Full Governors
23.09.26
Signed.....

CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION (CME)

Introduction
This policy reflects the changes in regulations for Children Missing Education (CME) 2016 and an updated version of the referral process for CME.

This process does not replace the school's safeguarding procedures.

All forms are now electronic, and can be found on the Schools Information Portal (SIP). Referrals will only be accepted once completed electronically
https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/education-welfare/children-missing-education

DFE definition
"Children missing education (CME), as defined in Section 436A of the Education Act 1996, are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

Children who are absent from education refers to children who are registered pupils at a school but not attending regularly. This could include persistently absent pupils (who are absent 10 percent or more of the time from school) or severely absent pupils (who are absent 50 percent or more of the time).

The KCSIE 2025 has been updated to reflect that both being absent from school and being a child missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities."

Referral to Children Missing Education
This refers to any pupil (including none compulsory school age) where their destination is unknown. This includes reasons such as "gone home", "moved abroad", "emigrated" and the address is not verified. All CME investigations must have been completed to refer.
https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=13

CME Referrals
Schools should indicate if child has previously been open to services (social care or MAT) or currently open to services

Notification of removal from roll
This refers to any pupil (including none compulsory school age) where their destination is known.
https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=11

Notification of removal to Electively Home Educate (EHE)
This refers to any pupil (including none compulsory school age) who has been withdrawn from school by parents/carer to home educate.
https://scholsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=12

Notification of child on roll
Under the new guidance, the Local Authority must to be notified of ALL pupils (including none compulsory school age) placed on roll within 5 school days at a non-standard transition point.
https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=15

Supporting guidance for completing a Referral to Children Missing Education Officer (no EWS involvement)

Before a pupil is registered as missing, several investigations must be carried out to locate the pupil and family. Below you will find a number of investigations which are a necessity, with key indicators to help you carry these out. If you have an Education Welfare Officer attached to your setting, they will pick this work up from the 11th school day of absence. If the pupil has not arrived by specified on roll date but have transferred in from out of the city, try to call the old school to see if the pupil is still attending there and they have not arrived in Derby.

Call all contact numbers including emergency contacts (where appropriate). This includes email addresses where possible.

School could discuss with missing pupil's friends/ family members possible whereabouts if appropriate.

After 10 school days of unauthorised absence and wherebouts of the pupil remains unknown the school must send letter b.

If after the above investigations have been completed the pupil/s remains missing, school can refer to EWO where applicable.

If your school/academy does not have an allocated EWO the school/academy must carry out the following actions before a referral is submitted to the CME Officer via SIP portal.

Home visit

Below are some key areas to be mindful of:

- Is the house empty?
- Is there post on the floor?
- Is the grass long so could have been empty for a long time?
- Is there a 'To Let' sign up?
- Contact neighbours to see if they saw the family move out.

Housing investigation:

- Is the property a Derby Homes property? Contact them to see if it is and to establish if they handed in their notice on the tenancy? Have they got a forwarding address and/or other contact numbers?

School Health investigation - key questions to ask are:

- Have they been seen by the GP lately?
- Have they been seen by a GP/ Hospital in another area?
- Have they got a medical condition which makes it likely that they will return to for their appointment?

Sibling school checks

- Are there any siblings in your school or another?
- Have they gone missing or did they put in a request for absence?
- Has the school any other contact details/ email address?
- Check with the admissions team to see if there are any new applications?
- Speak to family/friends in school – did they say they were going on holiday?

Social Care investigation - Call the First Contact Team on 01332 641172

- Have there been/or are there any reported concerns for this family? If there are, consider calling the police to report this child as missing (101)
- Is the pupil known to Early Help or Child Protection?
- Are there any other agencies involved? If there are, contact them to see if they have any information.

New Communities Achievement Team (NCAT) investigations – (to be carried out where applicable)

- Call/email the team and ask if they are aware of this family or any relatives?
- If they are would they call/visit to try and locate the family?

Following all the above checks being completed, should you still have no location for the pupil please complete the following form:
https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=13

Grounds for deleting a pupil from the school admission register
Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended.

8(1)(a) - where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.

8(1)(b) - except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school.

8(1)(c) - where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.

8(1)(d) - in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.

8(1)(e) - except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.

8(1)(f) - in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that,
(i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted;
(ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
(iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.

8(1)(g) - that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has

indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

8(1)(h) - that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and,

(i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2);
(ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
(iii) the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.

8(1)(i) - that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.

8(1)(j) - that the pupil has died.

8(1)(k) - that the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and,

(i) the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school; or
(ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.

8(1)(l) - in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school.

8(1)(m) - that he has been permanently excluded from the school.
8(1)(n) - where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.
8(1)(o) where,

(i) the pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or an Academy;
(ii) charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the pupil; and
(iii) those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.

