



People Directorate

Children and Young People Missing Education: Guidance and Procedures For Schools

**Produced by:
Education Welfare Service**

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1. Introduction

Definition of Children Missing from Education

The Department for Education's (DfE) definition of Children Missing Education (CME):

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

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority and its Schools and Settings to safeguard all children. This document sets out the guidance and procedures for children and young people missing from education and the role of the Education Welfare Service and other Agencies in meeting all statutory responsibilities. This document should be used as a point of reference by Head Teacher/Principal, Staff in School and Settings and all other professionals who work with children and young people and their families. This guidance is shared with Schools from the Independent Sector as a model of good practice within Halton. This document provides a framework within which consistent practices and procedures can be applied, following revised statutory CME Guidance.

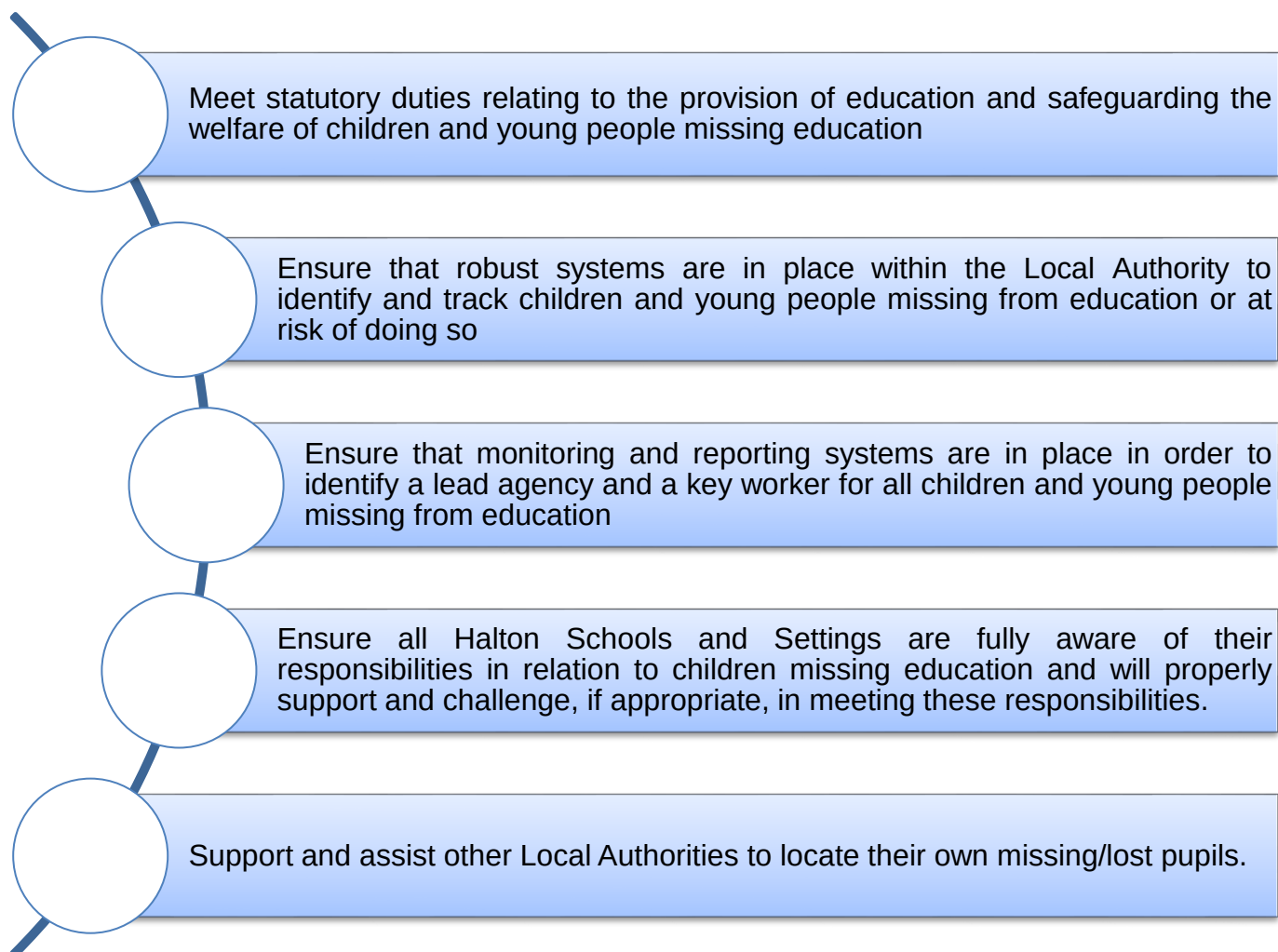
Children and young people, who are not included in education provision, are more likely to be at higher degrees of risk that could include participation in anti-social behaviour or criminal behaviour, social isolation and/or sexual exploitation/trafficking/forced marriage/FGM or at risk of radicalisation. These ‘missing’ children and young people are amongst the most vulnerable in Halton.

