an immediate home visit, the initial contact with the family can be by telephone or letter.

If no address is provided by the referring LA and no contact has been made through the Admissions team, the referring LA will be informed so that it can continue to investigate the child as missing education.

Referrals to other LAs:

If a child leaves a PCC school and provides an address in a new authority but no school is known, then the CME Tracking Officer will contact the new authority's CME Officer using the LA Referral Form.

If the new authority confirms that it has an application from the family regarding the child, or a school place has been offered or the child has been admitted to school, the case can be closed to PCC.

If the new authority is unable to confirm location of the family, the case will remain open to PCC and the CME Tracking Officer will continue to investigate the child as missing in education.

Working with Key Stakeholders and Information Sharing

The Children Missing Education Team will work in partnership with key stakeholders within Peterborough to ensure positive outcomes for children and young people. The continued development of inter-agency work, information sharing and clear referral routes will ensure that every effort will be made to engage vulnerable children and young people.

Relevant Partner Agencies include:

- UK Visas and Immigration - Immigration Services
- Housing and Homeless Organisations
- Police
- Voluntary and Community Groups;
- Schools and other educational establishments
- Youth Justice Service
- Health - School Health, Accident and Emergency, GPs
- Members of the Public
- Children's Social Care
- External Local Authorities
- Other Local Authority services such as Elective Home Education, Education Psychology Service and Behaviour Support Service.

The CME Team will ensure that all key stakeholders are aware of the procedures for referral of children who are missing or at risk of going missing from education. Details of how to refer and contact details for Peterborough City Council Children Missing Education Officer can be found at the back of this document.

In order to effectively identify, track and engage children missing from education, it will be necessary to request from and share information with other agencies. Any information sharing will comply with legislation and guidance relating to confidentiality, data protection and human rights.

MOVEMENT OF CHILDREN

The number of pupils on any schools roll at any one time will vary. In Peterborough, **all** schools are requested to report on pupil movement on a weekly basis through the completion of the “Weekly Return to School Admissions Team at PCC” in addition to the completion of a CME Referral form, or Leaving City Form, as appropriate. This return should be submitted to the PCC School Admissions Team weekly - every Friday.

This information is shared with the CME Tracking Officer to ensure that all children recorded through this return as having left the school with no known destination/education provision are not missed as being identified as a Child Missing Education.

COMMON TRANSFER FILE (CTF)

The statutory requirement to send the Common Transfer File (CTF) from the previous school to the new school ensures that specific information about a pupil is transferred with the child or young person.

The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005 state that information must be sent within 15 school days of the pupil ceasing to be registered at the previous school and, where possible, should be sent to the next school before the pupil leaves their existing school unless the new school is unknown.

When to create a “full” CTF:

- At the point of normal transfer between school phases a separate file should be generated for each school to which at least one pupil is transferring. This file should group together all pupils known to be leaving and then joining the same school;
- A CTF may be generated for a single pupil who transfers schools between school phases;
- A single CTF may be generated to send details of all leavers to the maintaining LA for onward transmission;
- Where a pupil is leaving the school and no destination is known, a file should be generated for each pupil and the destination shown as LA number XXX and school number as XXX;
- Where a pupil is leaving the school and the destination is known to be a school outside of the maintained sector in England and Wales, a file should be generated for each pupil and the destination shown as LA number MMM and school number as MMMM. However, where the pupil is a child whose parents are in the Armed Forces and are posted abroad, the pupil is likely to be transferring to a Service Children’s Education School and a CTF should be sent to that school in the normal way;
- There will be occasions when a CTF has to be created for a pupil after they have left the school. This could be on receipt of a request from a subsequent school because a pupil has arrived at that school.

Common Transfer Files for XXX and MMM are loaded onto S2S in the same way as files for schools – the only difference is that these files can only have the details of one pupil to enable individual pupil information to be retrieved.

REGISTERS: CIRCUMSTANCES FOR REMOVAL FROM SCHOOL ROLL

A pupil of compulsory school age **CANNOT** be deleted from the admissions register when:

1. The pupil's whereabouts are known and the pupil is refusing to attend or the parent/carer is preventing attendance e.g. on grounds of distance;
2. The pupil has been absent for fewer than 20 school days.

