



North Yorkshire
County Council

NORTH YORKSHIRE

Children missing education

(Destination school not known)

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**(Adopted by HSHAFED Hovingham & St Hilda's,
Ampleforth Dec 18)**

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Overview

1.0 Legislative Framework

- 1.1 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 can be found at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751>

(See Appendix 1 for further information)

- 1.2 Amendments to the above legislation came into force as of September 2016. DfE Guidance regarding Children Missing Education (CME) was updated in September 2016.

(See the CYP.Info website - CME and School Attendance - for more information regarding the LA's duties regarding CME)

2.0 The Meaning of 'Children Missing Education'

- 2.1 All children of compulsory school age, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude any special educational needs they may have. 'Children missing education' (CME) are those who are not registered at a school, not receiving a suitable education otherwise (i.e. Elective Home Education or alternative provision), are not regularly attending the school where they are a registered pupil or cease attending and/or their whereabouts or destination school is not known. These children can be at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation and in later life becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

3.0 Purpose

- 3.1 There are certain vulnerable groups who are more likely than others to become children missing education; as follows:
- young people who have committed offences
 - children living in women's refuges
 - children of homeless families perhaps living in temporary accommodation
 - young runaways
 - children with long term medical or emotional problems
 - looked after children
 - children with a Gypsy/Roma/Traveller background
 - young carers
 - children from transient families
 - teenage mothers
 - children who are permanently excluded from school
 - migrant children whether in families seeking asylum or economic migrants
 - children moving out of Independent Schools/Academies/Free Schools
 - children whose parent (s) are in the Armed Forces

3.2 The authority is committed to ensuring that:

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

4.0 Tracking and Monitoring

- 4.1 New guidance was introduced by the DfE, as of September 2016 to ensure LAs and schools make procedures even more robust to prevent children become 'missing'.
- 4.2 North Yorkshire County Council has effective tracking and enquiry systems in place and an appointed named person (Julie Hodges - CME Co-ordinator) to whom schools, other agencies and the public can make referrals regarding children who they believe are missing.
- 4.3 Data regarding in year admissions and leavers is collected automatically from schools on a daily basis through Group call and is transferred onto the LA's database (Synergy). Daily reports are sent to the CME Co-ordinator when children without a destination school can be identified.
- 4.4 In the case of Independent Schools, including Academies and Free Schools, and schools who are not signed up to Group call, weekly returns regarding in year leavers and admissions are required to be sent to the CME Co-ordinator (see *CME 1 & 3 - Appendix 3 & 4*).
- 4.5 When a child ceases attending a school and there are concerns, or a destination school is not known, Form CME 2 (*Appendix 2*) should be completed and sent to the CME Co-ordinator for action to be taken to establish the whereabouts of the child and log the child as CME on synergy.
- 4.6 Schools, the Local Authority (and other agencies where necessary) need to act as soon as possible to make reasonable enquiries as to the whereabouts of the child (see paragraph 7.5 to 7.7).
- 4.7 Joint working arrangements are also in place with services such as Children and Families Service, Housing, Health, Police, Youth Justice Service, Probation and other local authorities to support this process..
- 4.8 The CME Co-ordinator will maintain the Synergy database for updating, reporting and review.

5.0 Children for whom there are child protection or other serious welfare concerns

5.1 The school's Designated Senior Person (DSP) for Child Protection should be consulted by school staff and the LA's CME Coordinator informed if any of the following apply to a child who may become missing:

- has a Child Protection Plan
- is subject to serious concerns about their health, safety or welfare
- is living in a family where there are concerns about domestic abuse, substance abuse, mental health problems or learning difficulties
- may be in contact with a person who poses a risk of harm to children and young people
- may be involved in commercial sexual exploitation (prostitution)
- is subject to a Care Order
- is Looked After by the Local Authority
- may be the victim of or involved in a crime
- may be taken out of the country illegally (e.g. abducted)
- may be taken out of the country for an illegal act (e.g. Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, Child Trafficking)

5.2 The DSP for Child Protection will immediately contact the Children and Families Service and/or the Police if any of the above apply. The CME Coordinator will check that a referral has been made and if not should alert the relevant agency.

When children are 'missing' - have ceased attending school and/or their whereabouts or destination school is not known

The following procedures are for use by the Local Authority, schools and other agencies in circumstances where:

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

6.0 When a pupil may be missing from a North Yorkshire School

6.1 Should a child leave a North Yorkshire school without notice being given by the parents/carers, or without the school being advised by the parents/carers of the new school the child is to attend, the school should immediately contact the parents/carers to establish the whereabouts of the child.

6.2 If the parent/carer cannot be contacted immediately and/or there are concerns that the child may be at risk of harm, staff should follow the advice at Section 5.0. Similarly, should such concerns arise at any stage the advice at Section 5.0 should be followed.

- 6.3** If a parent/carer cannot be contacted, in all circumstances the LA's CME Co-ordinator should be informed. The CME Referral Form (CME 2) is required to be returned to the LA by schools as soon as possible.
- 6.4** The CME Co-ordinator will log the child as CME on the LA's database (Synergy) and the CME Co-ordinator and the school will work in partnership to make joint reasonable enquiries as to the whereabouts of the child without delay. These can include, for example, telephoning any numbers held on record, or making a home visit to the last known address. It can also include making enquiries with pupils and parents who are friends or relatives of the missing child.
- 6.5** Enquiries by the LA can also include checking databases within and outside the Local Authority e.g. other LAs, liaising with other agencies known to be involved with the family such as the Children and Families Service, Housing, Health, Police, Military Welfare Services, Youth Justice, Probation, Benefits and the Home Office/Border Force.
- 6.6** A referral can be made to the Children and Families Service by the school or the CME Co-ordinator, to visit the last known address of the child and/or make enquiries of relatives and neighbours if required. The Children and Families Service may also be able to offer ongoing support to the family, if they are still in the North Yorkshire area and the family consent to intervention.
- 6.7** On receipt of information from the school the CME Co-ordinator will enter the details of the child on the North Yorkshire Children Missing Education database, (Synergy). This will ensure that a clear record is maintained of children who may be missing education in order to highlight those cases where continued monitoring and tracking is necessary.
- 6.8** Where all reasonable enquiries have been made, and the child has not been located, a referral will be made to the LA's Attendance and Enforcement Officers for a Risk Assessment to be completed which will be stored on Synergy. If there have become any concerns the Police and/or the Children and Families Service will be notified.
- 6.9** Those cases referred to the Children and Families Service will have outcomes recorded on the LCS/EHM database. The relevant manager from the Service and the CME Co-ordinator/Attendance and Enforcement Officers will make a joint agreement with regard to when it is appropriate to close active enquiries in the event of a child not being found.

7.0 Removal from roll and use of the DfE schools2schools site

- 7.1** The procedure in Section 10 of this document should be followed if a child leaves a North Yorkshire school in order to be Home Educated by his/her parents/carers or is admitted to an Independent School or Section 12 if to a school outside of England.
- 7.2** Children missing should not normally be removed from the school roll until they have been continuously absent for at least 20 school days **and** both the school and the LA have made joint reasonable enquiries to locate them. However, in exceptional circumstances, a pupil may be removed from roll at an earlier date. (*See Annex A - Children Missing Education - Grounds for deleting a pupil from the school admission register (DFE Sept 2016)*)
- 7.3** The DfE maintains a central secure internet site for the transfer of information from School to School (s2s) from the Common Transfer File (CTF) when a child moves

school. This provides a facility for secure messaging between Local Authorities which can be used for targeted messages about specific children.

- 7.4** Where a pupil has been missing from a school for 20 school days and joint reasonable enquiries between the school and the LA have failed to locate the child, the school should create a "lost pupil" Common Transfer File (CTF) with XXXXXXXX as the destination. This CTF should be immediately uploaded onto the DfE s2s secure site where it will be held in the Lost Pupil Database. Appropriate use of the secure messaging service to make enquiries of other Local Authorities can be made.

All confidential Child Protection files for children who are missing from a school should be retained by the school until the child's 25th birthday.

- 7.5** Should a North Yorkshire school, which has sent a missing child CTF to the Lost Pupil Database, be contacted by a school at which the child has been subsequently registered, the new school should request that the previous school downloads the original CTF from the Lost Pupil Database on their behalf. The North Yorkshire school should then contact the LA's CME Co-ordinator to advise that the pupil has been found, passing on the new school details (including DfE School Number) and a request that the pupil is removed from the CME database.

8.0 When a pupil, who may have been missing from a school in another area, registers at a North Yorkshire School

- 8.1** If the parents/carers of a pupil from an unknown source school apply for admission to a North Yorkshire school, the North Yorkshire school should initially make reasonable attempts to identify the source school.
- 8.2** Where the source school cannot be identified they should then contact the CME Co-ordinator and request that a search be made of s2s database for a matching record using names, akas, former names, dates of birth and gender in order to locate the CTF. Once the CTF has been located the file should be downloaded and sent to the new North Yorkshire School.
- 8.3** The CME Co-ordinator should then contact the previous school/LA to advise that the pupil is now attending a school in North Yorkshire and request that any other documentation is forwarded.

9.0 When the LA is informed of a child missing from another local authority

- 9.1** When another LA contacts North Yorkshire County Council to assist them in locating a child, all such enquiries should be forwarded to the CME Co-ordinator who will initially check Synergy, to establish if the pupil has been admitted to a North Yorkshire school.
- 9.2** Enquiry from another LA & address given for child - Where an address has been given for the child and the child has not been admitted to a North Yorkshire school, the CME Co-ordinator will make a referral to the Prevention Service to request that reasonable enquiries be made to establish if the child has moved into North Yorkshire.
- 9.3** If the child is not located at the given address or any other address, then the CME Co-ordinator should be informed who will then inform the enquiring LA that the child has not been located.

- 9.4** Enquiry from another LA and no address given - Where an address has not been given for the child and the child has not been admitted to a North Yorkshire school, the CME Co-ordinator will contact the enquiring LA to inform them.
- 9.5** Children from another LA who are traced - If the child is traced the enquiring LA will be informed by the CME Co-ordinator.
- 9.6** If a child is traced and is not attending school or receiving a suitable education, a referral will be made to the Prevention Service who will offer support to access a school and the child's name will be added to the appropriate databases, (Synergy/EHM).
- 9.7** The CME Co-ordinator will track the progress of the case, and will only remove the child as CME on Synergy when the child is confirmed as attending a North Yorkshire school, the CTF file has been transferred, or, it is confirmed that the child is receiving education other than at school.

10.0 When a child leaves a Maintained North Yorkshire school to be educated outside of the Maintained Sector

- 10.1** If a parent/carer informs a North Yorkshire Maintained school, in writing, that they are removing their child in order to Electively Home Educate (EHE) them, or attend an Independent School, the school should inform the LA and remove the child from roll.
- 10.2** In the case of a parent wishing to home educate their child, schools should forward the letter from the parent together with a referral form to Children and Families with a notification for the Prevention Service to follow the EHE Pathway. (See *CYPS.Info - useful links*)
- 10.3** The CTF should be sent to the DfE s2s Database using MMMMMMMM as a destination in order that it goes into the database of pupils who have moved outside of the maintained system.
- 10.4** Where the child is to attend an Independent School, the maintained school should seek the name of the Independent School from parents and either write to or give parents a letter to give to the new school asking them to confirm that the child is now attending. If, within 2 weeks no confirmation is received, the procedure should be followed when a pupil may be missing from a North Yorkshire school (see Section 7).

11.0 When a child from the Independent Sector, including Academies and Free Schools may be missing

- 11.1** If a child leaves an Independent School and a destination school has not been identified, i.e. the child may be missing, then the Independent School will inform the LA's CME Co-ordinator (and/or forward form CME 2), who will make joint reasonable enquiries with the Independent School in attempting to locate the child (*Section 7*).

12.0 When a child moves outside of England

- 12.1** It is our duty, whenever possible, to confirm that a child who has left a North Yorkshire school has arrived at a new school safely. When a child moves outside of England, the school the child is leaving should always attempt to obtain both a forwarding address for the child and the name and address of the child's new school.

- 12.2** If a destination school is not known, a Risk Assessment will be completed by the Attendance and Enforcement Officers, with information from the Headteacher of the school, with particular reference to any welfare concerns regarding the family and filed on Synergy.
- 12.3 With a new school place arranged** - When a new school is arranged, the North Yorkshire school should forward a copy of the child's records to the new school abroad within four weeks of the child leaving, with a covering letter asking the new school to acknowledge receipt of the records and to confirm the arrival of the child at the new school.
- 12.4 Without a school place arranged** - If a school place has not yet been arranged for the child the school should give parents a letter and request that they pass the letter on to their child's new school. The letter should request that the new school contacts the originating school to initiate a transfer of the child's school records and confirm that the pupil has joined the new school.

13.0 Contact Details:

Any concerns about children missing education should be referred to:

Julie Hodges: Children Missing Education (CME) Co-ordinator
Tel: 01609 532477
Email: cme.coordinator@northyorks.gov.uk

For advice:

Julie Parrish: Attendance and Enforcement Officer
Tel: 01609 798013
E-mail: Julie.Parrish@northyorks.gov.uk

Kate Flinton: Attendance and Enforcement Officer
Tel: 01609 797232
E-mail: Kate.Flinton@northyorks.gov.uk (East Coast and Ryedale)

**or an Area Prevention Manager from your locality Prevention Service
see *CYPS.Info* or the *NYCC Website***

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