Children and young people who are missing from education may also be at risk of significant harm and every Local Authority has a Child Missing Education (CME) named point of contact. Every practitioner working with a child has a responsibility to inform their named CME contact if they know or suspect that a child is not receiving an education.

Children who are registered at a School or Setting (or some form of recognised alternative provision) but whose attendance is poor are not included in the definition of CME. The issues for these children will be dealt with by the School or Setting with the support of the Local Authority as appropriate.

Halton Education Welfare Service are committed to working with Schools and Settings and other partners to improve the monitoring and swift return of children and young people to a suitable education provision.

Adopting these procedures will also ensure high standards of safeguarding and will:



This Guidance does not replace any of the Safeguarding Procedures. Pan Cheshire existing safeguarding procedures and mechanisms for reporting and recording child protection concerns are to be observed at all times.

2. Groups of children and young people at risk

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education so it is vital that Local Authorities make judgements on a case by case basis. Although not exhaustive, the list below presents some of the circumstances that Local Authorities 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 schools should follow local child protection procedures. However, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made immediately to childrens' social care (and the police if appropriate). Local Authority officers responsible for CME should check that referral has been made and, if not, they should alert childrens' social care. The departments statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) provides further advice for school and colleges on safeguarding children.

Children of Gypsy, Roma, Traveller families (GRT) – It is important that schools inform the Local Authority when a GRT pupil leaves the school without identifying a new destination school, particularly in the transition from primary to secondary, so that they can attempt to facilitate continuity of the child's education. The Local Authority Education Welfare Service 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 – 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 Childrens Education Advisory Service (CEAS) to ensure safeguarding and continuity of education provision.

Missing children and runaways – children who go missing or run away from home or care may be in serious danger and are 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 school – there are many reasons why a child stops attending 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 suitable education. In all cases the CME and Pupil Tracking Officer will liaise with the wider Education Welfare Service or relevant Local Authority Officer, where appropriate.

Children of new migrant families – children of new migrant families may not have yet settled into a fixed address or may have arrived into a Local Authority area without that Authority becoming aware, therefor increasing the risk of the child missing education.

3. Notification of children and young people not in education, and referral routes

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

Halton will 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. It is an expectation that any professional becoming aware of a school aged child will make enquiries concerning their educational status

In the event of a child not being on the roll of a School or Setting or Electively Home Educated, it is the responsibility of that professional to contact the CME Officer Julie Whitehead, cme@halton.gov.uk or tel: 0151 511 7673 to report the situation.

4. Procedures for schools and settings

Schools and Settings should promptly make reasonable enquiries to contact the parent in instances where, a child leaves or ceases to attend a Halton educational provision;

Without the school being advised by the parent which new school or setting 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.

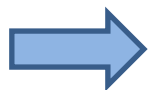
Following 10 days of non-school attendance or after the School or Setting have completed all reasonable checks, i.e. attempts to contact parents/carers, emergency contacts etc. the School or Setting should refer to the Education Welfare Service (EWS) using the Missing Child Referral Form (CME1).

The Education Welfare Service will then make reasonable efforts to identify the child's current whereabouts/destination. This will include;

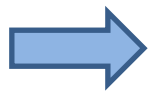
- Undertake a home visit within 5 working days of the referral, to make enquiries at home (or with known contact) and neighbours, as appropriate
- Reference to local databases within the Local Authority
- Contact with other agencies known to be involved with the family
- Checks with Housing Providers, where appropriate

If, at any point in this process, the Education Welfare Service locates the child, the EWS will refer back to the school. If the EWS establishes an actual address for the missing child in another Local Authority, the Education Welfare Service will contact the EWS or relevant Local Authority Agency, for that Local Authority to ensure the child is known.

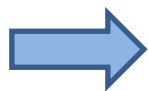
Following completion of all reasonable enquiries and where the child is still missing after 20 days of consecutive school absence;



The EWS will instruct the School or Setting to remove the pupil's name from the school register.



