



Warrington Safeguarding Children Board

Children Missing Education in Warrington

June 2007



Children Missing from Education Guidelines and Practice

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INTRODUCTION

The Out of School Report (Ofsted 2004) estimated that there are approximately 10,000 Children Missing from Education (CME) in the UK.¹ These children either fail to start in appropriate education provision or simply become lost from school rolls and fail to re-register at a new school when they move area.

These 'missing' children are amongst the most vulnerable in our country. It is vital that practitioners in all services work together to identify and re-engage these children back into appropriate education provision as quickly as possible.

Children who remain disengaged from education provision are potentially exposed to higher degrees of risk that could include engagement in anti-social or criminal behaviour, social disengagement and/or sexual exploitation.

The purpose of this document is to describe the procedures that are to be employed within Warrington to Identify, Locate and Engage children who are missing from education.

These procedures have been written for the guidance of all professionals who work with children and families. Adopting these procedures will also ensure that all children's services in Warrington:

1. Meet statutory duties relating to the provision of education and safeguarding the welfare of children missing education²
2. Ensure that robust multi-agency systems are in place in each Local Authority to identify and track children missing from education or at risk of doing so³
3. Ensure that monitoring and reporting systems are in place in order to identify a lead agency for all children missing from education.

1 OFSTED: Out of School; A survey of the educational support and provision for pupils not in school (2004)

2 Section 14 (1), S7, S437 (1), S19 (1), S19 (4a) of the 1996 Education Act, S175 of 2002 Education Act, Circular 11/99 Social Inclusion: the Local Education Authority role in pupil support, Children Act 2004

3 DfES Strategic framework document target (2002)

How Do Children Go Missing?

Children fall out of the education system and are at risk of 'going missing' because they:

- fail to start appropriate provision and so never enter the system (e.g. pre-school to Yr 1, new to the town and no application made to school);
- cease to attend, due to exclusion (e.g. illegal and unofficial exclusions) or withdrawal, removal from roll with no named destination; or
- fail to complete a transition between providers (e.g. being unable to find a suitable school place after moving to a new LA or within Warrington).

Diagram 1.



Who is a Child Missing from Education?

For the purpose of this document a Child Missing from Education is defined as:

“Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is not registered at any formally approved education activity (e.g. school, alternative curriculum, home education), and has been out of any education provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as 4 weeks)”

Some children who experience certain life events are more at risk of going missing from education. These include:

- young people who have committed offences
- children living in women’s refuges
- young runaways
- children of homeless families, perhaps living in temporary accommodation, house of multiple occupancy or Bed and Breakfast
- children with long term medical or emotional problems
- unaccompanied asylum seekers
- children of refugees and asylum seeking families
- children in new immigrant families, who are not yet established in the UK and may not have fixed addresses
- looked after children
- children with a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller background
- children who are privately fostered
- young carers
- children from transient families
- teenage mothers
- Children who are permanently excluded from school (particularly those excluded illegally) www.dfes.gov.uk/exclusions/guidance/index.cfm

This Guidance does not replace any of the Child Protection Procedures. Existing safeguarding procedures and mechanisms for reporting and recording child protection concerns are to be observed at all times.

What is the purpose of this guidance?

This policy has been designed to help the Council meet its statutory duties relating to the provision of education and the safeguarding and welfare of children and is underpinned by the Warrington's Children and Young People's Plan.

The implementation of these procedures will be endorsed by all Warrington Schools, Children's Services, and partner agencies to help to ensure that ALL children within Warrington achieve the five core outcomes under Every Child Matters:

1. Being Healthy
2. Staying Safe
3. Enjoying & Achieving
4. Making a Positive Contribution
5. Achieving Economic Well-being

To limit the opportunity for children to go missing when they fall out of the education system, a range of systematic processes and procedures have been identified.

