Norfolk County Council
Children Missing Education Policy

Summary of changes – December 2025

The Children Missing Education policy has been revised to reflect changes to the statutory guidance and practice as outlined below.

Section	Changes
Throughout	All references to statutory guidance and legislation have been updated including references to: ▪ Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities, Department for Education (2025)
5. Declaration	Shelley Horne, Senior Children Missing Education Officer December 2025

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Section 1 – Introduction

Our ambition is for all children in Norfolk to achieve their full potential and have their needs met at the earliest possible opportunity. All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children missing, or at risk of missing, education are vulnerable to academic underachievement and risk being out of education, employment or training (NEET) in later life. They may also be at risk of abuse and exploitation.

No single individual at a school, local authority or related service can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action to help in the identification and support of CME.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all individuals involved in identifying and supporting CME should make sure their approach is child centred.

In most circumstances, pupils leaving a school will be planned and discussed with the school in advance of the pupil leaving. 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.

This policy outlines how the Local Authority discharges its legal duty under section 436A of the Education Act 1996 to make arrangements to identify, as far as it is possible to do so, children missing education (CME). It provides a framework which aims to:

- Limit the possibilities of children becoming missing from education.
- Ensure agencies work together, sharing information to identify, locate, safeguard children missing education.
- Ensure procedures are in place for children not in education to access an education provision as soon as possible.

This policy:

- Defines 'children missing education'.
- Brings together the legal framework, government guidance and local procedures regarding children missing education.
- Explains the role and responsibilities of schools, the Children Missing Education Team, and other agencies involved with children who are missing education and effective information sharing.
- Explains the governance of Children Missing Education within Norfolk.

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with:

- **Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools - GOV.UK**
- **Working together to improve school attendance, Department for Education,**
- **School admissions code**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education, Department for Education (updated annually)**
- **Working together to safeguard children : statutory guidance HM Government**

This policy is underpinned by the following relevant legislation:

- **The Education Act 1996** – sections 7, 8, 14, 19 and 436A
- **The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024**
- **Education Inspections Act 2006** – sections 4 and 38
- **Education Act 2002** – sections **157** and **175**
- **Children's Act 2004**

Section 2 – Definitions

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 a school.

CME includes children who:

- Are in the process of applying for a school place.
- Have been offered a school place for a future date but have not yet started.
- Are receiving elective home education (EHE) that has been assessed as unsuitable.
- Have been recorded as CME for an extended period, for example where their whereabouts is unclear or unknown.

CME are *not* children who:

- Are receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school (for example, pupils who are electively home educated or attending alternative provision) which is suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.
- Are EHE but the local authority has not had an opportunity to assess whether the education being provided is suitable.
- Are registered at a school, even if they are persistently or severely absent from that school.

Pupils missing from education are children who are on a school roll but due to their circumstances, they are not accessing a suitable, full-time education.

Local authorities' responsibilities for children missing education apply to all children of compulsory school age. Children are of **compulsory school age** from the first full term after the child reaches their fifth birthday or until the last Friday in June in the school year that they reach sixteen.

A **Parent** is defined in **Section 576, Education Act 1996** as:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who has care of a child (having care of a child or young person means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person, irrespective of their relationship).

Section 3 – Roles and responsibilities

Parents have a **duty** to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are receiving a suitable full-time education either by regular attendance at school or a suitable, full-time education otherwise than at school.

Schools

All **schools**, state funded and independent, have a range of statutory duties under **The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024** and **DfE Statutory Guidance** relating to the keeping of school admissions and attendance registers.

All schools must ensure compliance with regulations relating to pupil enrolment, keeping of admissions and attendance registers and ensure that any removals from roll are in line with the regulations. This includes all schools' joint responsibilities with Norfolk County Council to ascertain the whereabouts of any missing child prior to removal from roll. The proprietor of a school who fails to comply with regulations is guilty of an **offence** and can be fined in the Magistrates Court.

In line with statutory guidance and legislation, all schools:

- Must notify Norfolk County Council within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admissions register including all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil
- Must monitor each pupil's attendance through their daily register following their school attendance procedures and policies to establish any reasons for absences, marking register accordingly and support improvements in attendance
- Do their own initial proactive work to locate a child at risk of becoming a CME, before working jointly with their local authority to conduct further reasonable enquiries to identify their whereabouts – schools should also continue to play their role in conducting joint reasonable enquiries even after they have submitted a Possible Pupil Missing Education (PPME) referral to the local authority.
- Work collaboratively with their local authority to return CME in their local area into education – this might also involve working with a child's home local authority, if different.
- Offer appropriate support to successfully integrate children into their school, including having efficient decision-making processes for admissions in place to prevent delays.
- Carefully follow guidance on removing or adding pupils' names from or to the admission register, which in some specific cases will involve joint actions to be undertaken between the school and local authority before this decision can be made.
- Must notify Norfolk County Council when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the **regulations,** no later than the date that the child's name is due to be removed.

Sections 5, 6 and 7 of this policy outline the local procedures to support all Norfolk schools to meet statutory requirements and achieve best practice.

Sections 175 and 157 **Education Act 2002** place a duty on all schools to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils

at school. Schools have specific duties to have appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education to help identify risks of abuse and neglect and hold more than one emergency contact for each pupil as outlined in **Keeping Children Safe in Education**.

Norfolk County Council has statutory duties under **Section 436A of the Education Act 1996** to identify, as far as is possible, children who are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at school. In addition, **Section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996** further requires the Local Authority to intervene if it appears that parents are not providing a suitable education. Norfolk County Council must consult with parents when establishing whether a child is receiving a suitable education. Norfolk County Council has a duty to take prompt action and early intervention to ensure children without suitable education are supported into education swiftly.

Norfolk County Council's arrangements under **Section 436A** also play an important role in fulfilling its wider safeguarding duties under **Children's Act, 2004**, to safeguard children's welfare, cooperate with other agencies in improving children's well-being, including protection from harm and neglect.

A range of teams hold responsibilities to ensure Norfolk County Council fulfils its statutory duties. These are outlined below.

Children Missing Education (CME) Team

- Track all compulsory school age pupil movements within Norfolk to ensure children transfer to another school.
- Identify, locate and track all children of compulsory school age children who move into Norfolk until they are placed on roll at a new school.
- Along with the school and Attendance Team, make reasonable checks to ascertain the whereabouts of children who fail to start at school or may be missing education until the child's whereabouts is identified or all investigation routes have been exhausted.
- In accordance with statutory guidance, act as a point of contact for enquiries and referrals from other Local Authorities, partnership agencies and Children's Services staff.
- Receive and record details of starters and leavers from Norfolk schools.
- Take responsibility for maintaining the Lost Pupil Database, investigating any pupils' records uploaded to the Lost Pupil Database.
- Use Norfolk County Council recording systems, reporting facilities, school census information, daily attendance data, VYED and Lost Pupil Database to identify children missing education where a notification has not been received.
- Maintain a database of children who are not registered at school or in receipt of a suitable education otherwise in Norfolk.
- Produce data and reports as required for Children's Services Leadership Team and Norfolk County Council Members.
- Ensure up to date guidance and legislation is available to Norfolk schools and that local policies and procedures operate in accordance with this information.
- Provide advice and guidance to schools regarding removal pupils from admissions and attendance registers to ensure statutory compliance.
- Raise awareness of children missing education and the local procedures for reporting concerns with partner agencies and the public.