School or Setting will subsequently complete and submit the CME 2 form to CME Officer, cme@halton.gov.uk



School or Setting will ensure that the CTF is uploaded via s2s in accordance with the DfE guidelines.

Upon receipt of the CME 2 form, the CME Officer will investigate further with multi-agency partners, which may include;

- Health Agencies
- DfE Databases
- ESCR (Social Care) database
- Halton Council Tax records
- Relevant government agencies
- Any Local Authorities where it is suspected the child may be living or have previously been resident

If the child is still missing after all enquiries have been completed, the CME Officer will activate a national missing children alert via s2s.

Children missing education may raise potential safeguarding issues. If School or Settings believe a child or family to have gone missing, they should;



- **NOT** remove that child from their roll without following the CME Guidance and Procedures ensuring all reasonable enquiries have been made



- Follow the recommendations detailed on the School Checklist form (demonstrating the school's initial safeguarding checks)



- Referring to the Education Welfare Service using form (CME1) and subsequent completion of the CME 2 form, which **MUST** be submitted to CME Officer CME@halton.gov.uk

5. Removal from School roll

Schools and Settings must notify the Local Authority CME Officer when a pupil's name is to be removed from the admission 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) as set out in Annex A** and the revised **DfE statutory Children Missing Education guidance (September 2016)**. Additional advice can be sought from the council's Education Welfare Service.

Using Pupil Tracking Notification form, Schools and Settings **must** advise the Local Authority CME Officer via email cme@halton.gov.uk each time you remove a pupil from school roll following in year transfer (or at primary transition to secondary education), to a school located in another Local Authority area, transfer to an Independent school, withdrawal to become Electively Home Educated or moves abroad (including Wales, Scotland and Ireland) or out of area.

Notification form CME 2 should only be completed and submitted to report children and young people who have been removed from the school roll when their current **whereabouts are unknown**.

The CME 2 form must only be submitted when all "reasonable enquiries" have been completed by School or Setting and the agreed CME process has been completed (i.e. CME 1 referral has already been submitted to Education Welfare Service)

REMOVAL FROM SCHOOL ROLL FOR ANY OTHER REASON OTHER THAN THOSE SPECIFIED ABOVE IS ILLEGAL.

6. Tracking and cross boundary arrangements

Agreed information sharing protocols ensure timely notification with neighbouring Local Authorities on the management of referral for children attending schools in Halton but living in another Local Authority.

If a child goes missing from a Halton school but lives in another Local Authority, the CME Officer will contact the designated lead in that Local Authority to alert them of the pupils CME status.



Similarly, if a child or young person leaves Halton, the CME Officer will alert the new/receiving Local Authority of the reported move to confirm arrival and ensure appropriate safeguarding of the child or young person.

7. Common transfer file (CTF)

There is a statutory requirement on School and Settings to send specified information about a pupil moving School to the receiving School. Since June 2001, this information has been transferred through the electronic common transfer file (CTF) via DfE's s2s secure website.

Common Transfer Form (CTF)

The law requires 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 "old " school. The unique pupil number (UPN) needs to be included in the CTF as a unique identifier for the pupil and each UPN should only contain information regarding one pupil.

Additional pupil tracking notifications

All Schools and Settings are required to notify the Local Authority, using attached Pupil Tracking Notification Form of all in year transfers to Schools and Settings that are located in other Local Authority areas, transfer to independent Schools, withdrawal to become Electively Home Educated or moves abroad, (including Wales, Scotland and Ireland) at both **in year (non standard) transition points and at standard transfer from primary to secondary education.**

The Department for Education requires that forwarding information (new school, home address, telephone or email details) is collected, wherever possible, for children and young people moving abroad and that schools and settings should maintain contact with that family until a school place is secured for the child or young person.