The contents and maintenance of the school registers is governed by the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024** and **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024**.

If there is in any doubt as to whether a removal from roll is permitted by law, or whether the LA should be informed, the CME Tracking Officer should be consulted before removing.

Deletions from registers

Regulation 9 enables schools to delete compulsory school-age children from registers only in the following circumstances:

- The pupil has been registered at another school;
- The pupil has not continued at the school following completion of nursery education;
- The pupil is also registered at one or more other schools and the other schools have agreed the deletion;
- The pupil has a school attendance order which has been changed to name another school
- The pupil had a school attendance order which has been revoked
- The parent of a pupil has notified the school in writing that the pupil will be leaving the school to be educated otherwise than at a school
- The pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school
- The pupil has not returned following a leave of absence
- The pupil has been continually absent from school for 20 school days
- The pupil is detained under a sentence of detention
- The pupil has died
- The pupil will be over compulsory school age and will not continue into the sixth form
- The pupil is a boarder at a school maintained by a local authority or academy and their boarding fees have not been paid
- The pupil has ceased to be a pupil at an independent school or non-maintained special school
- The pupil has been permanently excluded from the school

Regulation 12 requires schools to inform the LA of the following deletions of compulsory school age pupils as soon as they become aware of the circumstances and before the deletion is made, but must be by the end of the fifth day:

- The pupil's parents have advised in writing their intention to withdraw their child to Electively Home Educate;
- A pupil has ceased to attend the school and no longer lives or boards within travelling distance of the school;
- The school medical officer has certified that the pupil's health means they will not return to the school before reaching the end of their compulsory school age: and
- Permanent exclusion.

Long term absence

Unless one of the circumstances in the regulations applies, schools cannot delete pupils if their absence is authorised. They can delete pupils who have at least 20 continuous school days of unauthorised absence. Both the school and the LA must try to trace the pupil before the deletion is made. It is good practice for schools to commence initial investigation into pupil absence in accordance with their individual attendance policy and procedures.

Regulation 12 requires schools to provide the LA with details of pupils who fail to attend regularly or have 10 days of continuous unauthorised absence and schools should refer to a Local Authority Attendance Officer to commence further enquiries.

The pupil must remain on the school roll until all reasonable enquiries are completed even if this means that the pupil will amass more than 20 days absence.

The outcome of both the school and the LA attempts to trace the pupil will dictate their next steps. Where they are unable to find the pupil, cases must be referred to the appropriate agencies. In agreement with the LA, the school should delete the pupil from the school registers and if it does so, must transfer the pupil's information to the Lost Pupil Database via the S2S website to safeguard against the child missing his/her education.

When enquiries by either party locate the pupil, action should be taken according to the pupil's circumstances at the time. This could mean, for example, accessing specialist services, dealing with a transfer between schools, keeping the pupil on the roll and treating the case as one of persistent absence.

If this process is not followed, schools will be required to reinstate pupils on to their school roll.

For more guidance, please refer to:

[Children Missing Education](#)

[The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

[Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)

CME procedures do NOT replace safeguarding procedures for the reporting of Child Protection concerns, which must be observed at all times.

DEFINITIONS

Children Missing Education (CME) refers to ‘any child of compulsory school age who is not registered at any formally approved education activity (e.g. school, alternative provision, elective home education) and has been out of education provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as 4 weeks)’.

‘Suitable and efficient’ education refers to an education that achieves what it sets out to achieve and is suitable for the child’s age, ability and aptitude and any other special educational needs that the child may have.

Compulsory school age

A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn five between

- 1 January and 31 March, they are of compulsory school age on 31 March;
- 1 April and 31 August, they are of compulsory school age on 31 August;
- 1 September and 31 December, they are of compulsory school age on 31 December.

A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the year that they reach sixteen years.

Parent is defined in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 as:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person, who, although not a natural parent has parental responsibility for a child or a young person;
- Any person who has care of a child (having care of a children or young person means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person, irrespective of their relationship).

School – for the purposes of this policy school is used to refer to all maintained schools, academies, free schools, independent schools, alternative provision schools or any education provision where a child is registered as their main education base.