These include:

- procedures to ensure referrals to the Children Missing Education (CME) Officer who keeps an updated central register of all children missing education
- procedures to identify and locate children missing education through liaison with other services and agencies most likely to find such children
- procedures to re-engage those missing, with appropriate educational provision through a lead agency and action planning process
- procedures to identify children missing education through liaison with other LA and access to national databases(S2S)
- developing existing systems to identify those at risk of becoming CME
- raising awareness, through publicity, to the general public regarding CME and every child's right to an education

As CME may raise potential child protection issues, if schools believe a child or family to have gone missing they should **NOT** remove any child from their roll without following the checklist procedures and working with their Education Welfare Officer to complete the checklist form and creating a Common Transfer File and electronically posting on S2S. **(Page 11 & FAQs)**

Schools cannot remove a pupil from roll until reasonable enquiries have taken place over a period of no less than four weeks. If this process has not been followed schools will be required to reinstate pupils back on to their school roll.

If the new address of a family is known, in another area of the town, the child must not be removed from roll until taken onto the roll of another school.

Identification processes within Warrington

Notification and referral routes

A new post of CME Officer has been created to coordinate, through multi-agency work, the identification, referral, tracking and engagement of children missing education.

The CME Officer will work in partnership with key stakeholders in Warrington including Schools, Children's Services, Housing, Health, Looked After Children Officer, Connexions, Youth Offending Team (YOT), the Police, alternative education providers and voluntary organisations to develop the already existing inter-agency network so that all members are aware of systems of referral for pupils who are missing or at risk of going missing from education (**CME 2**).

The CME Officer will manage the co-ordination of the referral process to ensure that all stakeholders understand the referral procedures outlined below:

Referral from within Warrington:

- S2S Out of School Enquiry
- Email to CME Officer cme@warrington.gov.uk
- Telephone the Education Welfare Service on (01925) 442915

Referral from other local authorities/agencies:

Other local authorities and agencies use many different methods to notify Warrington of children new to the town, including:

- Letter/email to the CME Officer or Education Welfare Service
- Arrangement for the Placement of Children (LAC)(General) Regulations 1991 (Regulation 5) notification (used by Social Care).
- North West Protocol (Notification Form for LAC).
- S2S secure messaging.
- Share information at the Pupils Out of School Meetings (POOSM)

If an Education Management System (EMS) search is unproductive a referral will be made to POOSM who will then allocate the case to a named officer to investigate further.

Checking process

The CME Officer has access to various centrally held databases against which a child's name can be checked to establish whether he/she is registered with a school or an educational provider (Schools letter **CME 3a & 3b**). Enquiries directly to other LAs will be made if destinations are known. (**CME 4**). When the Child Index is fully operational this will be used in addition to those currently accessible.

These databases are:

CME Database (POOSM)
EMS – Exclusions
S2S Lost Pupil Database
School Census Pupil database
Elective Home Education Database
Carefirst
PCT data base

Database and monitoring

The CME database will include an up to date record of all pupils who are not on the roll. These include:

- International arrivals including asylum seekers/refugees
- Traveller Children
- Looked After Children arriving in Warrington
- Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) statements
- Young offenders
- Other children with no school place

A database of those children whose parents have elected to educate at home is monitored separately. Monitoring is an essential component of effective systems. The numbers and status of children in the database, the speed with which an education action plan is agreed and children's progress into provision will be reported on a regular basis. This will be in the following ways:

- Monthly to the Multi-Agency Pupils Out Of School Meeting
- Annually for wider circulation

Reports will be circulated to partner agencies and may also be requested and supplied from time to time for other purposes by other groups.

Other notification routes used to identify Children Missing from Education

Truancy Sweeps

Undertaken by staff from EWS and Warrington Police

EWOs check school registers at regular intervals.

To identify children who have left a school and a new destination is not confirmed

Telephone calls to the EWS

Referrals received from other Council Departments

Referrals received from Primary Care Trust (PCT) through health visitors, school nurses and others

Referrals received via DfES Lost Pupil Database (S2S)

DfES S2S database checked for pupils uploaded as 'missing' and checked with local records

Partner agencies and services involved in the CME referral and monitoring process

Children's Services: Admissions Team, Inclusion Team, Education Welfare Service, School Effectiveness Team, Children's Social Care

Connexions – Pupils Out Of School Lead and Personal Advisers (PAs)

Warrington Police

Other LAs

Parent Partnership Service

Primary Care Trust (PCT)

Schools

Youth Offending Team

Youth Service

NSPCC

Women's Refuge

Housing

Probation

Common transfer file requirement

There is a statutory requirement to send 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).