- Alert the Transitional Education Service of any pupils who meet criteria for interim provision in accordance with the LA's duties under **Section 19 of the Education Act 1996**.

Attendance Team

- Fulfil Norfolk County Council's statutory responsibilities for ensuring parents provide their children with a full-time education in accordance with the **Education Act 1996**.
- Respond to referrals from the CME Team in cases where a child is not on roll of a school but appears to be living in a Norfolk address and investigate what educational arrangements the parent is making for the child.
- Work with families where Services to Home Educators has failed to establish evidence of a suitable education being provided at home to ensure the child receives a suitable education through admission to school.
- Where it is established that a child is not receiving a full-time, suitable education at home, work with the parent, child and any other relevant professionals to ensure suitable educational provision is secured for the child.
- Where a parent or carer fails to satisfy Norfolk County Council that the child is receiving a suitable, full-time education, instigate School Attendance Order proceedings through consultation with the Admissions Team and school leaders.
- Conduct prosecutions of parents who are found to be in breach of a School Attendance Order (SAO).

Admissions Team

- Co-ordinate all standard transition admissions arrangements to ensure all pupils are made an offer of a school.
- Encourage current schools to support all parents to make a standard transition application for their child.
- Provide every school with a list of destination schools for leavers and incoming pupil list for receiving schools to ensure no child is missed through standard transition points.
- Ensure any children for whom Admissions have agreed first admission to school outside their chronological year group are entered into the lower year group admission round.
- Ensure immediate placement for pupils who are Children Missing Education and those who no longer wish to home educate.
- Refer all children who are not allocated a school place within 15 school days to the Transitional Education Service for interim provision to ensure the LA is fulfilling its duties under **Section 19 of the Education Act 1996**.
- Alert the CME Team if a child previously identified as CME is known to be offered a school place.
- Support the identification of named schools for any child for whom a school attendance order is required by Attendance Team.
- Co-ordinate allocation of new school places for pupils attending a school due to close.

Fair Access Team

- Administer the **Fair Access Protocol** to ensure that all children are made an offer of a school place through co-ordinated Fair Access protocol where the standard admissions process has not resulted in a school place offer.
- Co-ordinate referrals to Unity Education Trust Pathfinder Academy in those circumstances whereby reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise may not

for any period receive suitable education unless arrangements are made for them in accordance with the **Education Act 1996, section 19**.

- Refer all children who are not allocated a school place within 15 school days to the Transitional Education Service for interim provision to ensure the LA is fulfilling its **s19 duties**.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Team

- Co-ordinate all phase and in-year school transfers for pupils with Education and Health Care plans (EHC plans) including admission to complex needs schools.
- Ensure any children for whom SEN Team have agreed first admission to school outside their chronological year group are entered into the lower year group admission round.
- SEN Operational Team will notify CME Team of all children who move to Norfolk that they are notified of with EHC plans no later than the day the Team become aware that the child has arrived.
- EHCP Co-ordinators will liaise with CME Team regarding any children missing education with EHC plans.
- EHCP Co-ordinators will refer all children waiting for a school place to be allocated to UET Pathfinder Academy f and alert the Transitional Education Service to ensure the LA is fulfilling its **s19 duties**.
- The SEN Operational Team and SEN Placements Team will notify CME Team of any children whose alternative provision and independent school placements are due to or have ceased.
- The SEN Placements Team will notify the CME Team and the Transitional Education Service of any EOTAS packages that have been agreed for any child following receipt of signed cessation notice and no later than the day the package of education starts.

Services to Home Educators (SHE)

- Make enquiries in all cases in order to satisfy the LA that a suitable education is in place
- Provide information, advice and guidance to assist parents with their child's education
- Where parents fail to provide Services to Home Educators with evidence that a suitable education in in place, SHE will notify the CME and Attendance Teams and the child will be considered as a child missing education.
- SHE will inform CME Team of any Child Missing Education subsequently listed as home educated as soon as they become aware of the situation.

Virtual School for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

The Virtual School for looked after and previously looked after children is part of the Education of Vulnerable Groups Achievement and Access Service (EVGAAS) and ensures the educational achievement of children looked after by the local authority is seen as a priority. The Virtual School for looked after and previously looked after children will:

- Ensure educational attainment and progress of children looked after by the local authority are monitored and evaluated as if those children attended a single school.
- Ensure every eligible Norfolk looked after child is in suitable and full-time education.
- Avoid drift or delay in providing suitable educational provision, including special educational provision and unplanned termination of educational arrangements through proactive, multi-agency cooperation.

- Ensure the CME Team are aware of any Norfolk looked after children identified as a child missing education and work in partnership, retaining the lead to identify a suitable education placement.
- Discuss children missing from education data in relevant meetings and ensure a clear and time-limited action plan is in place to ensure appropriate education provision is secured.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Service

- Access and Attendance Officers work with children from the traveller community and their families to ensure they obtain their legal entitlement to a suitable education.
- Access and Attendance Officers undertake home visits, visits to Traveller sites and unauthorised encampments, to promote the importance of education and attendance at school.
- Access and Attendance Officers will notify the CME Team as soon as they become aware of children missing education residing within Norfolk.
- Access and Attendance Officers also liaise with the CME Team and other local authorities to share information regarding the movements of traveller families to help prevent children missing education.

Education Safeguarding Team: Operation Encompass (OE)

- Alert the CME Team to any child who appears on the daily notification spreadsheet without a school recorded on Synergy.
- Alert the CME Team to any non-resident child recorded as being in Norfolk at the time of any incident so the CME Team can liaise with the relevant LA to ensure that child is on the roll of a school.
- Share details of any OE notification with allocated officer if child is CME

Section 4 – Identifying children missing education

In most circumstances, the CME Team will be notified of children missing education via:

- Schools removing a pupil's name from Admission register and submitting a Deletion Return.
- Norfolk Children's Services Teams will notify CME Team of any children missing education via telephone call to CME Team on **01603 307716** or email to **cme@norfolk.gov.uk**.
- CME Team will use Norfolk County Council recording systems, reporting facilities, school census information, VYED and Lost Pupil Database to identify children missing education where a notification has not been received.

Referrals from Norfolk Children's Services teams, partner agencies, families of Children Missing Education members of the public

Partner agencies will be well placed to identify any children missing education within Norfolk. Parents and carers and/or family members may be concerned that their child is a child missing education. Members of the public may also have concerns about a possible child missing education.

Any referrals to CME Team can be made by contacting the CME Team on **01603 307716** or by email to **cme@norfolk.gov.uk**.

Children missing education enquiries and referrals from another Local Authority Children Missing Education Teams

When other Local Authorities CME Teams have reason to believe a child missing education may be in Norfolk, they should contact the CME Team on **01603 307716** or by email to **cme@norfolk.gov.uk**

Enquiries will be made by the CME Team to help establish whether this is the case or not. The CME Team will respond to any enquiries within 5 working days with their findings. If evidence is gained confirming the child's location within Norfolk, CME Team will accept responsibility for the child and add them to the Norfolk Children Missing Education Register.

When other Local Authorities CME Teams have already located a child as being within Norfolk, they should complete our Other LA CME referral form or contact us via email cme@norfolk.gov.uk. Norfolk CME Team will accept responsibility for the child and add them to the Norfolk Children Missing Education Register. The case will be allocated to a CME Officer who will track the child's enrolment into school.