Grounds for deleting a pupil from a school admission register –Plain English version
School attendance order https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/app/eforms/?formid=11

In year transfer https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=11

Successful managed move https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=11

EHE https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=12

Moved out of area – new address and school confirmed
https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=11

CME following authorised leave of absence
https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=13

CME Referral – 20 school days of absence
https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=13

Custodial sentence/prison -four months and pupil will not return
https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=11

Pupil has died https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=11

Sixth form/ Year 11 ends before June https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=11

Attends an Independent school https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=11

Permanent exclusion https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=11

Leaves nursery/ Early Years placement and school not known – CME

https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=13

Left following attending an independent/private boarding and owes fees – CME
https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=13

Letter (a)

This refers to a pupil who has moved home address out of the City or UK. School must send a letter containing the following:

Dear Parent

Thank you for informing us you will be moving out of area. I can confirm in accordance with Regulation 8(1) of The Education Act, your child will be removed from our school roll on ***(Date they leave Derby).***

Following this, our school will refer your child to the Education Welfare Service, who will confirm that you have left Derby City and have obtained a new school place at your destination.

If you should return to Derby and require a school place, you must contact the Admissions Department on 01332 642728.

Yours Sincerely

Letter (b)

This refers to a pupil who is on roll, but not attending and their whereabouts are unknown. School must send a letter containing the following:

Dear Parent

Your child has been absent from school from the period of ***(Date)*** to ***(Date).***

This leave has been unauthorised.

We have tried to contact you on several occasions to confirm your whereabouts. In accordance with regulation 8(1) of the Education Act I am writing to confirm that failure to contact the school will result in your child being removed from our school roll.

Please respond to this letter by **(20 school days of absence).** Failure to do so will mean your child **is** removed from roll.

Following this, we will refer your child to the Education Welfare Service as a missing child. Please be advised this may result in a referral to the police in accordance with the Missing Children Protocol.

Should you return to Derby you will need to contact admissions on 01332 642728 for a school place. I must inform you this may not be at our school depending on places available.

Yours Sincerely

Letter (c)

This refers to a pupil who has failed to return to school following a period of authorised leave:

Dear Parent

Following your authorised absence you have failed to return to school.

Your child has been absent from school from the period of ***(Date)*** to ***(Date).***

We have tried to contact you on several occasions to confirm your whereabouts. In accordance with regulation 8(1) of the Education Act I am writing to confirm that failure to contact the school will result in your child being removed from our school roll.

Please respond to this letter by **(20 school days of absence including leave of absence period).** Failure to do so will mean your child **is** removed from roll.

Should you return to Derby you will need to contact admissions on 01332 642728 for a school place. I must inform you this may not be at our school due to availability.

Yours Sincerely

Letter (d)

This refers to a pupil who is being removed from roll to be Elective Home Educated. The school must send this letter after receiving written notification from parent/carer:

Dear Parent

Thank you for informing us you will be Home Educating (***child's name***). I can confirm in accordance with Regulation 8(1) of The Education Act, your child will be removed from our school roll on ***(date they requested on their letter)***

Following this, our School will refer your child to the Elective Home Education Co-Ordinator, who will contact you regarding a home visit in order to ensure the correct Education provision is being provided.

If you should wish to reapply for a school place, you must contact the Admissions Department on 01332 642728.

Yours Sincerely

Letter (e)

This letter must be sent by the school or EWO (as agreed) when the whereabouts of the pupil are unknown. They have also been removed from your school roll and referred as CME. This is in line with DfE CME regulations 2016.

This must be sent to: Child Benefit Office, Benefits and Credits, Waterview Park, District 15.

Dear Sir,

My name is (name and job role) from (place of work)

I am writing to inform you that following the CME Regulation changes 2016, HMRC were named in the statutory guidance as a reasonable check by Local Authorities to locate a missing child.

I am making the following enquiry Under Data Protection Act 1998 Section 29(2).

The children have been reported as Children Missing from Education, whereabouts unknown:

Parent/ carers name:

Childs name: DOB:

Last known address:

I have visited the property on several occasions and the family no longer reside there. I have contacted all relevant agencies and as of yet, have no further leads as to where this family may be. I have exhausted all enquiries and am concerned this child may be at risk of significant harm. Please could you carry out checks on your system and inform me of the whereabouts of this child should it be known to you.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours Sincerely

S2S Guidance - The "Lost" Pupil Database
When a pupil transfers from a school in your area and the destination school is not known, the school should create a CTF file using XXX for the destination LA and XXXX as the destination school number, and upload it. Each file should hold information on only one pupil.