USEFUL CONTACTS

CME Tracking Officer's

Floor 1, Sand Martin House, Bittern Way, Fletton Quays, Peterborough, PE2 8TY

Kelly Shelton
CME Tracking Officer
Tel: 07551 040511

Rosie Whaley
CME Tracking Officer
Tel: 07825 867160

Email: cme@peterborough.gov.uk

CME Monitoring Officer's

Floor 1, Sand Martin House, Bittern Way, Fletton Quays, Peterborough, PE2 8TY

Claire Carrington
CME Monitoring Officer
Tel: 07908 609924

Rebecca Whomes
CME Monitoring Officer
Tel: 07483 379301

Admissions & Attendance Manager

Floor 1, Sand Martin House, Bittern Way, Fletton Quays, Peterborough, PE2 8TY

Nicola Griggs
Tel: 07551 047039

Head of Service – Admissions, Attendance & Transport

Libby Walker
Tel: 07920 160244

School Admissions Team

Floor 1, Sand Martin House, Bittern Way, Fletton Quays, Peterborough, PE2 8TY

Tel: 01733 864007

CME Letter 1

On School's headed paper

Parents Name

Parents Address

Post Code

Dear Parent/Carer

Admission to (year group)

(Name of Child), (Date of Birth of child):

You recently received a letter offering you a place for your child, (name of child), at this school. Our records show that you have not contacted us to make arrangements for the admission of (name of child).

If you do not contact us by (date), i.e. 10 days from the date of this letter, this offer will be withdrawn and offered to another child. Failure to reply may result in your child being without a school place and you will, therefore, become responsible for the provision of education for your child.

Should you be unhappy with the school place you have been offered, you have the right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel for a place at the school you would prefer. However, when considering an appeal, parents must bear in mind that class size legislation states that classes **must not** contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher. An Appeals Panel must consider class size legislation when hearing appeals for reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes, where this applies.

If you have any concerns regarding the above school place or wish to discuss the offer please contact the School Admissions Team on 01733 864007 or admissions@peterborough.gov.uk. If you wish to exercise your right of appeal, please contact the Education Appeals Team on appealsservice@peterborough.gov.uk .

Yours faithfully

Headteacher

CME Letter 2

On School's headed paper

Parents Name

Parents Address

Post Code

Dear Parent/Carer

Admission to (year group)
(Name of Child), (Date of Birth of child):

I recently wrote to you regarding the offer of a school place for your child, (name of child) in year (year group).

Our records show that you have still not contacted us to make arrangements for the admission of (name of child).

I am, therefore, writing to inform you that, in accordance with point 2.13 of the School Admissions Code (2021), as you have not responded to this offer within a reasonable period of time, or in response to my previous letter, I have no alternative but to withdraw this offer. I have notified the Local Authority School Admissions Team that this offer is to be withdrawn and have made a referral to the Local Authority's Children Missing in Education Team.

If you have any concerns regarding the above or wish to discuss the availability of a school place for your child please contact the School Admissions Team on 01733 864007 or admissions@peterborough.gov.uk. If you wish to exercise your right of appeal against the decision to offer you a place at one of your preferred schools please contact the Education Appeals Team on appealsservice@peterborough.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully

Headteacher

CME Letter 3

School Headed Paper

*(Parent's name
and
last known address)*

Date

Dear *(Parent Name)*

Reference: *Child(ren's) Name(s) and date(s) of birth*

I am writing to inform you that (name) will be deleted from our Admissions register under Section 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 should they fail to return to school by the time that registration ends on *(20 school days from the date of this letter)*.

The school is permitted to take this action if your child(ren) have not returned by the date specified because the following applies under Section 9 - that he/she/they will have been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than 20 school days and

- (i) at no time was the absence during that period authorised by the proprietor;
- (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil(s) is/are unable to attend the school by reason of sickness, or any unavoidable cause;
- (iii) both the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil(s) is/are.

In line with our safeguarding procedures, all details will be sent to the Children Missing Education Tracking Officer at Peterborough City Council for further investigation.

Should you return to Peterborough you will need to make a formal application to Peterborough City Council, School Admissions for another school place for <child's name>.

If you disagree with the above action or wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact us as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher
Copy to: CME Tracking Officer