

Children Missing Education Policy

September 2026

Updated to reflect statutory and administrative changes



City of Westminster



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

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This policy should be read alongside the statutory guidance and legislation listed in Appendix 1. Schools seeking practical guidance on notification requirements should refer to Appendix 2, and the reasonable enquiries form is provided at Appendix 4.

1. Introduction

Every child of compulsory school age is entitled to a suitable, full-time education that meets their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs. Children Missing Education (CME) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school, including where their educational provision, whereabouts or status is unknown.

Children who are missing education are deprived of learning opportunities, support and the daily oversight that school provides. This can have a significant impact on their educational attainment, future life chances and wellbeing. It can also increase safeguarding risks by reducing opportunities to identify concerns such as abuse, neglect, exploitation or radicalisation. Evidence indicates that children who miss education are less likely to progress to further education, training or employment.

This policy sets out the commitment of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster City Council to preventing, identifying and supporting children missing education. It explains the roles and responsibilities of schools, parents, local authority services and partner agencies in sharing information, assessing risk and securing suitable education as quickly as possible.

This policy should be read alongside the relevant Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance and legislation set out in Appendix 1.

2. Policy context

The Department for Education (DfE) updated the statutory *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* guidance to reflect the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and subsequently revised the statutory *Children Missing Education* guidance in September 2025. Both local authorities and schools are required to have regard to this guidance. This policy reflects those requirements and supports a consistent, coordinated approach to identifying, tracking and supporting children of compulsory school age who are not receiving a suitable education.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children missing education are identified promptly, effective tracking and intervention arrangements are in place, and that schools, parents, local authority services and partner agencies share information appropriately to safeguard children and secure suitable education as quickly as possible.

3. Local Authority Response Framework

The local authority's CME response framework is based on the following principles:

- ▶ **Clear response framework:** clear referral routes, named CME oversight, case recording, risk assessment and escalation arrangements.
- ▶ **Partnership:** effective working with schools, other local authorities, Children's Social Care, SEND, Early Help, housing, health, police, youth justice and other relevant agencies.
- ▶ **Information sharing:** lawful, proportionate and secure sharing of information to identify children, assess risk and secure suitable education.
- ▶ **Family engagement:** support-focused contact with families to understand barriers and secure appropriate education.
- ▶ **Prevention:** targeted work at transition points, for new arrivals, for children in temporary accommodation, for children with SEND, and for children whose education status may be unclear.
- ▶ **Review and accountability:** regular review of open cases, data trends, referral quality, outcomes and learning for schools and partner agencies.

4. Reasons children may become CME¹

Children may become Children Missing Education (CME) for a variety of reasons. These include families moving into the area from elsewhere in the UK or overseas and awaiting a school place; children who have been allocated a school place but are not attending, including those starting Reception or transferring to secondary school; children whose elective home education arrangements are considered unsuitable; pupils with an unconfirmed destination following a school move; administrative errors leading to a child being removed from roll incorrectly; children who do not access alternative provision following permanent exclusion; and cases where a child's educational provision, whereabouts or status cannot be verified due to insufficient information or lack of parental engagement.

Children at greater risk may include children known to Children's Social Care, children with SEND or an EHCP, including where needs are not being appropriately identified or supported, children with medical or mental health needs, children living in temporary accommodation or placed out of borough, children from highly mobile families including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children or children from refugee/asylum-seeking families, pupils in or leaving alternative provision or custody, children attending or suspected to be attending unregistered independent schools, children affected by exploitation, trafficking, modern slavery, forced marriage, FGM, radicalisation, domestic abuse or homelessness, and children who have recently arrived in the UK.

Where a child identified as suspected or confirmed CME requires education, the local authority will seek to minimise the time the child spends out of suitable education. This may include support through in-year admissions, Fair Access Protocol arrangements, SEND/EHCP processes, section 19 provision where applicable, alternative provision, or other suitable arrangements. Schools and the local authority should work together to support timely admission, integration and reintegration, with appropriate attendance and pastoral support where needed.

5. Children who are not CME

Children are not normally considered Children Missing Education where they remain registered on a school roll, including where they are persistently or severely absent. Children receiving suitable elective home education or suitable education through alternative provision are also not Children Missing Education.

Where a child remains on roll but is not attending, schools should continue to follow attendance, safeguarding and support procedures unless and until a lawful ground for deletion from the admission register applies.

6. Key roles and responsibilities

Everyone who works with children and families has a responsibility to understand their role in identifying and responding to Children Missing Education (CME). Every CME enquiry should be approached from a safeguarding perspective, recognising that children who are not receiving a suitable education may be at increased risk of harm.

Potential CME cases may be identified by a range of professionals, including school staff, admissions officers, Early Help and Children's Social Care practitioners, housing officers, health professionals and the police.

Within Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster, the Admissions and Access to Education Team is responsible for overseeing all notified CME cases and coordinating enquiries to establish a child's whereabouts and educational status.

7. Responsibilities of the local authority

The local authority will maintain arrangements to identify, so far as possible, children of compulsory school age in its area who are not registered at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise. This includes maintaining a named senior officer with oversight of CME policy and practice, a named CME officer to coordinate casework, a system for recording and tracking referrals, and arrangements for escalating cases where education is not secured or safeguarding concerns arise.

The local authority will take a coordinated approach in line with multi-agency working practices. In addition to information gathered by the Admissions and Access to Education team, we will work with the following departments and agencies to identify CME.

- ▶ Early Help; ▶ Children's Social Care; ▶ SEND; ▶ Virtual School;
- ▶ Youth justice; ▶ Housing; ▶ Health; ▶ Police;
- ▶ Other local authorities and schools; ▶ Voluntary agencies and members of the public.

The local authority will share information appropriately, securely, and in line with data protection regulations. We will undertake reasonable enquiries, assess risk and secure suitable education. Appendix 3 (flowchart) illustrates the process followed in referred cases of CME.

The local authority will also work with other local authorities and relevant agencies where children move across borough boundaries, where another authority is seeking to locate a child who may have moved into Kensington and Chelsea or Westminster, or where a child resident locally may have moved elsewhere without a confirmed education destination.

The local authority has additional responsibilities, and powers, these include:

- ▶ Arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils from the sixth school day of exclusion;
- ▶ Safeguarding children's welfare, and a duty to cooperate with other agencies in improving children's well-being, including protection from harm and neglect;
- ▶ Serving notice on parents requiring them to satisfy the local authority that the child is receiving suitable education, when it comes to the local authority's attention that a child might not be receiving such education;
- ▶ Issuing School Attendance Orders (SAOs) to parents who fail to satisfy the local authority that their child is receiving suitable education, if the local authority deems it is appropriate that the child should attend school;
- ▶ Prosecuting parents who do not comply with an SAO;
- ▶ Prosecuting or issuing penalty notices to parents who fail to ensure their school-registered child attends school regularly; and
- ▶ Applying to court for an Education Supervision Order for a child to support them to go to school.

Key points

The local authority has a statutory duty to identify, track and support children who may be missing education.

The local authority will:

- ▶ Maintain arrangements to identify children who are not receiving a suitable education.
- ▶ Undertake reasonable enquiries to establish a child's whereabouts and educational status.

- ▶ Work with schools, families and partner agencies to safeguard children and secure suitable education as quickly as possible.
- ▶ Share information lawfully and securely where necessary to support enquiries and reduce risk.
- ▶ Ensure concerns are escalated promptly where safeguarding issues arise.
- ▶ Use statutory powers, where appropriate, to secure a child's access to suitable education.
- ▶ Schools and partner agencies play a vital role in helping the local authority identify children at risk of becoming Children Missing Education and should share information promptly when concerns arise.

8. Responsibilities of schools and education providers

Schools, academy trusts, governing bodies, management committees, proprietors, pupil referral units, alternative provision academies, non-maintained special schools and independent schools must have regard to the statutory Children Missing Education (CME) guidance. They are responsible for maintaining accurate admission and attendance registers, undertaking timely enquiries where a child fails to attend or cannot be contacted, notifying the local authority of pupils joining or leaving at non-standard transition points, and working with the local authority before removing a compulsory school age child from roll where their destination or educational provision is not confirmed.

Maintaining accurate and up-to-date pupil records is essential. Schools should regularly remind parents and carers to notify them of any changes to contact details, address or family circumstances. Accurate information supports schools and the local authority in locating children whose whereabouts or educational provision may be unknown.

Schools should act promptly where a child does not start at the expected time, leaves without a confirmed destination, fails to return following travel or a holiday, cannot be contacted, or where safeguarding concerns arise. Where a child remains on roll, attendance concerns must be managed through the school's attendance and safeguarding procedures. CME referral must be made where reasonable enquiries have been completed and the child's whereabouts or educational provision cannot be confirmed.

Schools must notify the local authority when a pupil is added to or deleted from the admission register at a non-standard transition point. Deletion returns should include the pupil's full name, address, parent/carer details, emergency contact number, future address where known, destination school where known, and the Regulation 9 ground relied upon. New pupil returns should be made within five days of the pupil's name being added to the admission register, except where the child is starting at a standard transition point and no return is required by the local authority (*refer to Appendix 2 for the protocol of notification*).

Schools have the primary responsibility for making reasonable enquiries to establish a child's whereabouts, educational status and any new address or destination school. These enquiries should be recorded and, unless there is an immediate safeguarding concern requiring urgent action, completed before referring the case to the local authority.