Detailed guidance on compiling and sending the CTF, including use of the TeacherNet website, has been distributed via LAs and is available at www.teachernet.gov.uk/s2s in the Information Management Strategy (IMS) section.

The information must be sent within 15 school days of the pupil ceasing to be registered at the old school, unless the new school is not known. In this case, a transfer file using XXXXXXXX as the destination should be created and uploaded onto the secure site. If a request is made from the pupil's new school, it should be sent within 15 school days.

Where both the old and new school have the necessary facilities the CTF must be sent to the new school either:

- through the secure file transfer service on the TeacherNet website at www.teachernet.gov.uk/s2s
- as an email attachment or file over a secure network that links schools within a LA or within a regional broadband consortium.

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIRECTORATE
EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE**

**CHILDREN THOUGHT TO HAVE LEFT THE AREA
CHECKLIST**

This checklist is to be used in all cases when it would seem that a child has moved from this area and neither yourself or the school at which the child is currently registered have been informed of either a new address or school.

Name of Child(ren):

.....

School:

Name of EWO:

	Date (s) Times	Action By	Response/Result (where appropriate Name Person(s))
1. Has the school checked possible whereabouts with staff and pupils?			
2. Check with EWO colleagues, files and database.			
3. Check Pupil Support and School Support Services database – Free Meals etc.			
4. Visit to address (es) given by school.			
5. Check with neighbours and any known extended family.			
6. Check with Housing Department by telephone and/or Housing Association/Estate Agent by letter.			
7. Enquire of the data base of children who have a child protection plan			
8. Check with agencies known involvement , eg probation, Police, GP, Health Visitor, Social Services, Youth Services etc.			
9. Contact Local Benefits Agency/Housing Dept/ Council Tax.			
10. Check with Principal Officer (Education) for Looked After children.			
11. Check with PAST Team re: possible statement.			

If having completed the above mentioned 'checks', the child's whereabouts remain unknown, notify school, attaching a copy of this checklist, stating that the child/children have not been traced and suggesting that their name(s) may be deleted from the register, as "Left Untraced". Inform Pupil Support Team and School Effectiveness and Information Management Team with a copy of this form.

Retain this completed checklist and copy letters for future reference.

Signed EWO

Print Name

Date

Signed Headteacher

Print Name

Date



Children Missing Education referral form

To be completed for children who are resident in Warrington and not on the roll of a school

Date: _____

Name of Referrer: _____

Organisation: _____

Name(s) of Child (ren)

_____ DOB _____ Yr Group ____ M/F ____ SEN ____ LAC ____

_____ DOB _____ Yr Group ____ M/F ____ SEN ____ LAC ____

_____ DOB _____ Yr Group ____ M/F ____ SEN ____ LAC ____

Full name of primary carer:		Relationship:	
Current Address:			
Name of GP:			
Contact number:			
Previous school name:			
Town/City/Country:			
Length of time on roll:		Date of leaving:	
Other relevant info:			
Any safety factors to be acknowledged when visiting this family:			
Signature of referrer:			
Completed forms to be faxed to: The Pupil Support Manager Children's Services 3 rd Floor New Town House Buttermarket Street Warrington WA1 2NJ Tel: 01925 442915 Fax: 01925 443189		Office Use Only: Date EMS checked: Date S2S checked: Lead Agency: Contact Number:	

[Click **here** to type name of Name & Address of school]

Date: [Click **here** to type Date]

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to inform you that I have received notification that the following pupil(s) are Children Missing from Education (CME).

The EMS database shows them as being or having been on your school roll.

Please confirm the current status of the pupil(s) by completing and returning the attached form CME 3b by (insert 1-week period date).

