



Department
for Education

Children missing education: Policy and procedure checklist

September 2025

Summary

We have set out a checklist below that local authorities may want to use to review whether they have effective policies and procedures in place to identify and support children missing education (CME).

Checklist – Policy and procedures

Strategic management and leadership	
Written policy covering objectives, procedures, roles and responsibilities which is agreed with partners concerning CME	
Effective arrangements to identify and provide the full range of services for CME	
Regular monitoring of the processes and numbers by senior and lead members	
Networks and points of contact	
Identification of key stakeholders (statutory and non-statutory) who provide information about CME	
Named point of contact for CME within the local authority with clear responsibilities. A contact email address should be provided and a landing page with a link to the CME referral page	
Guidance for schools on CME including definitions and referral process	
Inform schools of the process for joint enquiries to establish the whereabouts of suspected CME, including responsibilities and timelines	
Data sharing agreements with relevant agencies, e.g. Border Force, Health, Police	
Information Systems	
Database of CME	
Monitoring of numbers of children in the authority area who are CME, including those new to the area or country	
Clear access rules and procedures to ensure fair and safe data processing	
Engaging children into suitable education	
Clear processes for securing the support of other agencies where it is needed, e.g. for welfare or health reasons	
Agreed process for securing suitable educational provision for children once found	
Monitoring of pace at which children move into provision	
Integration team to support children into education with a clear route for schools to request support	

Information systems which allow access to updated information concerning availability of school places and with alternative providers	
Effective child tracking systems	
Effective systems which keep children engaged in suitable education	
Record of children who have left educational providers (school, custody and alternative provision) without a known destination	
Record of children whom the local authority considers are not being provided with a suitable education, including actions taken	
System of regular follow ups for children until they are registered at a new school or in receipt of suitable education otherwise.	
Strategy in place which prevents children identified as being at increased risk from becoming CME	
Focus on transition points to track applications for, and take up of, school places to prevent children from becoming CME	
Effective information sharing with other local authorities	
Encourage schools to transfer files via s2s	
Identified officer within the local authority who is the database administrator for s2s	
Use of the searchable area of the s2s website	



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