Schools and Settings are no longer required to report in year transfer to other Local Authority Schools and Academies that are located within Halton local Authority as this information will be collected via other data reporting systems (i.e. school census)

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

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

Department for Education Children Missing Education' statutory guidance

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

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

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/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/ukxi/2006/1751/pdfs/ukxi_20061751_en.pdf

Keeping Children Safe in Education

[Keeping Children Safe in Education'](#)

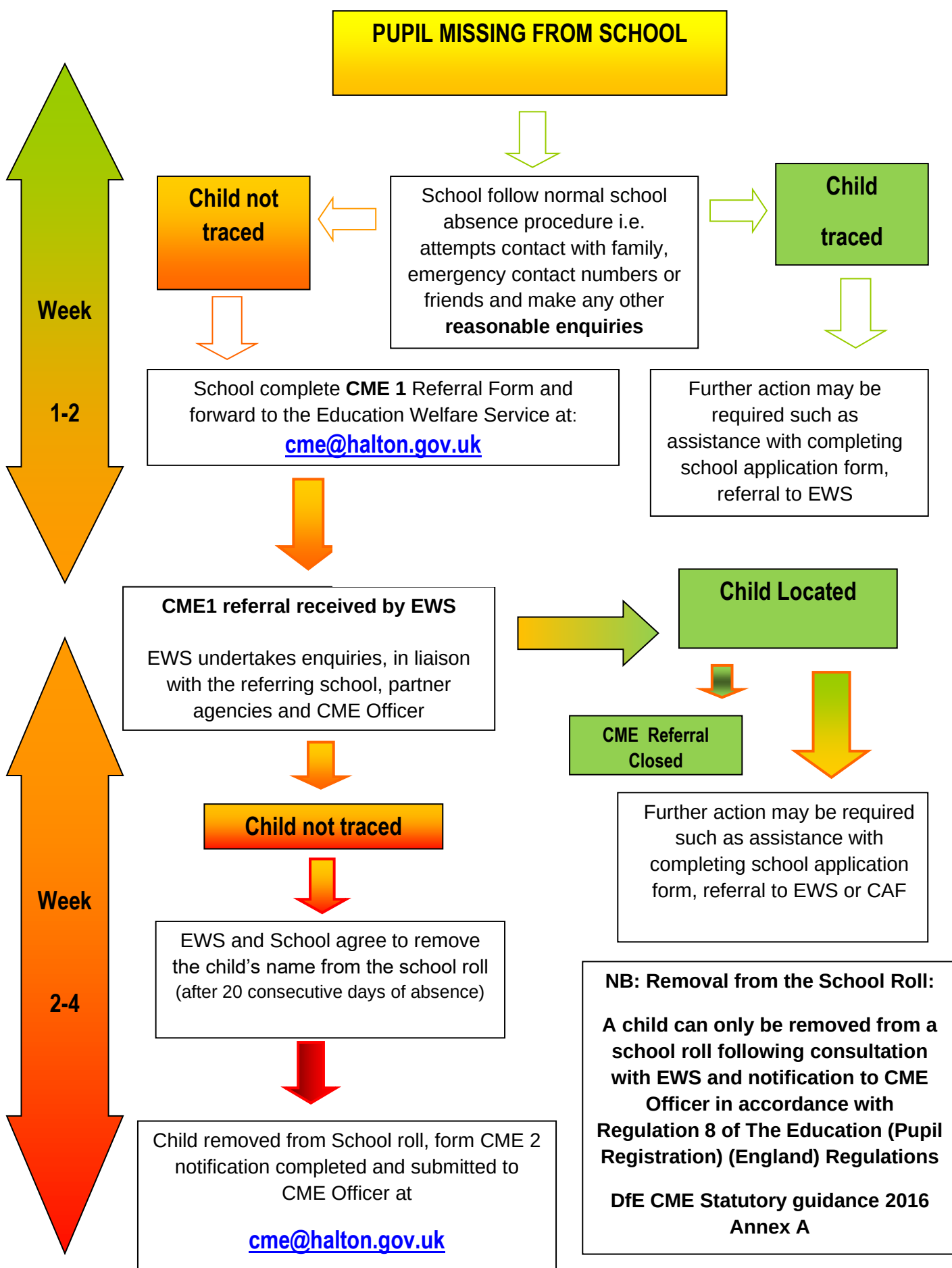
The Prevent Duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers – June 2015

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf

School Inspection handbook September 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015>

APPENDIX 1



Appendix 2

CME 2 notification received by CME Officer

CME Officer will

- Confirm all information received is correct
- Review all available data systems; ESCR, K2S, Council Tax & HBC internal systems etc. and liaise with appropriate Key Partners

If Child Located

- School and all relevant professionals contacted with current information
- All data systems will be updated
- Ensure school have uploaded CTF to appropriate destination
- CME referral closed

If Child Not Found

CME Officer will :

- Discuss with relevant Local Senior Leads
- Liaise with Key Partners
- Databases and previous school history
- Pursue enquiries with internal partners and Local Agencies

If Child Found

If Child Not Found

- Post National Missing Pupil Alert on DfE S2S
- If aware of social care concerns, liaise with Local Safeguarding Manager
- Update all data systems
- Pupil remains on CME cohort and is subject to ongoing review

Week

4
onwards



SCHOOL CHECKLIST

For school use only

To be used for pupils who have become 'missing' or where a forwarding school or address is not known.