Name of Pupil

DoB

EMS Status

Yours sincerely

CME Officer



Pupil Status Confirmation Form – School Return

(Name of School) _____

(Pupil Name) _____

I confirm the above pupil is: **On school roll** **Not on school roll** (delete
as appropriate)

On school roll details

On school roll and attending Included in last School census (PLASC)

On school roll and not attending Date last attended: _____

On school roll and educated off site

Name of Education Provider: _____

Start date at this provision: _____ Number of sessions per week _____

Not on school roll details

Date removed from roll _____

Reason removed from roll _____

CME Checklist Attached

Transferred to a Warrington school Name of School _____

Transferred to a non Warrington school Name of School _____

Moved address

New Address: _____

Other Reason: _____

Headteacher's Name: (please print) _____

Headteacher's Signature: _____ Date _____



ENQUIRY FORM – MOVEMENT OF CHILDREN

<p>The children below are reported to have moved into your authority. Would you kindly make enquiries to establish if they are now resident in your borough? Where not known, please notify me as soon as possible.</p>			<p>Reply: Name of Officer</p>
			<p>Designation:</p>
<p>Enquiry From:</p>	<p>Telephone</p> <p>Fax</p>	<p>Signed:</p>	
		<p>Telephone:</p>	
	<p>Date of Enquiry 20</p>	<p>Date:</p>	
<p>Name of Children (Surname)</p>	<p>DOB</p>	<p>School last attended</p>	<p>School to which now admitted</p>
<p>Parent / Carer</p>			<p>Have School records been requested?</p>
<p>Last known address</p>			<p>Medical Records should be forwarded to:</p>
<p>New Address</p>			<p>Confirmation of current address:</p>
<p>Comments</p>			<p>Comments:</p>



INDIVIDUAL PUPIL ACTION PLAN

This Action Plan should be completed for every child missing from education by the main keyworker and a copy sent to the CME Officer. The action plan should reflect future steps being taken to ensure a pupil is reintegrated back into mainstream or other education provision.

Pupil details

Name _____ D.O.B. _____ Year Group _____

Address: _____

Name of Keyworker/Agency _____ Date of Action Plan _____

Last known School _____ Date Removed from Roll _____

Brief reason for child missing from education _____

Actions:

Target Date

Outcome

Final Outcome:

Enrolled at school:

Date on Roll:

Name of school:

Start Date:

Placed in PRU provision:

Name of provider:

Other:



Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is the keyworker and what is their role?

The key worker is not always the person making the referral. The keyworker is the person who is in regular contact with an individual child. It is the role of the keyworker to ensure the CME Officer is regularly updated on the current status of a child.

2. Who is responsible for ensuring an Action Plan is in place?

It is the responsibility of the CME Officer to ensure an Action Plan is in place for each child.

3. What do I do with a pupil's record if I do not have a forwarding destination?

YOU SHOULD STORE THE RECORDS SECURELY

PUPIL RECORDS MUST NOT BE DESTROYED

4. When can I take a young person off roll?

When the CME Checklist For Children Thought To Have Left The Area has been completed (page 11).

This document must be agreed and signed by the Headteacher and the Education Welfare Officer.

5. What is the CME e-mail address where referrals should be sent?

All CME referrals should be sent to c.m.e.@warrington.gov.uk

6. If a child is on a school roll but not attending who do I contact?

You should contact Education Welfare Officer in your area (01925) 442915.

7. When can Traveller children be taken off school roll?

Parents should let you know if they are going travelling and when they are returning. They should be kept on roll for this period. If the parents have not informed the school of the return date and have been travelling for **more than 4 weeks** and the Checklist (CME1) has been followed, they can be taken off roll.

8. What is the Common Transfer File (CTF) and when should it be completed?

See CTF Requirement Page 11 and www.teachernet.gov.uk/s2s for more guidance and information.

The CTF should be sent within 15 days of the pupil being taken off roll if the new school is known.

If you do not know where a child has moved to, then a transfer file using XXXXXXXX as the destination should be created and uploaded onto the secure site. The file should only hold information on one pupil. Pupils can only be removed from roll four weeks after attendance has ceased. This should only be done following the checklist (CME 1) and consultation with your Education Welfare Officer.

If a child arrives in your school and you do not know the previous school, contact the School Effectiveness Team on (01925) 443165.

When a pupil moves to an Independent school or a school in Scotland then MMMMMMMM is used, this enables the CTF to be stored securely and available if the child returns to a maintained school. This file should only hold information on one pupil.

Files for XXXXXXXX and MMMMMMMM 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. If in doubt contact (01925) 443165.