The regulation is that pupils can be removed from the register if they have been continuously absent for a period of 20 days or more. The school should only do this after consulting its local Education Welfare Service, as the school and Local Authority are required to make reasonable enquiries to locate pupils before removing them from the register. This should be Regulation 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006

If a pupil arrives in a school and the previous school is not known, the school should ask the LA to search the database for a matching record using gender, names or former names and date of birth. School users cannot search the lost pupil database.

When a pupil moves to a non-maintained school or one outside England and Wales then the school should use MMMMMMM as the destination code. This enables the CTF to be stored securely and to be available if the pupil returns to a maintained school. Exceptions are Non Maintained Special Schools, Service Children's Schools or other schools which can be identified via Edubase (http://www.education.gov.uk/edubase/home.xhtml) and which are using S2S.

If the destination school is not using S2S then a CTF transfer file uploaded onto S2S to go to that school will be rejected; in that case the school should use MMMMMMM for the destination. Each such file should hold information on only one pupil. Files for XXXXXXX and MMMMMMM 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.

For more guidance please refer to:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/360445/DfE_S2S_Guide_LA.pdf

Frequently asked questions

- **A pupil has been offered a school place and has not arrived do we need to put them on roll?**
  Yes. The DfE regulations state the following:

  16. Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.
  All pupils must be placed on roll. If the pupil does not arrive by the given date from the LA (admissions email) then school must still place the pupil on roll and establish the whereabouts of the pupil. If the location of the pupil cannot be found the pupil must be reported as missing via the SIP portal.
- **A pupil has not turned up to our school, how can I complete all the information needed on the SIP form?**
  If a pupil has not arrived at your school by the specified "on roll" date it is vital that all schools carry out the checks with all agencies as specified on the referral form. Please note if your school has an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) attached to it then they can help you to check with the relevant agencies. If your school does not have a EWO then you must call the numbers on page 14 to carry out the checks yourselves.

- **I have a pupil in my early years setting who is none compulsory school age why do I have to report them as CME?**

The DfE regulations cover legal school aged children, however in Derby City we would advise to follow CME protocol for non-statutory school aged children too. This is because once a pupil has been on your roll we have a record of the pupil on our systems. This means we have a responsibility to track the pupil's education. We know that when a pupil comes off roll it's easier to track them with the current contact details rather than waiting a year for all the pupils contact details etc to be old.

- **We have a pupil with a protection plan that we can't locate what do we do?**
  Primarily school must follow their safeguarding procedures. This does also include ringing the police to report the pupil as missing if there are serious concerns. It's important to liaise with the social worker and log everything you have done, however small the task.

- **We have a Looked After Child (LAC) on our roll can we remove them if they leave the area?**
  A looked after child should not be taken off roll until they have started at a new school. The Local Authority is the legal guardian for the child and so we must make sure they have started and settled at a new school. They could suddenly move back to the area, this could be for a number or reasons including returning to parents or placement breaking down. Schools must liaise with Social Workers and Specialist EWO at all times.

- **We have a child who has had a long period of unauthorised leave. When can I remove from roll?**
  If a request for a long period of absence has been received the family must provide a return date prior to leaving. If school are not authorising the absence, then they can start their non-school attendance procedure. If the family do not provide a return date and you are unable to gain contact with the family, school must start there CME procedures. You must discuss this case with EWS before you are able to remove from roll.

- **I have completed a referral form on SIP but have not received a copy of the referral back via email. How do I get a copy?**
  When a referral is completed on SIP you should receive a notification email to say the referral has been received into the CME inbox. The referral will no longer be sent back to you via email. This is in line with GDPR. If you require a copy of the referral, you need to either print and scan it to yourself before pressing submit or press print and change the option of printer to save as pdf before pressing submit.

Contact details for agency checks:

- First Contact team (Social Care): 01332 641172
- Education Welfare Service (EWS): 01332 641448
- Admissions – primary in year: 01332 642728, 01332 642725
- Admissions – secondary in year: 01332 642350
- Admissions – primary and junior intake: 01332 642730
- Admissions – secondary intake: 01332 642727
- New Communities Team (NCAT): 01332 641305
- Elective Home Education Officer (EHE): 01332 640350
- School Organisation & Provision SEND Team (SEND): 01332 642425
- Derby Homes: 01332 888777

Other useful contact numbers:

- Contact: CME Officer
- Telephone: 01332 641445 / 01332 641448
- Email: cme@derby.gov.uk

- School transport: 01332 642725
- Admissions appeals: 01332 642697
- Medical tuition: 01332 973869
- Kingsmead: 01332 973830

Useful documents:
https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/education-welfare/children-missing-education

https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=11

https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=12

https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=13

https://schoolsportal.derby.gov.uk/apps/eforms/?formid=15

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

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/360445/DfE_S2S_Guide_LA.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-transfer-file-16-specification

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550511/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf

Revised Operational Framework January 2019 (Derby City Council)

Reviewed autumn 2026
To be reviewed autumn 2027