Where a child has stopped attending school and reasonable enquiries have failed to establish their whereabouts, or where their whereabouts are known but there is no confirmed destination school and reason to believe they will not return to their current school (for example, where the family has moved abroad), the child must remain on roll and be referred to the local authority.

A child may only be removed from the admission register where a lawful ground for deletion exists under Regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and all statutory conditions associated with that ground have been met. Where the relevant ground requires joint enquiries between the school and local authority these enquiries must be completed before deletion is considered.

Where the grounds require joint reasonable enquiries by the school and local authority, those enquiries must be completed and recorded before deletion. Where the child has been located, the school and local authority must agree, where required by the relevant ground, that there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account reasonable steps that could be taken to secure attendance.

Schools must make the required deletion return to the local authority and, where the child's suitable education is not confirmed, ensure a CME referral is made. Local authority consent is specifically required where a compulsory school-age pupil is on roll at a special school under arrangements made by the local authority, unless one of the prescribed exceptions applies.

The local authority will promote awareness of CME procedures amongst independent schools within and outside the borough where children resident in Kensington and Chelsea or Westminster may attend.

Key Points

Schools play a critical role in preventing children from becoming missing education and must act promptly when concerns arise.

Schools are responsible for maintaining accurate admission and attendance records, undertaking reasonable enquiries when a child cannot be located, and working closely with the local authority to establish a child's whereabouts and educational status.

Schools must:

- ▶ Maintain accurate admission and attendance registers.
- ▶ Make reasonable enquiries when a child does not start school, stops attending, or cannot be contacted.
- ▶ Notify the local authority of pupils added to or deleted from the admission register at non-standard transition points.
- ▶ Keep pupils on roll until a lawful ground for deletion under Regulation 9 has been met and all required enquiries have been completed.
- ▶ Refer cases to the local authority where a child's whereabouts or educational provision cannot be established.
- ▶ Continue to follow attendance and safeguarding procedures for pupils who remain on roll but are not attending.
- ▶ A child should never be removed from roll simply because they have stopped attending school.
- ▶ Schools must ensure that the relevant statutory ground for deletion applies and that all legal requirements have been met before removal is considered.

Remember

Poor attendance is not the same as Children Missing Education (CME). Where a child remains on roll, schools should continue to manage the case through attendance and safeguarding procedures. A CME referral should be made where reasonable enquiries have been completed and the child's whereabouts or educational arrangements cannot be confirmed.

9. Responsibilities of parents and carers

Parents have a duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are receiving suitable full-time education.

If parents are proposing to withdraw their child from school, it is important that they supply information to the school about how their child will be continuing to receive suitable education, for example providing the name and address of the new school the child will be attending. Where this information is not yet available, parents are asked to inform the school of the location where their child will reside.

Some parents may elect to educate their children at home and, unless registered at a special school under arrangements made by the local authority, may usually withdraw them from school at any time to do so. As outlined in the regulations, where a parent notifies a school in writing that their child will no longer attend the school after a certain day and will receive education otherwise than at a school (for example, EHE) and that day has passed, the school must delete the child's name from the admission register (unless a school attendance order (SAO) is in place) and inform the local authority.

Under section 436A of the Education Act 1996, local authorities must make arrangements to try to identify children of compulsory school age not registered at a school or receiving suitable education otherwise. Under section 437 of that Act, local authorities must make informal enquiries with parents whose children are not registered at school (for example, electively home educating parents) to establish what education is being provided if they do not already know. Parents are strongly encouraged to co-operate with local authorities during these informal enquiries.

Where informal enquiries do not satisfy the local authority that a child is receiving suitable education, the local authority will consider whether action under section 437 of the Education Act 1996 is required. This may include serving a formal notice requiring the parent to satisfy the local authority that suitable education is being provided, and, where appropriate, issuing a School Attendance Order naming a school. The use of the SAO process will be considered alongside safeguarding, SEND, EHE, admissions and alternative provision considerations.

10. Preventing children from becoming CME

The local authority will ensure that systems, information and guidance are available to prevent, where possible, children becoming CME, as below.

- ▶ Support schools to comply with statutory admission and deletion regulations and prevent unlawful off-rolling;
- ▶ Track key transition points (starting Reception Class (5+) and Secondary Transfer);
- ▶ Regular monitoring of children who have applied but are currently out of school awaiting a school placement;
- ▶ Track those that have been offered a place to ensure they are placed on roll;
- ▶ Swift referral to alternative provision after Permanent Exclusion;
- ▶ Raise awareness of CME through training and publicity;
- ▶ Publicise contact details and methods for colleagues to refer identified CME to the designated officer;
- ▶ Maintain accurate data in relation to all CME and submit returns to the DfE termly;
- ▶ Identify and respond to safeguarding concerns, including indicators of exploitation, neglect, abuse, radicalisation, trafficking, modern slavery, domestic abuse, homelessness, frequent moves, family breakdown or children returning from abroad.
- ▶ Regular review of 'Children Not on Roll Elsewhere' detailing leavers identified by DfE without another education provision.

School staff and Early Help services are responsible for supporting children who are on roll but cease to attend. Partnership working between Early Help, attendance officers, schools, and admissions officers can help identify children that are at risk of becoming CME, such as those with persistent low attendance or multiple suspensions.

The local authority will ensure schools clearly understand when to make a CME referral, when to use attendance procedures, and when immediate safeguarding action or referral to Children's Social Care is required.

There is a senior officer in the Admissions and Access to Education team who is responsible for the oversight of policy and practice relating to CME. In addition, a designated CME officer can support and advise colleagues, families, or schools in relation to day-to-day CME enquiries.

11. Support and casework

The CME Officer works with families, schools and partner agencies to identify and address barriers to education, provide advice on the available options, including Elective Home Education where appropriate, and support children to access suitable educational provision as quickly as possible.

The CME Officer is also responsible for managing cases where the local authority may need to consider the use of a School Attendance Order to secure a child's education.

Enquiries will be proportionate to the level of risk and urgency presented. Reasonable enquiries may include contact with parents and carers, current and previous schools, destination schools, admissions services, SEND and EHE Teams, Early Help, Children's Social Care, housing services, health professionals, the police, youth justice services, other local authorities and relevant national databases. Where there are immediate safeguarding concerns, these must be referred through the appropriate safeguarding procedures without delay.

12. Children Missing Education and safeguarding

Children Missing Education (CME) is both an education and safeguarding issue. Children who are not receiving a suitable education may be at increased risk of harm, including abuse, neglect, criminal or sexual exploitation, radicalisation, trafficking, modern slavery, domestic abuse, homelessness, and unmet health or welfare needs. The level of risk will vary according to the individual circumstances of each child and should be assessed using information available from schools, families, local authority records and partner agencies.

Where there is any reason to believe that a child may be at risk of significant harm, schools and local authority officers must act immediately in accordance with local safeguarding procedures and must not delay action pending the outcome of CME enquiries. Where appropriate, CME investigations should continue alongside safeguarding activity to ensure that the child's whereabouts, welfare and access to suitable education are established as quickly as possible.

13. Elective Home Education and CME

Children receiving suitable Elective Home Education (EHE) are not considered Children Missing Education (CME). However, a child may be identified as CME where the local authority has determined that the education being provided is unsuitable, where a parent has not demonstrated that suitable education is taking place, or where the child's whereabouts or educational arrangements cannot be confirmed.

In such circumstances, CME and EHE enquiries should be coordinated to ensure that the suitability of the education, any safeguarding concerns, and the need for statutory intervention are considered as part of a single, joined-up assessment of the child's circumstances.

14. Children in temporary accommodation and out-of-borough placements

Children in temporary accommodation may face additional barriers to accessing education. This includes children placed outside the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster.

Where education is unclear, enquiries should establish the child's current address, which local authority is responsible, whether a school application has been made, whether a school place has been offered, whether the child has SEND/EHCP or social care involvement, and whether there are safeguarding concerns.

Information should be shared securely and promptly with other local authorities where required, so that children do not remain out of education because responsibility is unclear.

15. Removing pupils from the school admission register

The grounds for deleting a pupil's name from the admission register are set out in [Regulation 9 of the School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#). Key principles are as follows:

- ▶ Schools must ensure that the relevant statutory ground and all associated conditions are met before deleting a pupil's name from the admission register.
- ▶ A pupil's name must not be deleted retrospectively.
- ▶ Where the child's destination or education provision is unknown, the school should provide the local authority with all available information, including parent/carer details, current or future address, possible destination school, safeguarding concerns and enquiries completed.
- ▶ Children on roll with poor attendance, persistent absence or severe absence should continue to be managed through attendance, safeguarding and support procedures unless and until a lawful removal ground applies.

16. Children reported to have left the country

Where a school is informed that a child has left the country, it should seek and record evidence of the move, including any available confirmation from parents/carers, travel information, overseas address or overseas school details. If the school is satisfied that the child is no longer resident in England and is receiving, or will receive, education abroad, the child would not normally be considered CME.

If the information is unclear, inconsistent or unsupported by evidence, the school must complete reasonable enquiries and consult the CME Officer before deciding that the child has left the country.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, or the child is known to Children's Social Care, has an allocated social worker or is subject to another statutory intervention, the school must not rely solely on a report that the child has left the country. The school must notify the CME Officer, inform the relevant professional immediately, make a referral to the Front Door where required.

Where the local authority suspects that a child may have moved abroad but enquiries do not provide sufficient reassurance, further checks may include seeking evidence of travel, requesting information from Border Force where appropriate, and considering whether safeguarding partners should be involved. Where there are concerns for the child's safety abroad, advice should be sought through the appropriate safeguarding route and, where relevant, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

17. Untraceable CME

Most children missing education are located, and suitable education provision is established, following reasonable enquiries.

Where a child remains untraceable after reasonable enquiries, the case should be treated as untraceable. The CME Officer will ensure that all enquiries are recorded, relevant partner agencies are consulted, relevant databases are checked, other local authorities are contacted where movement is indicated, safeguarding concerns are reviewed throughout, and senior oversight is sought where required.

For any child missing education who remains untraceable, the CME Officer will complete the Record of untraceable child of compulsory school age form.

This process reflects the tracking and enquiry expectations set out in the [DfE CME statutory guidance](#).

18. Reasonable enquiries checklist

Reasonable enquiries should be lawful and proportionate to the circumstances of the case.

- ✓ checking school and admissions records
- ✓ make contact with the parent, known relatives, or emergency contacts using all recorded contact details;
- ✓ check Get Information About Pupils (GIAP) and school2school (s2s) systems;
- ✓ check other local databases within the local authority, such as those held by SEND, EHE, Early Help, Council Tax, Housing, Electoral roll, and Children's Social Care teams;
- ✓ contacting health, police, or youth justice partners where relevant and appropriate;
- ✓ check with any external agencies (e.g. voluntary community support workers) known to be involved with family;
- ✓ check with local authority and school from which child moved originally, if known;
- ✓ check with any local authority and school to which a child may have moved;
- ✓ check with the local authority where the child lives, if different from where the school is;
- ✓ in the case of children of Service Personnel, check with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS);
- ✓ if appropriate check with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and/or the Border Force; and home visit(s) if appropriate.

Key point

There is no single prescribed list of checks for every case. Enquiries should reflect the child's circumstances and level of risk. A clear audit trail must show what was checked, what was found and how decisions were reached.

In all cases, a record of checks undertaken will be recorded and their outcome noted.

If, after undertaking reasonable, lawful and appropriate enquiries, a child of compulsory school age remains untraceable, the 'Record of Untraceable Child Form' is completed for sign-off by the Head of Admissions and Access to Education.

19. Information and data management of CME

The CME Officer maintains a secure database of all children reported as missing education and believed to be resident in RBKC or Westminster. Records include key information such as identifying details, education status, enquiries undertaken, partner agency involvement, actions taken, outcomes, and reasons for case closure. This data is used to monitor trends, inform practice, and target resources effectively.

Since July 2024, local authorities have been required to submit statutory termly aggregate CME returns to the Department for Education at each pupil census point (October, January and May).

Data is reviewed regularly to identify themes and groups at greater risk of missing education, including children with unconfirmed destinations, frequent school moves, cross-border movement, recent arrivals to the UK, pupils leaving independent schools, and children subject to EHE concerns. Learning from this analysis informs training, school communications, quality assurance activity, and partnership working.

The local authority will monitor children who are awaiting school places, have been offered a place but not started, or whose application remains unresolved, to ensure that they do not remain without suitable education.

20. Quality assurance, review and training

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where statutory guidance, legislation or local safeguarding arrangements change. The Admissions and Access to Education leadership team will review CME data, audit a sample of cases, test timeliness and quality of enquiries, and identify learning for schools and partner agencies.

The local authority will provide advice, briefings or training for schools and relevant partners on CME definitions, referral routes, lawful removal from roll, reasonable enquiries, safeguarding escalation, information sharing and the use of local forms and secure transfer routes.

Protocol for Schools Located in Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster: Identifying Children Missing Education

The legal context

Responsibility of Parent/Carer

In England the law specifies that parents have a responsibility to ensure that any child of compulsory school age is in receipt of an education: education is compulsory, but school is not. Parents therefore have a legal right to elect to home educate their children.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states *the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable: (a) to his age, ability and aptitude; and (b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.*

Responsibility of Local Authorities

Under section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (inserted by the Education and Inspections Act 2006) the Local Authority (LA) has a duty to make arrangements to establish the identities, so far as it is possible to do so, of the children of compulsory school age in their area who are not registered at a school and not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at school.

Under Section 437 (1) of the Education Act 1996 the LA has a duty to intervene if it appears that a child is not receiving a suitable education.

Under Section 437 (3) of the Education Act 1996 the LA may serve a School Attendance Order If – a parent on whom a notice has been served under subsection (1) fails to satisfy the local authority, within the period specified in the notice, that the child is receiving suitable education.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Working to resolve Children Missing Education (CME) cases is part of the wider remit of the LA to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster.

Under Section 175 (1) of the Education Act 2002 the LA has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. *A local authority shall make arrangements for ensuring that the functions conferred upon them in their capacity as a local authority are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.*

Schools must only remove a pupil from roll where a lawful ground exists under Regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and all statutory conditions attached to that ground have been met. If the child continues to reside at the same address but has been absent for more than 20 days without reason, the child **must not** be removed from the school roll. The school must liaise with the Early Help service as an attendance matter.

Protocol for Schools Located in Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster: Identifying Children Missing Education



This document sets out the new requirements for identifying children missing education (CME) and is for the attention and action of all schools with pupils of statutory school age (five to 16). This includes Independent schools and Alternative Provision providers.

Background

It is a legal requirement for all schools to notify the maintaining local authority of all new starters and leavers to their school or alternative education provision. **This does not include pupils starting at the school at the first point of entry in reception or Year 7, or leaving Year 11.**

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 (“the Regulations”) is a statutory instrument to improve communication and co-ordination between schools and LAs. This includes independent schools. In accordance with regulation 13(1) to (3) and 13(4) to (6) the following applies to non-standard transition points, also referred to as ‘in-year’.

All schools are legally required to:

- Inform the LA when they are about to delete a pupil’s name from the admission register under the permitted grounds relevant to children of statutory school age (these are shown on the **In Year Leaver** form available on request from the Admissions Team);
- Record details of the pupil’s residence, the name and contact details of the person with whom they reside, the date from which they will reside there, and the name of the destination school (where they can reasonably obtain this information);
- Inform the LA of the pupil’s destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school or area;
- Notify the LA of leavers by completing the **In Year leaver Form** provided by the school Admissions Team **within five days** during term-time.
- **Independent schools** are required to provide information to the LA within five days when registering new pupils, including the home address and previous school (where they can reasonably obtain this information).
- **Alternative Provision**, including the Hospital School, are required notify the LA of new starters under a dual roll arrangement. This is to ensure the child is tracked by the LA and both establishments fulfil their safeguarding duty.

¹ In the case of refusal to disclose the name of the destined school, please refer to the designated Admissions Team point of contact who will advise and assist.

Notification Requirements

Schools are required to return notification forms to the Admissions Team via London Grid for Learning Document Exchange. This is a preferred method communication with the LA ensuring data protection by securely transmitting sensitive information. Acknowledgement of receipt can be noted when documents are downloaded by the recipient on the LGfL Document Exchange.

For **Independent schools**, returns will be made via S2S common transfer file or secure email. To ensure compliance with General Data Protection Requirements (GDPR) **forms must not be returned by email unless encrypted**. Acknowledgement of receipt will not typically be made for returns submitted via email, designated officers make follow up enquiries where necessary.

The Admissions Team has designated officers that will be checking and monitoring the information returned and will be the key contact for any enquires.

Westminster State schools 📧 leaverreturns@westminster.gov.uk

Kensington and Chelsea State schools 📧 Leaver>Returns@RBKC.gov.uk

Independent Schools 📧 gideon.mpalanyi@rbkc.gov.uk (Gideon Mpalanyi)

Hospital School 📧 fbayram@westminster.gov.uk (Filiz Bayram)

Alternative Provision (Ormiston) 📧 PEX@rbkc.gov.uk

Special Schools 📧 Leaver>Returns@RBKC.gov.uk or leaverreturns@westminster.gov.uk



It is the responsibility for each school to ensure that notifications are sent to the LA. Reminders will not be sent but the designated officer may contact a school directly if notifications have not been submitted to the Admissions Team for a period of four weeks.



Standard Transition Points

Systems are already in place to identify children that either do not accept a school offered to their child or do not attend the school for which they have been accepted and been placed on roll. The Admissions Team will monitor cases where a school place has not been secured at the standard point of entry (Reception and Year 7). If a pupil fails to attend school on the agreed starting day, the school is expected to try and establish the reason for absence. If they are unable to locate the pupil, schools should notify the Admissions Team (CME Officer).

Independent Schools

To ensure safeguarding responsibly is consistent with state-maintained schools, Independent schools are required complete both an **In Year Starter and Leaver Form** (available on request from the Admissions Team) to notify the LA of children admitted and not arrived as expected. The school must have carried out their own checks before passing to the LA.

Useful Information

Notification Forms: Please complete the relevant local authority return for your school type. Please send an email to the team if you do not already have the template notification form.

✉ LeaverReturns@westminster.gov.uk

✉ Leaver.Returns@RBKC.gov.uk

User Guides: Helpful information on securely submitting return forms to the LA

- State Maintained Schools – [London Grid for Learning \(LGfL\) school users guide](#)
- Independent Schools – [School to school \(S2S\) data transfer system guide](#)

Relevant links: Government guidance and legislation associated with this protocol document.

- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education – GOV.UK](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance – GOV.UK](#)
- [Children missing education – GOV.UK](#)
- [Elective home education – GOV.UK](#)

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- [Children missing education – GOV.UK](#)
- [Elective home education – GOV.UK](#)

Admissions Team: Designated notification officers for leaver returns are provided above. Please find details below for other queries.

- Dedicated telephone line – 020 7745 6432 / 6433 (9am to 2pm)
- Westminster Schools – schooladmissions@westminster.gov.uk
- Kensington and Chelsea Schools – school.admissions@rbkc.gov.uk
- Children Missing Education – missing.education@rbkc.gov.uk
- Elective Home Education – home.education@rbkc.gov.uk

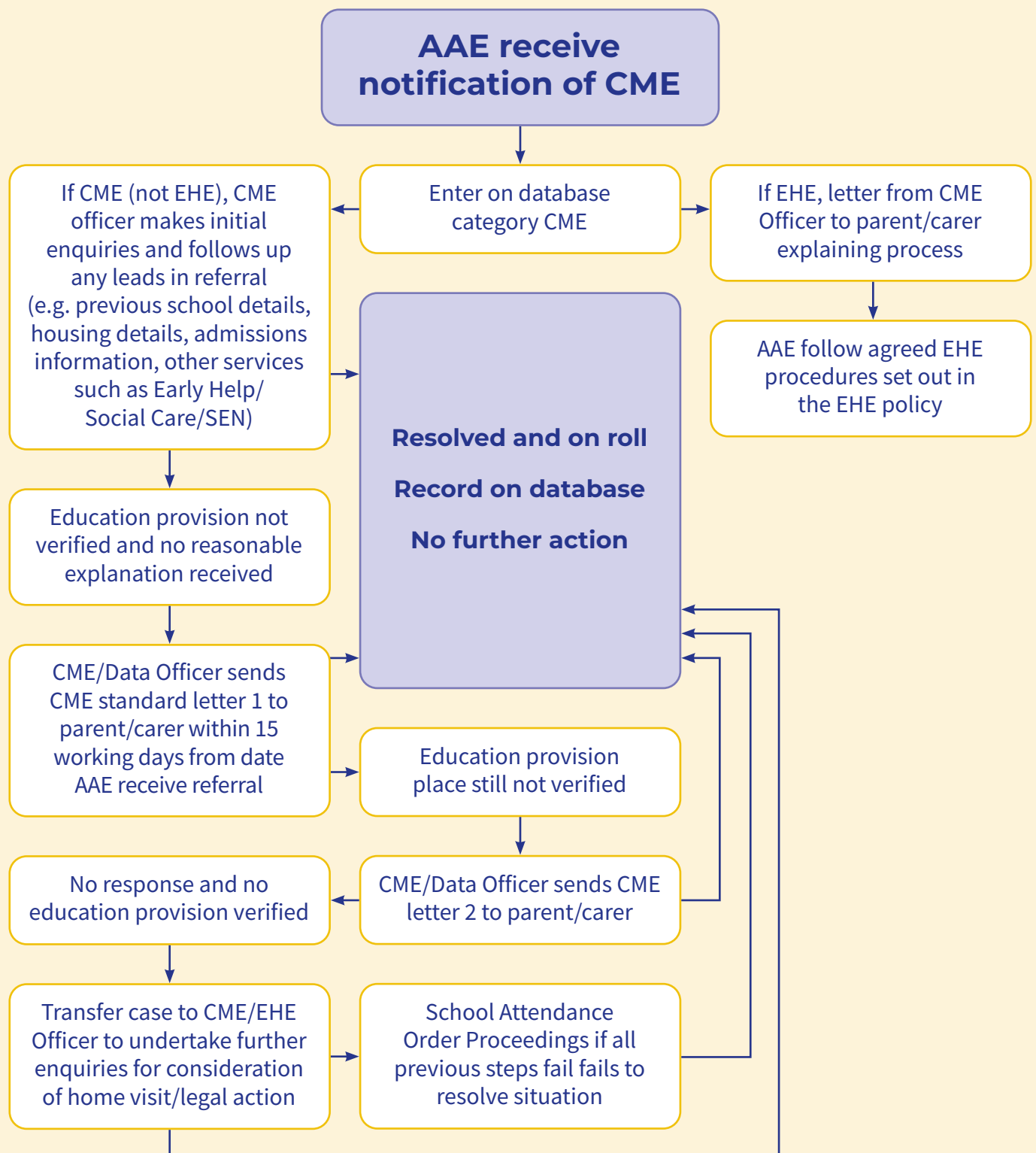
Early Help: The Early Help service is a point of contact for schools where there are concerns about pupil attendance (persistent unauthorised absence).

- Westminster Early Help – accesstoeearlyhelp@westminster.gov.uk
- Kensington and Chelsea Early Help – earlyhelp@rbkc.gov.uk

Admissions and Access to Education Service (AAE)

Children Missing Education Flow Chart

(n.b. if CME cannot be located, reasonable enquiries form submitted to Head Admissions and Access to Education for sign off)



School reasonable enquiry form

Leading to Children Missing Education/Off Roll

Please return your completed form by password
protected or encrypted email to

 missing.education@rbkc.gov.uk



City of Westminster



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

When schools should use this form?

- Where pupils have stopped attending, attempts to make contact have not been successful, no leavers form has been completed and where the destination of the child is not known.

When should schools NOT to use this form?

- Pupils who have stopped attending but who have not moved (e.g. parent still liable for council tax at the home address) are non-attenders NOT CME; they must remain on the school's roll and be dealt with as non-attenders.

When is it appropriate to take a pupil off the school roll?

- A pupil may only be removed from roll where one of the statutory grounds for deletion under Regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies and all associated conditions have been met, including any required joint enquiries with the local authority.

School name	
School attendance lead	

Please return your completed form by email to  missing.education@rbkc.gov.uk

Pupil details	
Full name	
Date of birth	
Last attendance date	
Parent details	
Full address	
Mother/carers full name	
Mother/carers telephone	
Father/carers full name	
Father/carers telephone	
Email address(es)	

Please return your completed form by email to  missing.education@rbkc.gov.uk

Pupil ethnicity (if known)

Please tick one option

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ White British | ☐ White Irish |
| ☐ Traveller of Irish heritage | ☐ Any other white background |
| ☐ Gypsy/Roma | ☐ White and Black Caribbean |
| ☐ White and Black African | ☐ White and Asian |
| ☐ Any other mixed background | ☐ Indian |
| ☐ Pakistani | ☐ Bangladeshi |
| ☐ Any other Asian background | ☐ Black Caribbean |
| ☐ Black African | ☐ Any other Black background |
| ☐ Chinese | ☐ Any other ethnic group |
| ☐ Refused | ☐ Information not obtained |

Additional and/or emergency contact details

Family/friend full name	
Email address	
Telephone	

Please return your completed form by email to  missing.education@rbkc.gov.uk

Enquiries made by school					
Date of phone call 1			Number called		
Outcome of phone call 1					
Date of phone call 2			Number called		
Outcome of phone call 2					
Date of phone call 3			Number called		
Outcome of phone call 3					
When was the letter posted?			Outcome		
Date of home visit		Time of home visit		Visit made by	
Was anyone home?	☐ Yes	☐ No	Did accommodation appear uninhabited? (empty bins, post piled up etc.)	☐ Yes	☐ No
Other comments					
Did you check with the neighbour?	☐ Yes	☐ No	Neighbour's address		
Outcome of visiting/speaking with the neighbour					

Please return your completed form by email to  missing.education@rbkc.gov.uk

Other information	
Was absence following a holiday?	☐ Authorised ☐ Unauthorised ☐ No
Were there any previous long absences or holiday?	
Was a housing check done?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Outcome of a housing check	
Is family known to Children's Social Care?	☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, what is the social worker's full name?	
If yes, what is the social worker's telephone number?	
Explain any welfare or/and vulnerability concerns. E.g. domestic violence, SEN, temporary accommodation, mobility issues.	
SEN – is there any SEN support in place? (for those without a EHCP)	☐ Yes ☐ No Explain:
Is there an EHCP in place?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Is this family from the Traveller community?	☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, what were their previous known destinations?	
Are the family Asylum Seekers?	☐ Yes ☐ No
What were previously attended schools?	
What was the previously attended school (if known)?	

Please return your completed form by email to  missing.education@rbkc.gov.uk

Was there any recent breakdown in relationships known? E.g. in school between pupils, or between pupil or parent and school? E.g. over different opinions relating to behaviour, exclusions or SEN?

Reason for CME

Please tick where appropriate

- ☐ Moved from another LA area in England, not yet applied for a school place
- ☐ Moved from another country and not yet applied for a school place
- ☐ Waiting for the outcome of a school application/admissions appeal
- ☐ Accepted a school place waiting to start
- ☐ Did not get school preference
- ☐ Concern that suitable education is not being provided through EHE
- ☐ Difficulty in accessing a school place
- ☐ Dissatisfaction with the school – general
- ☐ Dissatisfaction with the school SEND
- ☐ Dissatisfaction with the school – bullying
- ☐ Challenging a School Attendance Order
- ☐ Believed to have moved to another LA in England
- ☐ Believed to have moved to another country
- ☐ Unknown
- ☐ Reason not recorded
- ☐ Other

Please return your completed form by email to  missing.education@rbkc.gov.uk

Additional information	
School signature	
Signatory full name	
Role in the school	
Date of signing	
Signature	
School attendance service worker signature	
Attendance lead full name	
Date of signing	
Signature	
CME officer signature	
Signatory full name	
Date of signing	
Signature	

Please return your completed form by email to  missing.education@rbkc.gov.uk