Section 5 – Admission to school (enrolment)

Admitting a pupil to a Norfolk school

First admission to school and school transitions are critical points at which children are at increased risk of becoming children missing education and it is essential that local procedures and statutory regulations are followed to prevent this from occurring. Efficient enrolment into school is vital to both reduce the length of time children may be missing education and prevention of pupils becoming children missing education.

Schools must enter pupils' names on the admission register on the first day that the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance have agreed that the pupil will attend the school. If no date has been agreed or notified, the pupil's name must be entered on the first day they attend the school. Names must be added before or at the beginning of the first session on that day.

Acceptance of an offer

Most school admissions involve the school or admission authority offering a place to the parent of the prospective pupil or, in the case of admission to sixth form, the prospective pupil. An offer of a place is not an agreement. Before a pupil can be registered at a school the parent (or prospective pupil) must have accepted the offer, either by agreeing the starting day in advance or the pupil attending the school on that day. In the normal admissions round, when parents have accepted the school place and starting day offered, the local authority can communicate that agreement to schools on behalf of the parent. This can also be the case where the local authority co-ordinate in-year applications for school places.

If the parent does not accept the place offered by the Local Authority the Admissions and CME Teams will work with the family to understand the reasons for refusal. If this is the only place that can be offered by the LA, the parent will be advised of this. They will have the right to appeal. If the appeal is successful, the child will be offered a place at that school.

If parents do not appeal or their appeal is unsuccessful, and they continue to refuse the place offered, the LA will need to consider initiating the School Attendance Order process. An Attendance and Entitlement Officer would hold a formal consultation with the school that was offered by Admissions.

The Admission Team must provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents are given information confirming that:

- That child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday;
- The child's parents can defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made; and
- Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

This will ensure that all children start education within their reception year, or the Admission Team will place the child in the following year's Reception admission round and will reduce the risk of children becoming missing from education at the very start of their school life.

The following outlines the process for state funded schools admitting pupils.

Process for state funded schools admitting a pupil to a Norfolk school

Standard transition point:

- Reception
- Transfer to Junior School
- Transfer to Secondary School

Admission and SEN Teams co-ordinate admissions for all children, provide destination lists for home schools and new intake lists for receiving schools

Receiving schools:

- Inform parents of expected start date of attendance.
- Enter all expected pupils on both their admissions and attendance register on the first day of the start of the academic year.
- Mark attendance register in usual way from first day.

Parent of Reception pupil informs school they are choosing to defer start date until their child reaches compulsory school age

Receiving schools:

- Enter pupil on both their admissions and attendance register from day of notification of school place allocation.
- Attendance registers marked X code until pupil's agreed first day, which must be no later than the date the pupil reaches compulsory school age or the first day of the summer term if they turn 5 within the summer term.
- Attendance register marked in the usual way from first start date.

In-Year Admissions

- Admission Team allocate school place.
- SEN Team allocate school place for pupil with EHC plan.

Receiving schools:

- Contact parent to arrange first day of attendance as soon as possible and no later than 5 school days after receipt of school place allocation from Admissions
- Enter pupil on both their admissions and attendance register on the first day that the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance have agreed that the pupil will attend the school. If no date has been agreed or notified, the pupil's name must be entered on the first day they attend the school. Names must be added before or at the beginning of the first session on that day. If the child is not CME and currently on the roll of a school, the receiving school should liaise with the child's current school to clarify on and off roll dates; these dates must be consecutive in line with the Pupil Registration Regulations.
- Attendance register marked in the usual way from agreed first day.

If pupil fails to arrive on expected start date:

- Schools follow their school attendance procedures to establish the reasons why the pupil has not attended.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken as required.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the absence correct code to use before entering it onto the attendance register.

School establishes one of the following during enquiries:

Outcome	Action
Attendance issue identified	Follow school attendance procedures.
Pupil found to be attending another school, home educated, or has moved beyond reasonable distance	Refer to section 7 Grounds for removal from roll.
School establishes the pupil is possibly missing	Complete Possible Pupil Missing Education (PPME) form and return to CME Team (Appendix 2)

Admission of children outside their normal year group (Reception)

If parents wish to apply for their child's first admission to school to be outside their normal year group, they should direct this request to the Admission Team for children without an EHC plan and SEN Team for children with an EHC plan.

The appropriate team will consult with the headteacher of the school applied for and inform the parent of whether the request to defer admission to the following academic year has been agreed.

Where the relevant team has agreed to the deferment, the child's name will be removed from the chronological year group transition round and added to the admission transfer round for the following year.

Where the relevant team does not agree to defer first admission, the school place will be allocated, and school should enrol the pupil in the usual way.

Pupil details

All schools must ensure the **following pupil details** are entered onto the admission register:

- Full name
- Name the pupils uses at school
- Sex
- Address
- The full name and address of each of the pupil's parents
- Which of the pupil's parents the pupil normally lives with and at least one telephone number by which each parent who the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency; The DfE's advice is that where reasonably practicable, schools should hold an emergency contact number for more than one person for each pupil
- Day, month and year of birth
- Day, month and year of the pupil's starting day at the school
- Name and address of the school last attended, if any

Notifying the Local Authority when a child is added to the school admissions register

All schools **must notify Norfolk County Council** within 5 days of adding a pupil's name to the admissions register at non-standard transition points. Those schools that share daily attendance data with the LA will automatically fulfil this requirement. For any schools that do not or cannot share daily attendance data with the LA, a New Pupil Return must be submitted to **cme@norfolk.gov.uk** or securely via **Any Comms Plus**

Section 6 – Pupils who may be children missing education

'**Working together to improve school attendance**' and Children Missing Education guidance issued by the Department for Education outlines clear expectations for school regarding attendance and children missing education. All schools are expected to:

- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.
- Accurately complete admission and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Make data returns to the local authority with the details of any pupil of compulsory school age who has failed to attend regularly in line with local and national guidance.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

Making reasonable enquiries

When a pupil fails to attend school without reason, including where pupils have not returned following a period of authorised leave of due to exceptional circumstances or following admission to school, all schools **must** undertake **reasonable enquiries** to establish the reasons why the pupil has not attended following their school attendance procedures and, where applicable, safeguarding procedures. Absences must be unauthorised until the reason for absence has been established, and the school decides whether to authorise the absence.

Where the school has reason to believe that the pupil may be a child missing education, the school and CME Team **must** undertake and exhaust joint enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the pupil prior to agreeing removal from roll. This is a legal requirement of **The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024** and **Children Missing Education** statutory guidance.

The following outlines the process for responding to a possible pupil missing education.

Day one of unexplained absence

On the first day of absence, the school should make a telephone call to parent child resides with to seek reasons for absence and reassurance from the parent that the child is safe at home.

Result of call	Action(s)
Parent answers call and information is provided which indicates child is safe with them and the reason for absence is established.	Ask for reason for absence and record. Where a pupil is subject to a Child Protection Plan, notify the pupil's social worker.
The person answering call is not the parent and the school is not reassured that the child is at home or safe.	School's Designated Safeguarding Lead should be consulted on risk assessment of child's vulnerability.
Parent answers call, the child is not with them, they are possibly missing and the parent is concerned.	School advise parent to: ▪ Contact all people and places child is known to talk to and visit to see if they have any information about where child is. ▪ Actively search for the child. ▪ Contact Norfolk Police to report child as missing. ▪ Contact family GP, Walk-in and Accident and Emergency Centres in case pupil has sustained an injury and taken for medical treatment. ▪ Report back to school if pupil is found or remains missing. **School's Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed without delay and should contact any relevant professionals working with the family to ensure they are aware.**

Result of call	Action(s)
No answer at the home or on mobile numbers.	Telephone: ▪ All available contact numbers for parent child resides with ▪ All available contact numbers for any other parents the school is aware of ▪ All available emergency contact numbers **School's Designated Safeguarding Lead should be consulted on risk assessment of child's vulnerability.**

If the risk assessment on day one suggests the child may be at risk of harm, school's Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact Norfolk Police and/or Children's Advice & Duty Service (0344 800 8021) or the child's allocated worker if they have one.

