



SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL

**CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION
(CME)**

POLICY

April 2020

Contents

Page

3	Purpose
3	Introduction
3-4	Who is a child missing education?
5-9	Roles and responsibilities
10-11	Borough wide identification process
12	Children Missing Education flow chart
13	Data Base and Monitoring
13	Common Transfer File Requirement
14 - 15	CME checklist
16 - 17	Appendix 1 DFE Grounds for deleting a pupil from the school register

Purpose

Under Section 436A of the Education Act 1996, Swindon Borough Council (LA) as like all Local Authorities, has a statutory duty to identify children who are not receiving a suitable education via a school place or otherwise. *'The LA also has a statutory duty to provide promptly, a school place for every child requiring one. As part of this duty it is necessary to ensure that any child or young person of statutory school age is allocated a school place as soon as possible, and in any event, the LA will process in-year transfer forms within 30 school days if all relevant information has been provided'*. The following policy has been developed to ensure that there is a clear protocol for these requirements to be implemented and monitored.

Introduction

All children regardless of their circumstances are entitled to efficient, fulltime education, which is suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

Effective information sharing between parents, schools and Local Authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Local Authorities should focus their resources effectively in intervening early in the lives of vulnerable children to help prevent poor outcomes.

Prompt action and early intervention are crucial to discharge this duty effectively and ensure that children are safe and receiving suitable education.

Who are Child Missing Education?

"Children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and who are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school".
Department of Education – Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities – September 2016

When are Children most at risk of becoming missing from Education?

- Moving in and out of boroughs/Local Education Authority areas and beginning the school application process
- Failure of schools to notify the Local Authority of a child being off-rolled
- Exclusions
- Withdrawal of a child from school by the parent / carer
- Failure to transition between schools
- Disengagement / school refuser
- Frequent house moves, periods of homelessness or time spent in refuge / temporary accommodation
- Youth Offending Service involvement
- Children of Gypsy, Roma and Travelling families
- Children of immigrant families
- Asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors (Looked After Children)
- Young carers
- Children with Special Educational Needs
- Children who are Privately Fostered or are known to Children's Social Care (e.g. CP Plan, Child In Need)
- Trafficked children
- Children who have experienced domestic violence and other adverse family circumstances
- Children of Service personnel – MOD Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) on 01980618244

Local authorities should have **robust policies and procedures** in place to enable them to meet their duty in relation to these children, including ensuring that there are effective tracking and enquiry systems in place, and appointing a named person to whom schools and other agencies can make referrals about children who are missing education.

By identifying and working with these families, the LA aim to reduce the number of children and young people who are missing from education. Statistics show that children who suffer from a history of poor attendance, or have periods of missed education, are more likely to face future issues in relation to:

- Homelessness
- NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training)
- Anti-social / Criminal behaviour
- Social disengagement
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse
- Neglect and emotional abuse

- Sexual exploitation/ involvement in the sex trade
- Teenage parenthood
- Physical health issues
- Forced marriage
- Poverty

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents' responsibilities:

Parents have a duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are receiving suitable full-time education. Some parents may elect to educate their children at home and may withdraw them from school at any time to do so, unless they are subject to a School Attendance Order. If a child is on a school roll, it is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure that their child attends regularly.

Schools, Academies and Colleges Responsibilities:

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.

Schools must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register. Schools should agree with their local authority the intervals at which they will inform local authorities of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or have missed ten school days or more without permission. Schools should monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority.

Schools must also arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion. This information can be found in the Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England Statutory guidance.

Maintained schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils. Further information about schools' safeguarding responsibilities can be found in the Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Guidance, September 2019.

Please refer to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Recording information in the school's admission register

It is important that the school's admission register is accurate and kept up to date. Schools should regularly encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur, through using existing communication channels such as regular emails and newsletters. This will assist both the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.

Where a parent notifies a school that a pupil will live at another address, all schools are required to record in the admission register the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live, the new address and the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, schools must record this information in the admission register.

All schools must notify the Local Authority **within Five days** of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school – unless the Local Authority requests that such returns are made.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days immediately after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive schools days, the pupil shall be removed from the admission register when the school and the LA have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable causes.

OFF-ROLL NOTIFICATIONS, when can a child be taken off the school register?

All Schools, Academies and Colleges must notify the LA when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register at a non-standard transition point register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2016. **See Appendix 1.**

This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admissions register at a standard transition point, when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school – unless the Local Authority requests that such returns are to be made.

There is a clear responsibility for all Schools, Academies and College to ensure that the correct procedure and nature of investigation of this absence has been followed as children missing education may raise potential child protection/safeguarding issues.

An investigation led by the school should take place whenever a pupil is absent from school for a continuous 5 day period without any contact from parents/carers and/or when child protection/safeguarding concerns exist.

Schools also have a statutory duty under regulation 12 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 to notify the LA where a child has been absent from school for 10 consecutive days (for Looked After Children, schools to refer the pupil as CME to Local Authority on Day 5 of absence) and where such absence is unauthorised. A school can do this by submitting a CME Referral via the CME Link on Schoolsonline or via their individual log in Swindon.Gov.uk webpage once all reasonable enquires have been undertaken.

When removing a pupil's name the notification to the Local Authority must include:

- The full name of the pupil
- The full name and address of any parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides
- At least one telephone number of the parent/carer
- The full name and address of the parent/carer who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable
- The pupil's future address and destination school and the expected start date there, if applicable and
- The ground in Regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (see Appendix 1).

Exclusion and Reintegration Team

This team has an overview of school exclusion and coordinates all school exclusion data providing reports at regular intervals throughout each academic year.

The team provides intensive support to children and families where a child is at risk of permanent exclusion. They will support children, families and school colleagues through the permanent exclusion process ensuring that correct processes in place and pupils are placed in educational provision within statutory time-lines.

The team manage and administrate both the Swindon Primary and Secondary Fair Access Panels that have a focus on pupils at risk of permanent exclusion, reintegration and the placement of pupils who move to Swindon during Year 11.

Revised guidance has been issued on good practice in relation to the monitoring of the number of pupils in Swindon schools and educational settings who are on reduced or part time timetables. The team collate and analyse the data providing challenge to school colleagues as necessary.

A great deal of the work of the team is undertaken on a multi-agency/service basis in close partnership with senior leaders from schools (particularly secondary) with the aim of supporting pupils to remain in mainstream.

Managed Moves:

- The original or 'home' school should not remove a pupil who is on a managed move from roll until after the trial period is successfully completed. Following the successful trial period a date for the pupil to be on roll at the 'receiving' school will be agreed at a planned review meeting.
- During a managed move, the 'home' school should code the pupil's attendance at the trial school as "D" as s/he is "dual-registered" and attending a separate provision.
- The 'receiving' or trial school should code attendance/absence as normal. The pupil is a guest until the trial is completed.
- Where a managed move is unsuccessful, the pupil returns to their 'home' school on an agreed date and attendance marking continues as normal.

NB – each transition noted above should ensure seamless school attendance recording.

Children Missing Education (CME) Officer and Education Welfare Officers (EWO's) referral process:

The CME Officer is responsible for the arrangements for identifying children not receiving education in Swindon and will report termly to management. An Early Help Assessment should be completed by the school if needed.

- Schools should submit a CME Referral via the CME Link on Schoolsonline or via their individual log in Swindon.Gov.uk webpage once all reasonable enquires have been undertaken for children missing education when a pupil has missed 10 continuous school days (for Looked After Children, schools to refer as CME to Local Authority on Day 5) and the school has been unable to contact the parents/carers
- Some children who are missing from education can be identified and supported back into education quickly. Other children who have experienced more complex problems face tougher obstacles in getting back into suitable education. CME Officer and EWO will endeavour to support the young person in collaboration with the family and other Agencies to ensure suitable education is accessed.
- Where there is concern for a child's welfare, the CME Officer/EWO will refer to Swindon Mash on 01793 466903 or via swindonmash@swindon.gov.uk. If there is reason to suspect a crime has been committed, the police should also be involved. Where there is a concern that a child's safety or well-being is at risk it is essential to take action without delay.

Admissions Team

The LA does not have a statutory duty to coordinate in year admissions. However, in Swindon it has been agreed by schools that the LA administers and coordinates an in year admissions scheme. Under this scheme parents make an online application for a school place, applying for up to 3 schools, and the application is considered within specific defined dates (process periods) and offer dates which are available on the Council's website. All applications submitted by the prescribed closing dates are considered at the same time and all preferences equally, and the LA coordinates this process between all schools in Swindon. Every process period is approximately 30 school days long and an offer or refusal of a school place will be made by email. For additional information, please email: schooladmissions@swindon.gov.uk

Other Agencies

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

Maintained schools have a safeguarding duty, please refer to '*Keeping children safe in education*', statutory guidance in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils.

Please refer to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Any information regarding any child or young person without or seeking a school place should be forwarded to the CME officer who will liaise with the Admissions team.

See Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Borough Wide Identification Processes

A CME officer has been appointed to co-ordinate, through multi-agency working, the identification, referral, tracking and engagement of children missing education.

