

Children Missing Education (Staff Guide)

Who are children missing education (CME)?

These are children of compulsory school age (5 – 16) who are:

- Not on a school roll
- Not being educated other than at school
- Identified as having been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time

Why are children missing education or at risk of missing education?

- They fail to start school
- They cease to attend school either through withdrawal or exclusion (formal or informal)
- They fail to make the transition between primary and secondary school or move into a new authority
- They may be experiencing family or personal difficulties
- They may be moved from temporary accommodation at short notice
- Their whereabouts may be unknown
- They may be unable to attend school due to medical needs
- They may be educated other than at school
- They may need a co-ordinated approach for their complex needs before they are able to start school
- They are not in receipt of full-time provision suitable to age, their needs and ability
- They fail to return from holiday or compassionate leave

The law requires all children between the ages of 5 and 16 to be in full-time education

If I come across a child missing education what should I do?

1. For children leaving school with no known destination:

A well established procedure is already in place for schools when pupils leave a school and their destination is unknown. **It is essential that schools inform the Pupil Tracking Officer before removing a child from roll** if a forwarding school has not been identified. Schools should initially make their own reasonable enquiries. If a child has been absent for 10 school days, schools should initially make a referral to their Attendance Improvement Officer. If after 20 days, or where there are concerns the pupil has not been located a referral should be made to the Pupil Tracking Officer.

2. For children believed to be missing from education:

The referral procedure for children believed to be missing from education (excluding those in 1 above who leave a school with no known destination) is straightforward. It must be followed by staff within Education and Children's Services, in schools and partner agencies when children believed to be missing from education come to their attention.

Anyone who believes a child may be missing from education should refer this to the Pupil Tracking Officer by email. (diana.wingrove-owens@slough.gov.uk)

If everyone follows this procedure it will enable the Local Authority to meet its statutory duties in relation to pupils missing education.

The Pupil Tracking Officer will follow up all referrals, liaising with other agencies as necessary, to establish whether or not the child really is missing from education. If the child is missing from education, the Pupil Tracking Officer will ensure the details are passed to the appropriate team to secure suitable education. All children missing from education will be monitored by the Pupil Tracking Officer until such time as suitable provision is made.

3. Safeguarding

If there are any concerns for the wellbeing of the child a referral should be made to the duty team at Children and Families. The Pan Berkshire Safeguarding procedures can be found at <http://berks.proceduresonline.com/>

Contacts for Children Missing Education (CME)

Queries about individual children should be referred to the Pupil Tracking Officer.

Head of School Services:	Tony Browne
Tel:	01753 875717
Email address:	tony.browne@slough.gov.uk
Attendance Team Manager:	Tony Murphy
Tel:	01753 787661
Email address:	tony.murphy@slough.gov.uk
Pupil Tracking Officer (CME)	Diana Wingrove-Owens
Tel:	01753 787669
Email address	diana.wingrove-owens@slough.gov.uk