Day two to twenty

School continues to make enquiries to establish why the pupil is not attending in line with the school attendance policy. These enquiries should include:

- Continue efforts to contact all parents, family members and emergency contacts by all available telephone numbers and email addresses.
- Undertake a visit to the family home to establish whether the family still reside at the property. Enquiries with neighbours could be made if appropriate.
- Contact siblings' schools to see whether siblings continue to attend, or they hold information as to the families' whereabouts.
- Checks with members of school-based staff who the child or parent may have had contact with e.g. SENCO, Parent Support Adviser.
- Checks with other agencies with known involvement who may information regarding the whereabouts of the child.
- If ongoing risk assessment suggests the child may be at risk of harm, school's Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact Norfolk Police and/or Children's Advice and Duty Service.

If enquiries lead school to believe that the family are no longer living at the address known by school, they should contact the CME team as soon as this is established. Schools should not wait 20 days before contacting the CME team for further advice.

School establishes one of the following during enquiries:

Outcome	Action
Parent is failing to ensure regular attendance.	Follow school attendance procedures.
Family have moved and new address is gained, confirming it is still within reasonable distance of the school.	Follow school attendance procedures.
Confirmation that child is attending a new school or parent states in writing they are being electively home educated.	**Deletion Return form** can be submitted once written confirmation is received from the parent and pupil can be removed from school roll.

Outcome	Action
Family have moved and new address outside local area is gained but no new school identified.	Telephone or email the CME Team to establish whether removal from roll can be agreed under reasonable distance grounds. Where the pupil is in Year 11 and moving within Norfolk, the Admissions Team will support transport applications where possible. If this may apply, please contact the **Fair Access Manager** prior to removal from roll who will confirm that transport will be provided, or a local school offer should be made.
Family believed to have moved but new address has not been established.	Complete PPME referral form and submit to the CME Team to establish whether any further enquiries can be made by the school or CME Team to establish the whereabouts of the child.

Possible Pupil Missing Education (PPME)

On receipt of a PPME referral, further investigation actions to be completed by a CME Officer and school will be agreed including timescales for the actions and a review date. CME officers will check the LA's education database along with social care database to ascertain any further information that may be held which may support to establish the whereabouts of the family. Also to assist with their investigations CME officers may need to seek further information from external agencies such as housing, NHS, the Department of Work and Pensions, Border Force and HMRC.

Possible outcome 1

If following further enquiries, the location of the child is established by either the school or CME Officer, they will agree that sufficient evidence has been established to proceed with removal from roll and submission of off roll notification form.

Possible outcome 2

If following further enquiries, the school and the CME Team fail to establish the whereabouts of the child, they will agree the pupil can be removed from roll and school will submit a Deletion Return form under Regulation H or I.

CME Team register child as a child missing education and continue investigations into whereabouts of child.

Section 7 – Pupils leaving school

Removing pupil names from school admissions register at standard transition points (end of Year 2, Year 6 and Year 11)

Schools are not expected to notify Norfolk County Council of pupils' leaving school at standard transition times (where the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school).

However, not all pupils transfer to their expected schools and some pupils may not have agreed transfer places at the end of the school year. Therefore, Norfolk schools are requested to complete off roll notification forms for pupils leaving Year 2 and Year 6 who are suspected to:

- Become electively home educated
- Be moving away
- Not have an identified school to transfer to
- Transfer to an independent school
- Transferring to a school outside of Norfolk

Removing pupil names from state funded and independent special school admissions register

Pupils on roll at a special school, both state funded and independent, cannot be removed from the school roll without the consent of the Local Authority. The exception to this regulation is if the pupil has died or has been permanently excluded. Special schools must evidence agreement from the pupil's EHCP Co-ordinator prior to any removal from roll and this must be submitted with any Deletion Return form. This includes those circumstances where a parent cites their wish to home educate the child. If the LA agree to fund an EOTAS package for a pupil who holds an EHCP the pupil can be removed from roll under regulation F. However, the DfE have provided clear advice that schools can only remove from roll in these circumstances once they have confirmation from the parents in writing that they consent to this arrangement. Written confirmation from the LA alone is not sufficient.

Removing pupil's name from school admission register during the school year

In most circumstances, pupils leaving a school will be planned and discussed with the school in advance of the pupil leaving. Schools should work with families to gain sufficient information to ensure that the pupil's next school and/or address is established before the pupil leaves to reduce the risk of pupil becoming a child missing education through lack of shared information.

All schools **must notify Norfolk County Council** when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register at non-standard transition points by submitting a Deletion Return.

The following outlines the process for all schools removing pupils from the school roll.

Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

This guide applies to all schools and must be read in conjunction with:

- **Children Missing Education guidance, Department for Education**
- **Working together to improve school attendance**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022**
- **School to School guide for schools, Department for Education, July 2019**

All removals from roll must comply with the information below.

Each removal from roll regulation lists the statutory regulation, an interpretation of what the regulation means in practice and a list of school and local authority actions required.

The CME Team will work with schools to ensure all removals from roll are legal and appropriate.

It is important to be aware that the proprietor of a school who fails to comply with the regulations is guilty of an offence and can be fined in the Magistrates Court.

Removal from roll must only take place once all the requirements of the relevant regulation are met. This will mean that in some cases, the removal from roll date is later than last date of attendance at school.

Regulation 9(1)(a) Pupil attending another school

Law

(a) The pupil has been registered at another school, unless—

(i) a school attendance order naming the school is in force in relation to the pupil.
(ii) the pupil is a mobile child, and the school is their main school; or
(iii) the proprietor has agreed with a person with control of the pupil's attendance at the other school, or is such a person and has decided, that the pupil should be registered at more than one school.

Meaning

Pupil has transferred from your school to a new school and there is no gap in the pupil's education.

School action

- The current school must confirm that the child has started attending the new school and gain new parental details and address if appropriate.
- Remove pupil from admission and attendance register on the same day of confirmed date of enrolment at new school.

For example, if a pupil leaves School A on 28 March and their expected first day of attendance at School B is 29 March, they would be added to the admission register of School B and deleted from that of School A on 29 March.

School A will:

• Record the pupil's attendance and absence up to and including 28 March,
• Delete the pupil's name from the admission register on 29 March, and
• Transfer the appropriate pupil information via the S2S system.

School B will:

• Enter the pupil's name on the admission register on 29 March,
• Record the pupil's attendance and absence from 29 March,
• Follow up any unexpected absence on or after the 29 March, and
• Request the transfer of the pupil information.

- Submit confirmation of enrolment at new school with Deletion Return.
- Upload CTF onto **S2S system** with the correct code for the new school allowing the new school to download the CTF.
- Ensure all education records including safeguarding records are transferred securely to the new school.

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.

Regulation 9(1)(b) Where a nursery child does not get a place in Reception of the same school

Law

(b) The pupil was admitted to the school for nursery education and—

(i) they have completed such education and would, if they continued attending the school, be transferred to a reception, or more senior, class at the school; but
(ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again.

Meaning

Following Reception admissions round, the nursery child has not been allocated a reception place at the same school.

This regulation only applies to schools with nurseries.

Action

- Submit Deletion Return advising of allocated Reception place at alternative school.
- Children in nursery are not compulsory school age, so school does not need to follow the normal CTF process if they choose not to.
- If the school voluntarily chooses to follow the normal CTF process, which is recommended, the school should upload the CTF using the code for the known receiving school.
- When pupils enter a maintained school nursery, they are given a UPN (Unique Pupil Number). This number should follow the pupil throughout their school career. Therefore, it is imperative that schools pass on information regarding these children to their new schools via the CTF to ensure that they are not issued with new UPNs.

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.
- CME Team will track and confirm child's enrolment into school.

Regulation 9(1)(c) Ceasing of dual registration arrangement

Law

(c) The pupil is also registered as a pupil at one or more other schools and—

(i) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again.
(ii) the proprietor of each other school where the pupil is registered has consented to the deletion.
(iii) there is no school attendance order naming the school in force in relation to the pupil; and
(iv) the pupil is not a mobile child or, if they are, the school is not their main school.

Meaning

Pupil moves from a dual registration arrangement to a single registration and there is no gap in the pupil's education.

School action

- Remove pupil from admission and attendance register from date agreed with other dual registration school.
- Submit Deletion Return with evidence of consent of deletion from dual registration school.
- Both schools will already have an electronic record for the pupil on their MIS System. There is no need for one school to provide a CTF to another school when they have both had the same pupil enrolled dually (as both schools should be sharing all data for that pupil).
- The pupil's enrolment status will need to be changed to current (single) registration at the school they are solely attending.

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.

Regulation 9(1)(d) Revocation of School Attendance Order by the LA as the order has been amended to name another school

Law

(d) A school attendance order relating to the pupil and formerly naming the school has been amended by the relevant local authority to substitute the name of the school with that of another school.

Meaning

Where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, the Local Authority has advised your school that the SAO will be revoked as the order will name another school that the child should be enrolled at.

School action

- Pupil removed from admission and attendance register from date of notification from NCC Attendance Team.
- Submit Deletion Return with NCC Attendance Team notification.
- If appropriate, upload Common Transfer File (CTF) onto **S2S system** with the correct code for the new named school allowing the new school to download the Common Transfer File (CTF).

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.

Regulation 9(1)(e) Revocation of School Attendance Order by the LA as the pupil is to receive education otherwise than at school

Law

(e) A school attendance order relating to the pupil and naming the school has been revoked by the relevant local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the pupil to receive suitable education otherwise than at school.

Meaning

Where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, the Local Authority has advised your school that the SAO will be revoked as the child will be educated other than at school and the LA have deemed this suitable.

School action

- Pupil removed from admission and attendance register from date of notification from NCC Attendance Team.
- Submit Deletion Return with NCC Attendance Team notification.
- If appropriate, upload Common Transfer File (CTF) onto **S2S system** with the correct code for the new named school allowing the new school to download the Common Transfer File (CTF).

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.

Regulation 9(1)(f) Elective Home Education

Law

(f) A parent of the pupil has told the proprietor in writing that the pupil will no longer attend the school after a certain day and will receive education otherwise than at school and—

(i) that day has passed; and
(ii) there is no school attendance order naming the school in force in relation to the pupil.

Meaning

Parent has advised school in writing that they intend to home educate their child.

Parents must not, under any circumstance, be encouraged or coerced, into home educating their child. Please also refer **Services to Home Educators webpages** for further information.

Please note that parents of pupils with Education and Health Care plans enrolled at complex needs schools require **local authority approval** via the pupil's EHCP Co-ordinator before the removal from roll can occur.

School action

- Remove pupil from the admission and attendance register.
- Submit Deletion Return with copy of the parental notification evidence confirming their intention to educate the child and EHCP Coordinator approval for pupils with EHC plans enrolled in special schools.
- Upload CTF to S2S using the code 'MMM MMMM' this will ensure that the Common Transfer File goes to the Lost Pupils Database.

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.

Regulation 9(1)(g) child moves beyond reasonable distance from school and does not have a new school for immediate transfer

Law

(g) The pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school and—

(i) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again; and

(ii) the pupil is not a boarder.

Meaning

Pupil has moved too far from your school to be reasonably expected to attend and a new school place is not immediately available.

School must gain full details of who the child will be living with, their new full address and school even if only temporary.

This applies when pupils are moving within Norfolk, outside of Norfolk and outside of England. There is no distinction in the regulations, and the same information is required regardless of where the pupil moves.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child's attendance at school if it is within 1.8 miles from their family home for children 8 years old and under and 3 miles for those above 8 years old.

However, the local authority may opt to provide transport above these mileage limits if it is likely a local school place will not be secured. In these circumstances, transport can be provided for a journey of up to 45 minutes on public transport for primary children and 1 hour and 15 minutes for secondary pupils.

Please see appendix A for an example form for school's use when families are planning to move to ensure sufficient information is gained.

Where the pupil is in Year 11 and moving within Norfolk, the Admissions Team will support transport applications where possible. If this may apply, please contact the **Fair Access Manager** prior to removal from roll who will confirm that transport will be provided or a local school offer should be made.

The pupil will have a gap in education and become a **child missing education** until they are confirmed as attending an educational provision.

School action

- Remove pupil from the admission and attendance register.
- Submit Deletion Return with new address (beyond reasonable distance) and school information.
- For Yr11s, submit evidence of Fair Access Manager agreement to move of school.
- Upload CTF to S2S using code 'XXX XXXX'. This will ensure that the CTF goes to the Lost Pupil Database.
- When the child starts at a new school within England, the new school will be able to download the CTF from the Lost Pupil Database via their LA CME Team.

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.
- Move within Norfolk – CME Officer will track pupil movement until confirmation of enrolment in new school.
- Move outside of Norfolk but within the UK – CME Officer will refer to other LA CME Department.
- Move abroad – track pupil movement until confirmation of new address.

Regulation 9(1)(h) Pupil has not returned on the agreed date of return following an authorised term-time holiday

Law

(h) The pupil has been given leave of absence and—

(i) the pupil has not attended the school within the ten school days immediately after the end of the period of leave;

(ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause; and

(iii) the proprietor and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances but—

(aa) they have not succeeded; or

(bb) they have succeeded, and they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps they could take (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance

Meaning

The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended in September 2013** to allow headteachers to grant leave of absence during term time only if there are exceptional circumstances. The headteacher should determine the number of school days a child can be absent from school if leave is granted.

If the pupil fails to return on the day expected, school must follow their attendance procedures to ascertain whether the pupil is failing to attend school or is missing. There must be no evidence to suggest that the pupil is unable to attend school due to illness or unavoidable cause and the school and CME Team have failed after making reasonable enquiries to locate the pupil.

The pupil will have a gap in education and become a child missing education until they are located and confirmed as attending an educational provision.

School action

- School undertakes initial reasonable steps to locate the pupil.
- School telephone CME Team (**01603 307716**) to agree what further joint reasonable checks will be undertaken to locate the pupil.
- School must not remove the pupil from roll whilst joint enquiries are undertaken.
- Absence must be coded as unauthorised during this time.
- CME Team and school complete enquiries to either locate the pupil or deem whereabouts unknown.
- Date of removal from roll will be when CME Team and school decide that both parties have failed after making reasonable enquiries to locate the pupil.
- Remove pupil from the admission and attendance register.
- Submit a Deletion Return
- Upload CTF to S2S using code 'XXX XXXX'. This will ensure that the Common Transfer File goes to the Lost Pupil Database.

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.
- CME Team continue investigation to locate missing pupil until gaining confirmation of pupil's whereabouts.

Regulation 9(1)(i) Where a child has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than 20 school days and their whereabouts is not known

Law

(i) The pupil has been continuously absent from the school for at least twenty school days and—

(i) none of the circumstances mentioned in Table 2 in **regulation 10(3)** or in any row of Table 3 in **regulation 10(4)** other than the final three rows applied to the pupil at any point during that period;
(ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause; and
(iii) the proprietor and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances but—

(aa) they have not succeeded; or
(bb) they have succeeded, and they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps they could take (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance**.**

Meaning

A pupil is not attending school and the whereabouts of the pupil is not known. The school will investigate whether the pupil is failing to attend regularly or believed to be missing.

Once the school have established that the pupil is believed to be missing, school and CME Team undertake joint reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil or agree that they have failed to locate the pupil. The pupil remains on roll whilst enquiries are undertaken as outlined below.

The pupil will have a gap in education and become a child missing education until they are located and confirmed as attending an educational provision.

School action

- School undertakes initial reasonable steps to establish whether pupil is failing to attend or their whereabouts is unknown.
- School telephone CME Team (**01603 307716**) to agree what further joint reasonable checks will be undertaken to locate the pupil.
- Pupil must remain on roll whilst joint enquiries are undertaken.
- Absence must be coded as unauthorised during period.
- CME Team and school complete enquiries to either locate the pupil or deem whereabouts unknown.
- Date of removal from roll will be when CME Team and school decide that both parties have failed after making reasonable enquiries to locate the pupil.
- Remove pupil from the admission and attendance register.
- Submit Deletion Return.
- CTF uploaded to S2S using code 'XXX XXXX'. This will ensure that the CTF goes to the Lost Pupil Database.

CME Team action

- Whilst joint investigations are ongoing update Synergy database to record child as open pupil possibly missing education case.
- Once all joint investigations have been exhausted and whereabouts remain unknown, the CME Officer will agree removal from roll with school. The child's Synergy record will be updated to reflect change from PPME to CME case.
- CME Team continue investigation to locate missing pupil until gaining confirmation of pupil's whereabouts.

Regulation 9(1)(j) Pupil is in custody for a period of more than 4 months

Law

(j) The pupil is detained under a sentence of detention and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school after they cease to be detained under that sentence.

Meaning

Pupil will have received a custodial sentence of more than 4 months and school do not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to their home school upon release.

Education plans for pupils in in custody are agreed between Youth Offending Team (YOT) and school which will underpin decision making about whether the pupil will return to their home school.

Whilst the pupil is in a Young Offenders' Institution, if the school has received confirmation of education provided, the school can use B code during this period.

There may be a gap in the child's education if an agreed alternative school place is not available upon pupil's release from custody and will be a child missing education.

School action

- School work with YOT and any other relevant agencies to agree an education plan which decides whether a pupil will be returning to their home school upon release from custody.
- Remove pupil from the admission and attendance register.
- Submit CME form with YOT agreement to removal from roll.
- Upload CTF via S2S using code 'XXX XXXX'. This will ensure that the Common Transfer File goes to the Lost Pupil Database.

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.
- CME Team track pupil into their next school following release from custody.

Regulation 9(1)(k) pupil has died

Law

(k) The pupil has died.

Action

- Remove pupil from the admission and attendance register.
- Submit Deletion Return
- Upload CTF to S2S under 'MMM MMMM' to Lost Pupil Database.

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.

Regulation 9(1)(l) Where children will be over compulsory school age by the start of the next academic year and have informed the school that they no longer wish to attend school

Law

(l) The pupil will be over compulsory school age by the next time the school meets and—

(i) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again; or

(ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements to be transferred to the school's sixth form

Meaning

Pupil has been placed in a year group below their chronological age and ceases to be of compulsory school age before the start of the next school year, i.e. of Yr. 12 age and educated in Yr. 11.

Additionally, the pupil and/or parent has informed school in writing that they no longer wish to attend the school and the pupil will not meet the requirements to join school's sixth form.

Action

- Remove pupil from the admission and attendance register from date of agreement that pupil no longer wishes to attend school.
- Submit Deletion Return with pupil/parental notification of ceasing to attend school and evidence the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.
- If destination education provider is not known, the Participation and Transition Strategy team must be informed
- S2S system is for schools only. Schools should archive pupil's electronic records in the same way as for YR11s and the end of their compulsory education.

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database**.**
- Inform **Participation and Transition Strategy team**

Regulation 9(1)(m) Unpaid boarding fees at maintained school

Law

(m) The pupil is a boarder at the school and—

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

Meaning

A maintained boarding school or boarding academy may delete a pupil from its admission register where the boarding fees remain unpaid at the end of the school term for which they were due to be paid.

School action

Where fees are unpaid, the school should consider whether:

- The relevant local authority, in the case of a maintained school, has considered whether a case exists for paying some or all of the child's boarding fees.
- Removing the child from school would have a significant negative effect on their education and whether it can be mitigated, for example by transferring to a school closer to home.
- Parents/carers have been informed of any charitable or other voluntary sector assistance or benefits that may be available to help meet the cost of boarding fees; and,
- The school has given timely notice to the relevant local authority and the parents, to assist school transfer.
- Submit Deletion Return with evidence of consideration of above.
- Upload CTF via S2S using code 'XXX XXXX'. This will ensure that the Common Transfer File goes to the Lost Pupil Database.

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.
- CME Team will track and confirm child's enrolment into school.

Regulation 9(1)(n) Pupil leaving an independent school

Law

(n) The pupil has ceased to be a pupil at the school and the school is not—
(i) a school maintained by a local authority; or
(ii) an Academy

Meaning

The school or parent has ceased an independent school placement, following notice period, and the parent has not indicated what education arrangements they have subsequently made for the pupil.

In the case of an independent school place funded by Norfolk County Council, placement termination procedures must be followed prior to the ceasing of the placement.

In the case of privately funded independent school places, individual school's ceasing of placement policy will apply.

This regulation only applies where other regulations are not applicable.

There may be a gap in the child's education if a new school place is not available upon pupil's removal from roll and will be a child missing education.

School action

- NCC funded independent placements must follow placement termination procedures.
- Pupil is removed from roll at end of notice period.
- Submit Deletion Return
- Independent schools do not have a statutory requirement to follow the normal Common Transfer File process. They may, therefore, not have MIS Systems capable of generating CTFs. If they do choose to voluntarily follow the normal CTF process, then the coding they use would mirror that in the CTF guidance document.

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.
- CME Team will undertake investigation to ensure pupil is enrolled into education.

Regulation 9(1)(o) Permanent exclusion

Law

(o) The pupil has been permanently excluded from the school.

Meaning

Following decision to permanently exclude, the school must follow Department for Education statutory guidance on **exclusion**.

Pupil must remain on roll until the full appeals process has concluded. The appeal period applies for 15 school days after parents received a letter from the Governing Body advising the decision to permanently exclude has been upheld if parents do not request an Independent Review Panel or upon receipt of decision by Independent Review Panel, if requested.

The pupil's name can be removed from school admission and attendance registers from date of conclusion of appeal period.

Action

- Submit Deletion Return.
- If new school known, upload CTF onto S2S system with the correct code for the new school allowing the new school to download the CTF.
- If no school not known, upload CTF via S2S using code 'XXX XXXX'. This will ensure that the Common Transfer File goes to the Lost Pupil Database.

CME Team action

- Update Synergy database.
- Cross reference with information provided by Exclusions Team to check off roll date.
- CME Team track child through to enrolment into next school.

Escalation for illegal removal from roll

Off rolling is a form of gaming as defined by Ofsted, where a school prevents a pupil from attending school normally or removes a pupil's name from the school roll without a formal permanent exclusion, or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school to electively home educate. This is done in the interests of the school rather than the best interests of the pupil. The practice of off rolling is unacceptable, regardless of whether the removal from the register occurs with the agreement of parents or carers.

In most circumstances, an inappropriate removal from roll will occur because the regulations are not fully understood. CME Officers will work with schools to ensure the child is returned to the school roll, support the school's understanding of the regulations and agree what action should take be taken by the school or jointly with CME Team before a removal from roll is agreed.

If a CME Officer is not able to resolve an inappropriate removal from roll, they will refer this to the Senior CME Officer who will work to resolve the matter with the Headteacher and, where appropriate, the Chair of Governors for maintained and Independent schools or Chief Executive of Multi Academy Trust to whom the academy or free school belongs.

In the rare case that the matter remains unresolved the issue will be escalated to the Senior Adviser – Safeguarding.

Common Transfer Files (CTF), School2School (S2S) and Lost Pupil Database

School2school (S2S) is a secure internet system provided by the Department of Education to allows schools to transfer a pupil's electronic record (Common Transfer File – CTF) when the pupil leaves the school.

Common Transfer File guidance stipulates that all maintained schools must use this system and encourages academies and free school use. Schools must ensure a child's CTF (Common Transfer File) accompanies them every time they join or leaves a school. The school which the pupil is leaving must upload the CTF to S2S using the new school's code and the receiving school download the CTF from S2S.

If a child joins a school without a CTF being received from a previous school, the school should request details of the previous school from the child's parents. If these details are not forthcoming the school should ask the CME Team to search the School2School Lost Pupils Database to locate the CTF.

If a child joins from a school outside of the state education system, the enrolling school should make every effort to determine whether there is any history of attendance at a previous maintained school and download, if there is one, a CTF from the Lost Pupil Database, otherwise they will need to add the child's details manually.

If a child leaves school to attend an independent school, a school outside England or to be home educated the school should then upload the CTF to S2S website using code MMM MMMM (outside maintained system). These files are housed within the Lost Pupil database section of S2S.

If a child has been agreed as a child missing education, the school should upload to S2S website using code XXX XXXX. These files are housed within the Lost Pupil database section of S2S.

If a school has previously uploaded a missing child CTF to S2S and subsequently becomes aware that the child is attending another school, it should create a new CTF and send this to the school the child is now known to be attending. The school should also ask CME Team to retrieve the original file from the Lost Pupils Database as they are no longer Children Missing Education.

Section 8 – Locating missing children

CME Team investigations to locate children missing education

For children who have been identified as children missing education, the CME Team will use a variety of interventions to locate and track children into education. Some children will be identified and supported back into education swiftly and other children may experience more complex obstacles in getting back into education. It is crucial that the right intervention routes are utilised and are led by the child's needs and circumstances.

CME Team intervention

CME whereabouts unknown

Circumstance	Contact	Method
Family contact details Use all available lines of enquiry to establish: ▪ Siblings and their whereabouts ▪ Additional family contact details ▪ Suspected new addresses ▪ Suspected previous schools ▪ Suspected new school	Make direct contact with family.	All available contact methods.
	Check local databases.	▪ All Synergy modules (Admissions, SEN Live, PSS). ▪ Liquidlogic. ▪ Get Information about Pupils.
	Consult with other agencies.	▪ Other Children's Services Teams (social care, Youth Justice, GRT Team). ▪ Housing providers and agencies. ▪ Health. ▪ Refuges. ▪ Government agencies – DWP, HMRC & Border Force. ▪ Use of publicly available social media. ▪ Ministry of Defence Children's Advisory Service. ▪ USA Airforce school. ▪ Schools attended by siblings. ▪ Other LA CME Teams where child previously resided or is suspected to have moved to. ▪ Other schools where child previously attended or are suspected to have moved to.

Investigations lead to new information

Circumstance	Contact	Method
Family contact details	Make direct contact with family.	If whereabouts not established, continue with investigations appropriate to case.
Suspected address within Norfolk	Refer to Attendance Team to visit family.	If whereabouts not established, continue with

Circumstance	Contact	Method
		investigations appropriate to case.
Suspected address outside of Norfolk	Refer to other LA CME Teams.	Whereabouts established, track child's enrolment into education.
Suspected school identified	Enquire with school whether child has been admitted.	Refer to other LA CME Team.

Child's address in Norfolk but no school place

Circumstance	Contact	Method
Admission application made	Admissions Team, and where required Fair Access Manager, make offer of school place.	CME Team track child's enrolment into school.
SEN Team arranging admission for child with EHC plan	SEN Team make offer of school place.	CME Team track child's enrolment into school.
No admission application made	CME Team refer to Attendance Team who undertake school attendance order process and ensure child is enrolled into school.	Attendance Team track child's enrolment into school.
No evidence of suitable elective home education in place	Services to Home Educators refer to Attendance and CME Team. Attendance Team undertake School Attendance Order process and ensure child is enrolled into school	Attendance Team track child's enrolment into school.

Use of social media to locate missing children

CME Team will use publicly available social media to assist in their investigations to locate missing children.

Unresolved children missing education cases

In some instances, following extensive investigation the CME Team will not be able to establish the whereabouts of a child. In these circumstances, the Senior CME Officer will conduct a historic case review to identify any other possible routes of investigation and what the next steps will be for the individual case until the child can be located and is no longer a child missing education or ceases to be of compulsory school age.

Children missing education ceasing to be of compulsory school age

If the CME Team has not been able to locate the whereabouts of a child missing education or the child was not enrolled in a school at the point of ceasing to be of compulsory school age, the CME Team will inform the Participation and Transition Strategy Team.

CME Team supervision and support

The CME Team holds monthly team meetings, and 6 weekly individual supervision. These are the main ways in which the team monitors and reviews work, ensures staff are properly supported and continue to develop their skills and achieve agreed objectives and outcomes to enable children and young people to achieve better outcomes.

The Senior Children Missing Education Officer also holds 4 weekly individual supervision with Attendance and Entitlement Officers regarding their CME casework.

Section 9 – Information sharing and general data protection regulations

Sharing information is vital for early intervention to ensure that children receive the services that they require and to protect them from harm.

Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 we may share information **without consent** where we are performing a task in the public interest, for example, we are undertaking our legal duty to promote the welfare of children under the Children Act. Further examples of the legal basis for sharing information for this purpose are set out below:

- Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 as a child missing from education is deemed to be a “child in need”.
- Section 27 of the Children Act 1989 which states that a Local Authority may request help from any Local Education Authority and other agencies in exercising their duty to provide support and services to children in need and that Education staff have a duty to gather information regarding concerns.
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that it is the duty of the parent of every child aged 5 to 16 to cause the child to receive efficient full-time education, suitable to their age, ability or aptitude and to any special need they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

There is an additional condition to be met in respect of “special category data” (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, physical or mental health or condition, sex life and sexual orientation). In respect of this type of personal data we must not only have a legal basis (as explained above) but also show that it is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest. There may well be substantial public interest reasons to share special category data without consent for the purpose of carrying out an CME investigation.

In addition, where sharing information is likely to support the safeguarding and protection of a child, there should be no barriers to the sharing of information so that a proper assessment can be made.

As well as having a legal basis for sharing information we must also ensure that:

- It is **necessary** to share the information for purpose of the CME investigation.
- The information we intend to share is **proportionate** i.e. we only share what is needed to pursue our investigation and no more.
- The information is **relevant** to the investigation.
- The information is **accurate.**
- We share the information in a **timely** manner.
- The information is transmitted and kept in a **secure** way; and
- We keep a **record** of the information sharing covering the issues set out above.

Further information can be found in **Information Sharing, May 2024**.

Frequently asked questions

Q: The child is at home, but parents say they are not returning the child to school. Can I refer the child as missing?

A: As the child remains at the same address, we would not consider this child to be missing. You should continue to liaise with the parents, ascertain why parents are refusing to return the child to school and resolve issues as this is a non-attendance situation. If parents make an application for a new school, the pupil must continue to attend your school until a new school place is available.

Q: Parent has withdrawn their child from school. Should I remove from roll?

A: Parents cannot 'withdraw' their child from school unless they have another school place for the child to attend or they have elected to home educate.

Any other circumstances must be addressed through school's attendance procedures.

Q: Parents' circumstances have changed, and they are unable to bring the pupil to school e.g. transport/work commitments, etc. Can I refer the pupil?

A: This is an attendance issue, not CME and your school should devise a supportive plan with the family to overcome the transport to school issue, which could be offering breakfast club, linking with other families.

Q: What date should I delete the pupil from the admission register (off roll)? Why can't I remove from date of pupil's last attendance?

A: A pupil should only be deleted from roll when all the requirements for the relevant removal from roll reason has been met. Each removal from roll reason outlines how removal from roll dates are determined. This means that removals cannot be 'back dated' to when the pupil was first absent if sufficient information was not known.

Q: Pupil has not attended for 20 school days; can I remove from roll?

A: In order to remove from roll under Regulation I, all the subsections of the regulation must be met.

Q: When can I expect a response back from CME Team?

A: You should receive an auto response email advising of the safe receipt of your Deletion Return. If you fail to receive this, then it may mean that the Service has not received your email. In such cases, please check with the CME Team

Q: The pupil has moved to a refuge as a result of domestic violence– can I refer as missing?

A: If you have confirmation of the pupil's new address and it is beyond a reasonable distance to your school, the pupil can be removed from roll under Regulation G. If you do not have the family's new address, you will need to complete a PPME referral form and submit to the CME Team.

Q: The pupil has not returned from the six weeks holiday. Can I refer the child as missing?

A: You must undertake initial enquiries to find out why the child is not attending in the first instance and then complete a PPME referral form and submit to the CME Team. CME Team

Q: The pupil has moved abroad – do I refer?

A: If the family have provided you with full details of new address and educational arrangements, and proof of travel documents should you have concerns, you can remove from roll under Regulation G.

If you have not gained full information or the family have moved without prior notification to the school, you will complete a PPME referral form and submit to the CME Team. CME Team

Q: What should I do when a school place has been offered but parent did not make contact to take up place?

A: You should make contact with parent to arrange first date of attendance, in writing if necessary, as soon as practicably possible and no later than 5 school days after offer of a school place.

If the child was already on roll at another school, you should contact the school in addition to the parent as soon as possible to ascertain whether the child is still attending that school and to establish whether the place is still required.

If a pupil fails to attend school on the agreed starting day, the school is expected to follow this up and try to establish the reason for absence. If they are unable to locate the pupil, schools should notify the local authority.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Pupil moving away and leaving school form

Please return this form to the school office prior to your child(ren)'s last day at school.

Under Pupil Registration Regulations, schools must obtain this information before recording a pupil as a leaver on the school's admissions register.

Your child(ren)'s name(s)	
When are you moving?	
Last date your child(ren) will attend school	
Your new address (even if temporary)	
Your new postcode	
If moving within the UK	
Have you applied for a new school?	
Name of school/s applied for	
If moving overseas	
Have you applied for a new school?	
Name of school/s applied for	
Contact details for new school	
If no school being applied for, what educational arrangements will you make for your child?	
Airline travelling on	
Date of flight	
Destination airport	
Your details	
Your full name	
Your mobile number(s)	
Your email address(es)	
Name of alternative contact for you	
Contact details for this person	
Your relationship to child(ren)	
Will your child be living with you?	
Signature	Date

Please be aware that this information will be shared with Children Missing Education Team, Norfolk County Council who will ensure that your child(ren) enrol in a new school.

They may contact you if they are unable to confirm your child(ren)'s arrival at a new school.

School to complete	
Has all required information been provided?	
If pupil is not going to live with parent completing form, who will they be living with?	
Have you seen evidence of flights?	
Name of person checking information	
Signature	Date

Appendix 2 – Possible Pupil Missing from Education - Referrals for joint enquiries

This form should be completed when the whereabouts of a child is unknown, and school has conducted all reasonable checks to establish whereabouts.

Once completed, please email to **cme@norfolk.gov.uk** with any additional documents. A CME Officer will then be allocated to the child and further investigations will be conducted.

Please do not remove the child from roll until removal has been agreed by the CME Team.

Child details:

Child's FORENAME:	
Child's SURNAME:	
Ethnicity:	
First Language:	
Unique Pupil Number (UPN):	
Date of Birth:	
Gender:	
Current Address:	
Parent/Carer (1) Name:	
Parent/Carer (1) Address:	
Telephone Number	
Email Address	
Parent/Carer (2) Name:	
Parent/Carer (2) Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Email address:	
Emergency Contact details provided in pupil registration:	

Reason for Referral

Referrer details:

Name of School:	
Name of Referrer:	
Referrer Position/Job Title:	
Referrer Email Address:	
Referrer Telephone Number:	
Referral Date:	
Last day of attendance:	

Please provide information below regarding attempts to contact the family within the last 10 days: please note if these checks are not complete or evidence of attempts to gain information not provided, your referral will be returned.

School Check:	**Date(s)**	**Outcome**	**Completed by**
Phone call – parent			
Email to parent			
Letter sent			
Home visit made			
Sibling schools contacted			
Phone call - Emergency Contacts			
Contact with other agencies involved with family			
In school enquires			
Any other additional information relevant to this referral:			

Appendix 3 – A template of the New Pupil Return

Norfolk County Council

New Pupil Return - To be submitted with 5 days of pupil's enrolment

Name of school	
DfE Number	
School named contact	
Date form submitted	

Surname of pupil	Forename of pupil	Date of birth	Gender	UPN - if applicable	Parent/Carer name Add any other parent/s known	Address	Contact telephone number	Email	Previous school attended	Enrolment Date	Dual Registration - Managed Move or Attendance Trial

To be completed and returned to: cme@norfolk.gov.uk or via Any Comms Plus