The CME officer will work in partnership with key agencies in Swindon, including: Schools; Children Services; Housing; Health; Early Help Team; Youth Offending Team; The Refuge; alternative education providers; voluntary sector and the Police to continue to develop existing inter-agency networks so that all members are aware of systems for the identification of, and referral for, pupils who are missing, or at risk of going missing from education.

The CME officer will manage the co-ordination of the referral process to ensure that all understand the referral procedures as identified in the Children Missing Education process chart on page 11.

- Submit a CME Referral via the CME Link on Schoolsonline or via their individual log in Swindon.Gov.uk webpage
- Referral from other Local Authorities or agencies
- S2S out of school enquiry

Other Local Authorities and agencies use many different methods to notify Swindon of children new to the borough, or missing education, including:

- Referral via the CME Link on Schoolsonline or via school individual log in on Swindon.Gov.uk webpage
- Safeguarding concerns via the link swindonmash@swindon.gov.uk or by calling 01793 466903
- Arrangement for the placement of Children (CIC) general regulations 1991
- Regulation 5 notification (used by Social Care team within children services)
- Notification of child/children subject to a plan from other Local Authority
- S2S secure messaging

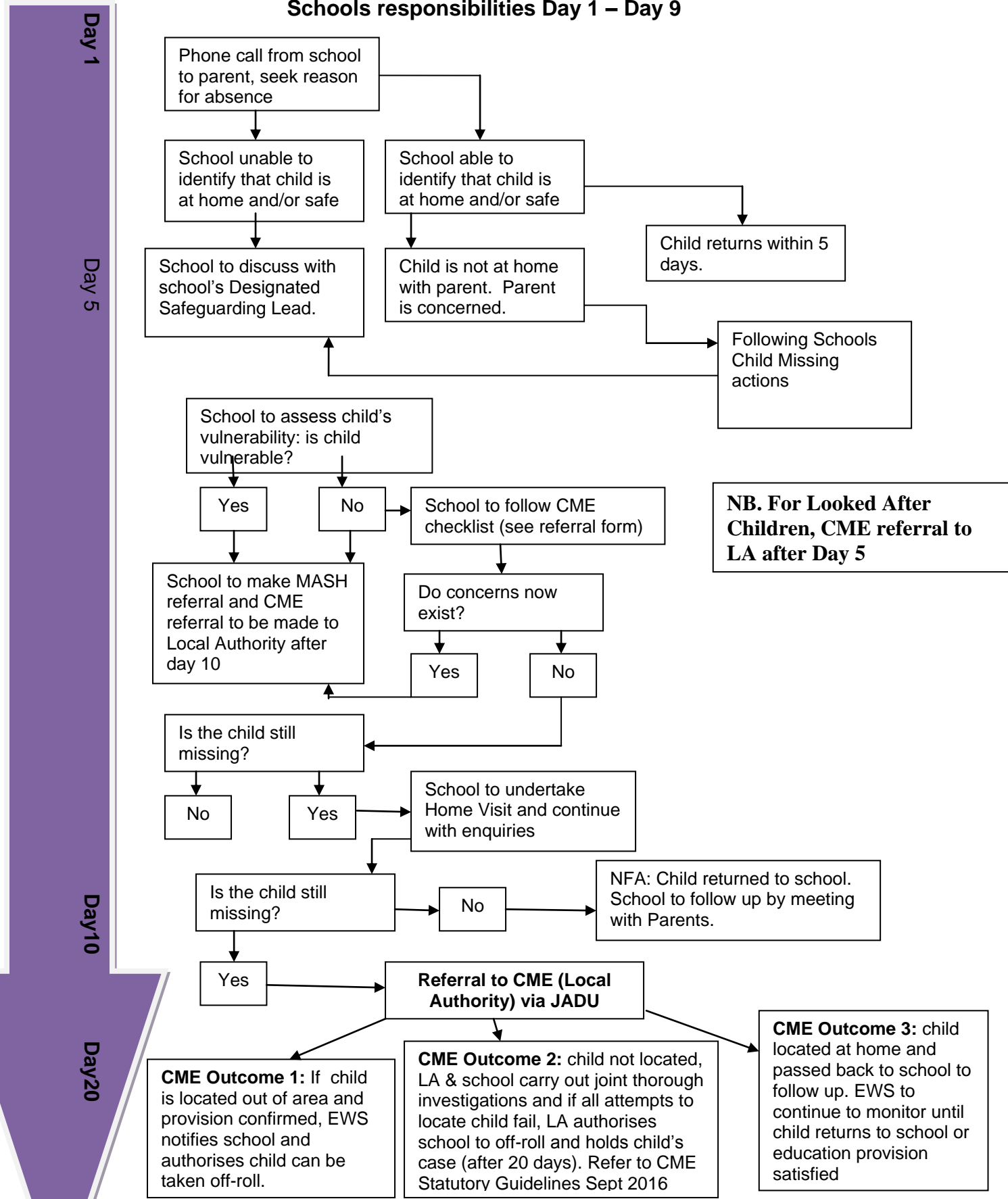
Sharing information with others

Families moving between local authority areas can sometimes lead to a child who is unknown to any local authority consequently missing education. Where a child has moved or where the destination of a child is unknown, the local authority from where the child has moved should identify relevant local authorities – either regionally or nationally – and check with them in order to ascertain the current location of the child.

Once the location of the child is established, the named person in the local authority where the child lives should satisfy themselves that that the child is receiving a suitable education.

Secure systems should be used to share and transfer personal information. Local authorities should not make blanket enquiries, as contacting all local authorities with a list of children is poor practice. This is also not a secure method of sharing personal information. Best practice is for local authorities to carry out thorough local checks in their own authority area before contacting specific local authorities that they believe to be linked to the child.

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION FLOW CHART (CME) Schools responsibilities Day 1 – Day 9



NB. For Looked After Children, CME referral to LA after Day 5

Database and monitoring

The On line Pupil Tracking System will include an up to date record of all pupils who are not on a school roll or are missing from their education provision. Each term the CME Officer will ask schools for details of pupils who have been absent for 10 continuous school days or more. These pupils are then added to the Online Pupil Tracking System and will be monitored by the CME officer and continually updated until the pupil is back in education. A report, produced by the Online Pupil Tracking System, is then circulated to other agencies for any updated information.

The Elective Home Education (EHE) Lead Officer monitors and updates a database of those children whose parents have elected to educate at home. Monitoring is an essential component of effective systems. (EHE guidance)

Common transfer file requirement

There is a statutory requirement to send specified information about a pupil moving school to the receiving school (Common transfer file, CTF 15 specification version 1.0 March 2015)

The common transfer file (CTF) is the mechanism whereby schools transfer “common transfer information” to a subsequent school when a pupil leaves as specified in the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005.

Information to be found on the DFE website – Common transfer File (CTF)

For further queries, please refer to your Education Welfare Officer or CME Officer.

TRACKING MISSING PUPIL CHECKLIST

School Actions:	√	Initials
1. Ask the friends of missing pupil for any current information		
2. Check emergency contact numbers		
3. Check free school meals database		
4. If a voluntary aided school, check with priest		
5. Check records to see if there are siblings at another school and contact the school		
6. Check with school nurse		
7. Carryout a Home Visit		
8. Does the pupil have a EHR/TAC/other plan (Please attach)		

THE ABOVE ACTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE 10TH DAY OF PUPIL MISSING (or Day 5 if the pupil is a looked after child)

This form to be passed to the Named Officer for Children Missing Education
(CME) 465030

EWO/CME Officer Actions:	√	Initials
1. Check with admissions team		
2. Make a home visit and check with neighbours		
3. Check with relevant Children Services Team 466903		
4. Check with local refuge 864984		
5. Check with housing 464405/housing benefit - email Housing.benefit@capita.co.uk		
6. Check with health 466760		
7. Check with YOT		
8. Check with Police Child Protection Team 507910 / 507976		
9. Update ICS, Capita		

THE ABOVE ACTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE 15th DAY OF PUPIL MISSING

CME Officer Actions		Initial
1. Check on Lost Child Database and upload message to other authorities		
2. Write to school and advise them to upload Common Transfer Form (CTF) and off roll pupil		
4. Still missing Report child as missing to police		

Pupil Located/Date/Destination

PLEASE RETURN TO:

Sam Chivers, Senior Education
Welfare Officer with responsibility
for Children Missing Education

Early Help Team North
Children, Families and Community
Health
The Meadows
Leigh Road,
Swindon
SN2 5DE
Tel: 01793 465778
Email: CME@swindon.gov.uk

Appendix 1:
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 Regulation 8(1) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended

(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.
(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/she has been registered as a pupil at another school.
(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/she is registered has given consent to the deletion.
(d)	In a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he/she 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.
(e)	Except in the case of a boarder, that he/she 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.
(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.
(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/she nor his/her parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
(h)	That he/she has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and — (i) At no time was his/her 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.
(i)	That he/she is detained in pursuance of a final order made by the 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.

(j)	That the pupil has died.
(k)	That the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before 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.
(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.
(m)	That he has been permanently excluded from school.
(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.
(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 pupil; and (iii) Those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.