Name of pupil:

DOB:

Age:

Address:

Tel No:

Parent/carer email address:

Name(s) of parent(s) / carer(s):

Name of sibling/s & DOB/s :

Reasonable enquiries to be undertaken by the school should include the following:

- Refer to internal school records and contact any other agencies known to pupil/family, ensuring if there are any safeguarding or social care concerns or the family are already known to Social Care, that school contacts integrated Contact and referral Team (i-CART) immediately at:

During the hours of 9am to 5pm from Monday to Thursday and 9am to 4pm on Friday, call 0151 907 8305.

If you have an urgent (safeguarding) concern outside these hours, please call the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0345 0500148.

- Make telephone checks to all emergency numbers, sending letters and emails where required/applicable and where possible, home visit by staff member
- If any siblings at another school, check with that school to gain possible information
- Check with friends and relatives of the pupil

If after 10 school days, or when all enquiries have been exhausted and the whereabouts of the pupil remains unknown, please refer to the Education Welfare Service by completing CME 1 Referral form and forwarding to

cme@halton.gov.uk



CME 1 REFERRAL FORM

To be sent to Education Welfare Service following 10 school days of absence or when school have made reasonable enquiries and their own checks have failed to locate a missing pupil or new school or home address is unknown

Name of referring School:

Date:

Name of Referrer:

Designation in School:

Child/ren's Names:

First Name	Surname	DOB	M/F

Name of Parent / Carer:

Address:

Tel No:

Email address of parent/carer:

Date child/ren last attended school:

Siblings

First Name	Surname	DOB	M/F

Please indicate if currently:

Children in Care(Looked After)		Gypsy, Roma, Traveller	
Subject to CAF/Child Protection Plan/CIN		Education, Health & Care Plan/Statement/SEN Support (please specify)	

Referral Form to be sent to Education Welfare Service at: cme@halton.gov.uk



CME 2 REFERRAL FORM

Notification of Removal from School Roll – in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) Regulations 2006

Please ensure this form is emailed securely to the CME Officer at: cme@halton.gov.uk each time you remove a pupil from school roll when reporting a child or young person missing from education where their current location is unknown and all “reasonable enquiries have been completed by the school.

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

Name(s)	
Date of Birth(s)	
Current Address	
Tel No/email	
UPN(s)	
Reason for removal	
Date of last attendance	
Date taken off School Roll (please ensure this is the same as entered on SIMMS)	
Has CME process been followed, i.e. CME1 referral submitted to EWS?	

Please indicate if currently:

Children in Care (Looked After)		Subject to Child Protection Plan	
Education, Health & Care Plan/Statement/SEN Support (please specify)		Subject to Child in Need Plan	
CAF in place		Gypsy, Roma, Traveller	

If school or educational provision is unknown, Child Missing Education (CME) procedure and referral to Education Welfare Service **MUST** have been completed prior to removal from roll.

Where a child is Elective Home Education, please send to Julia.calcasola@halton.gov.uk

Name:

Designation:

Date:



PUPIL TRACKING NOTIFICATION FORM

This form to be completed when:

- a pupil is removed from school roll following in year transfer to a school located in another Local Authority area, or
- a pupil transfers to an Independent school, or
- a pupil is withdrawn to become Electively Home Educated, or
- a pupil moves abroad (including to Wales, Scotland and Ireland).

Please ensure this form is submitted to the CME at: cme@halton.gov.uk

Name of School	
Child's Name	
Date of Birth	
Current Address	
New Address	
Tel No/email address	
Name of New school and L.A.	
UPN	
Reason for removal	
Date of last attendance	
Date taken off School Roll (please ensure this is the same as entered on SIMMS)	

Please indicate if child is currently:

Looked after		Subject to Child Protection Plan	
EHCP/SEND Support/Statement		Subject to Child in Need Plan	
CAF in place		From Travelling Family	

If school or educational provision is unknown, Child Missing Education (CME) procedure and referral to Education Welfare Service **MUST** have been completed prior to removal from roll.

Where a child is Elective Home Education, please send to Julia.calcasola@halton.gov.uk

Name:

Designation:

Date:

