
CHESHIRE WEST and CHESTER
Children and Families Service

**Children and Young People Missing
Education**

Guidance and Procedures

Date of Review: 1st April 2016



Cheshire West
and Chester

Page

1	.....	Contents
2	.....	Introduction
3	.....	Groups of Children and Young People at risk
4	.....	Identifying a Child as Missing From Education
5	.....	Notification and Referral Routes
	.....	Procedures
6	.....	Removal from School Roll
7	.....	Tracking and Cross Boundary Arrangements
	.....	Common transfer File requirement and procedure
8	.....	Links to documents supporting CME Guidance And Procedures

Appendices 1 & 2

School Procedure Flow Charts

CME Documents & Forms

CME 1 School Check List

CME 2 Children Missing Education Referral

CME 3 Notification of Removal from School Roll

1. INTRODUCTION

Definition of Children Missing from Education

The Department for Education's (DfE) definition and scope of Children Missing Education (CME) refer to;

“Any child of statutory school age (5-16) who is not registered at any formally approved education activity (e.g. school or setting, alternative curriculum, home education), and has been out of any education provision for a substantial period of time (agreed as 4 weeks)”

Children who are registered at a School or Setting (or some form of recognised alternative provision) but whose attendance is poor are not included in the definition of CME. The issues for these children will be dealt with by the School or Setting with the support of the Local Authority (LA) as appropriate.

It is a key responsibility of the LA and its' Schools and Settings to safeguard all children. This document sets out the guidance and procedures for children and young people missing from education and the role and function of the Children's Services and other Agencies in meeting all statutory responsibilities. It is intended that this document should be used as a point of reference by Head Teachers, Pastoral Staff in Schools and Settings and all other professionals who work with children and young people and their families. This guidance is shared with the Independent and Private Sector Schools as a model of good practice within Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C). This document provides a framework within which consistent practices and procedures can be applied

Children and young people who are not included in an educational provision, are more likely to be at higher degrees of risk that could include participation in anti-social or criminal behaviour, social isolation and/or sexual exploitation/trafficking/forced marriage/FGM or at risk of radicalisation. These 'missing' children and young people are amongst the most vulnerable in our county.

Children who are missing from education may also be at risk of significant harm and every Local Authority has a Child Missing Education (CME) named point of contact. Every practitioner working with a child has a responsibility to inform their CME contact if they know or suspect that a child is not receiving education.

CW&C Children's Services are committed to working with Schools and Settings and other partners to improve our monitoring and swift return to suitable educational provision for this group of children and young people. Underpinning this commitment is the knowledge that only if children attend school regularly, they will be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Adopting these procedures will also ensure that all Children's Services in CW&C ensure high standards of safeguarding and will;

1. Meet statutory duties relating to the provision of education and safeguarding the welfare of children & young people missing education
2. Ensure that robust systems are in place in the Local Authority to identify and track children and young people missing from education or at risk of doing so.

3. Ensure that monitoring and reporting systems are in place in order to identify a lead agency and a key worker for all children and young people missing from education
4. Ensure all CW&C Schools and Settings are fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to missing pupils and will properly support and challenge, if appropriate, in meeting these responsibilities.
5. Support other Local Authorities to locate their own missing/lost pupils

CW&C will closely monitor the operation of the missing children procedures to ensure best practice with regard to safeguarding

The implementation of these procedures is endorsed by all CW&C Schools and Settings, Children's Services and partner agencies. Independent Schools and the private sector are advised to inform the Local Authority if a young person has left their establishment and they do not have a forwarding School.

This Guidance does not replace any of the Safeguarding Procedures. Existing safeguarding procedures and mechanisms for reporting and recording child protection concerns are to be observed at all times.

2. GROUPS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK

There is considerable research available that identifies the reason for children and young people being "missing from education". The most common of which includes

- Failing to be registered at School or Setting, aged 5 years
- Failing to make a successful transition from Year 6 – 7
- Frequent house moves including periods of homelessness or accommodation in a refuge
- Family breakdowns

Some children who experience certain life events are more at risk of going missing from education. These include:

- Children who are at risk of sexual exploitation or being trafficked to the UK or within the UK. www.cheshire.police.uk/cse and www.knowandsee.co.uk
- young people who have committed offences
- children at risk or harm/neglect
- young runaways
- children of homeless families, perhaps living in a temporary accommodation house of multiple occupancy or Bed and Breakfast
- children with long term medical or emotional problems
- unaccompanied asylum seekers
- children affected by substance misuse
- children of refugees and asylum seeking families
- children in new immigrant families, who are not yet established in the UK and may not have fixed addresses
- Children in Care
- children with a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller background

- children who are privately fostered
- young carers
- children from transient families
- teenage mothers
- children from families of members of the Armed Forces

3 IDENTIFYING A CHILD AS MISSING EDUCATION Children and Young People not registered on a School roll or in an Education Setting

The process by which the local authority determines that the child or young person is not registered with an education provider

When a school or education setting suspect a child or young person has become missing from education, the school or setting should follow normal procedures for investigating pupil absence

However, if the school or education setting does not receive a satisfactory response within 10 working days, a referral should be made to the Education Welfare Service at; ewssecuremail@cheshirewestandchester.gcsx.gov.uk who will undertake further enquiries working in liaison with referring school, partner agencies and CME Officer. A home visit will also be carried out within 5 working days.

If location of pupil is not achieved within 20 working days, the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will be notified(Sue.Humphreys@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) and further investigations will be carried out in line with Local Authority procedure.

Children and young people may not be on school roll when a parent has not accepted a school place at phase transfer. When this occurs, the **School Admission Team** will inform the **Education Welfare Service**. For “in year” transfers a school may be contacted directly by the parents. The school **must** inform the School Admissions Team if parents accept or do not take up the offer of a school place. See Admissions “in year” process. www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/admissions

Parents who elect to home educate have a duty to ensure their children receive a suitable full time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (*section 7 of the Education Act 1996*). Some parents decide, as they are entitled, to provide suitable education by educating their children at home. The parents have no responsibility to inform the Local Authority if they choose to educate their child at home from the start of statutory school age.

When parents withdraw their child from a school or education setting to home educate, the name of the child can only be deleted from the Admissions Register of the school when the parents inform the school in writing (section 9(1) (c) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995. It is then the duty of the Head Teacher to inform the Local Authority within 10 working days of when the name of the pupil has been deleted from the register. Failure to do so will result in the child being listed as a Child Missing from Education.

Although children with Statements of Special Educational Needs can be home educated, the Local Authority remains responsible for ensuring that the education the child receives is suitable. The statement must stay in force and the Local Authority must ensure that parents can make suitable provision, including providing for their child’s special educational needs.

4 NOTIFICATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE NOT IN EDUCATION AND REFERRAL ROUTES

Notification can be received from within the Local Authority, from all other Local Authorities, other professionals and all partner agencies.

The CME & Pupil Tracking Officer and the Education Welfare Service have been designated to co-ordinate the identification, referral, tracking and re-engagement of children and young people who become missing from education.

CW&C will work in partnership with key stakeholders and partner agencies including Schools and Settings, Housing & Benefits, Health, Police, Young People's Services, Border Agency, and any other agencies who frequently come into contact with school aged children and young people. It is an expectation that any professional becoming aware of a school aged child will ask where that child is registered at school. In the event of a child not being on the roll of a School, it is the responsibility of that professional to contact the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer Sue.Humphreys@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk; or Education Welfare Service at ewssecuremail@cheshirewestandchester.gcsx.gov.uk

5 PROCEDURES

Schools and Settings should promptly take reasonable steps to contact the parent in instances where a child leaves or ceases to attend a CW&C educational provision;

- without the school being advised by the parent which new school or setting the child is to attend
- where the child has not returned from leave of absence from a holiday within two weeks of the expected date of return
- when a child fails to attend school after having accepted a place

Following 10 days of non-school attendance and after the School or Setting has been unable to contact parents, the School or Setting should refer to the Education Welfare Service (EWS) using the Missing Child Referral form (**CME2**)

The Education Welfare Service will then make reasonable efforts to identify the child's current whereabouts/destination. This will include;

- reference to Children & Young People's database (Tribal) and School Admissions to establish whether the child has moved school within the Local Authority
- undertake a home visit within 5 working days of the referral to make enquiries at home (or known contacts) and neighbours, as appropriate
- contact with other agencies known to be involved with the family
- checks with Housing Department, where appropriate

If, at any point in this process, the Education Welfare Services (EWS) locates the child, the EWS will contact the School. If the EWS establishes an actual address for the missing child in another Local Authority, the EWS will contact the Education Welfare Service or relevant Local Authority Agency, for that Local Authority.

Following reasonable enquiries and where the child is still missing after 20 days of consecutive school absence, the EWS will contact the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer.

The EWS will subsequently instruct the School or Setting to remove the pupil's name from the school register. School or Setting will complete and submit **CME3** Notification form to CME & Pupil Tracking Officer (Sue.Humphreys@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) and upload CTF via s2s in accordance with the DfE guidelines.

Upon receipt of CME3 Notification form, the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will investigate further with multi agency partners, which may include:

- Health Agencies
- DfE databases
- ESCR (social care) database
- CW&C Housing Benefits Agency
- Relevant government agencies
- Any Local Authorities where it is suspected the child may be living or have previously been resident
- Integrated Early Support Access Team

If the child is still missing after all these enquiries have been completed, the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will activate a national missing children alert via s2s.

Children missing education may raise potential safeguarding issues. If Schools or Settings believe a child or family to have gone missing, they should **NOT** remove that child from their roll without following the CME Guidance and Procedures; completing the checklist form (**CME1**), referring to the Education Welfare Service using form (**CME2**) and subsequent completion of form (**CME3**) Notification, which should be submitted to CME & Pupil Tracking Officer (Sue.Humphreys@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) and Education Welfare Service (ewssecuremail@cheshirewestandchester.gcsx.gov.uk)

6 REMOVAL FROM SCHOOL ROLL

Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation outlines when Schools and Setting may remove pupils from attendance/admissions register.

In brief, the regulations enable Schools and Settings to remove compulsory school age children from school roll only in the following circumstances:

- Completion of compulsory school age
- Permanent exclusion
- Death of a pupil
- Transfer between schools when new school is known
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
- The School is replaced by another School in a School Attendance Order (SAO) or the Order is revoked by the Local Authority
- Failure to return from an extended family holiday after both the School or Setting and the Local Authority have completed CME process
- 20 days continuous absence and both the School or Setting and the Local Authority have failed to locate the pupil and CME process has been completed
- When a pupil fails to attend school after having accepted a place and where CME procedures have been followed and reported upon

Removal from school roll for any reason other than those specified above is illegal.

If a child's name is removed from the school roll, the LA Designated Officer for Missing Pupils must be informed and completed CME 3 submitted to;
(Sue.Humphreys@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

7 TRACKING AND CROSS BOUNDARY ARRANGEMENTS

Agreed information sharing protocols ensure timely notification with neighbouring Local Authorities on the management of referrals for children attending schools in CW&C but living in another Local Authority. If a child goes missing from a CW&C school, but lives in another Local Authority, the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will contact the designated lead in that Local Authority to alert them of the pupil's CME status.

Additionally, if a child or young person leaves Cheshire West and Chester, the CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will alert the new/receiving Local Authority of the reported move to ensure appropriate safeguarding of the child or young person.

8 COMMON TRANSFER FILE (CTF)

There is a statutory requirement on Schools and Settings to send specified information about a pupil moving School to the receiving School. Since June 2002, this information has been transferred through the electronic common transfer file (CTF) via DfE's s2s secure website

Common Transfer Form (CTF)

The law requires that CTF data is sent to a pupil's "new" maintained school by the former school within 15 days after the pupil ceases to be registered at the "old" school. The unique pupil number (UPN) needs to be included in the CTF as a unique identifier for the pupil and each UPN should only contain information regarding one pupil.

If a child's destination is not known, schools are advised not to post the CTF to the s2s 'Lost Pupil Database' (LPD) until all Local Authority CME Guidance and Procedures have been completed and following liaison with Education Welfare Service.

Briefly, when uploading a CTF, if current school is unaware of where a child has moved to, then a transfer file using XXXXXXXX as the destination should be created and uploaded onto the secure s2s site.

When a pupil emigrates, becomes Electively Home Educated or transfers to an Independent school, or moves to a school in Scotland, Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland then MMMMMMMM should be used. This enables the CTF to be stored securely and available if the child returns to a maintained school in England or Wales.

Files for XXXXXXXX and MMMMMMMM are loaded onto s2s in the same way as files for schools – the only difference is that these files can only have the details of **one pupil** to enable individual pupil information to be retrieved.

In the unlikely event of a pupil joining a Cheshire West and Chester school without that school receiving a CTF from the child's previous school and where the parents are unable or unwilling to provide information about the previous school, then the receiving school should contact the Local Authority Pupil Tracking Officer Sue.Humphreys@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) to request assistance in identifying previous education provision.

Further guidance regarding creating and transferring of CTFs is available for schools and can be found on the following link: www.teachernet.gov.uk/s2s

ADDITIONAL PUPIL TRACKING NOTIFICATIONS

All Schools and Settings are required to notify the Local Authority, using form **CME3**, of all in year transfers, statutory transfer from primary to secondary placements where secondary school is located in another Local Authority, withdrawal to become Electively Home Educated, transfer to Independent Schools or moves abroad (including Wales, Scotland and Ireland)

Documents/Information Supporting Guidance Procedures Relating to Children Missing Education as follows:

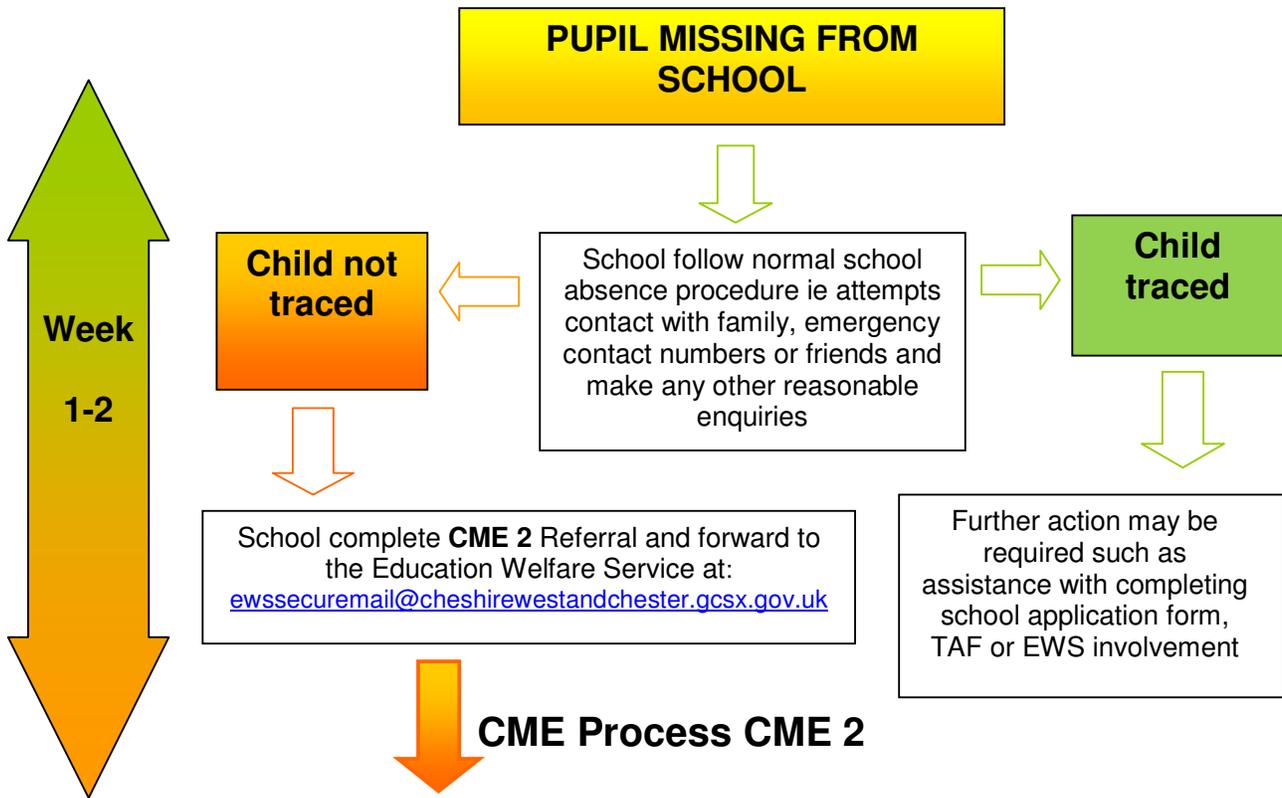
Regulation 4 of the Education (Pupil Registration)(England)Regulations 2006
Regulation 12(3) of the Education (Pupil Registration)(England)Regulations 2006
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/pdfs/uksi_20061751_en.pdf

Keeping Children Safe in Education
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/447595/KCSIE_July_2015.pdf

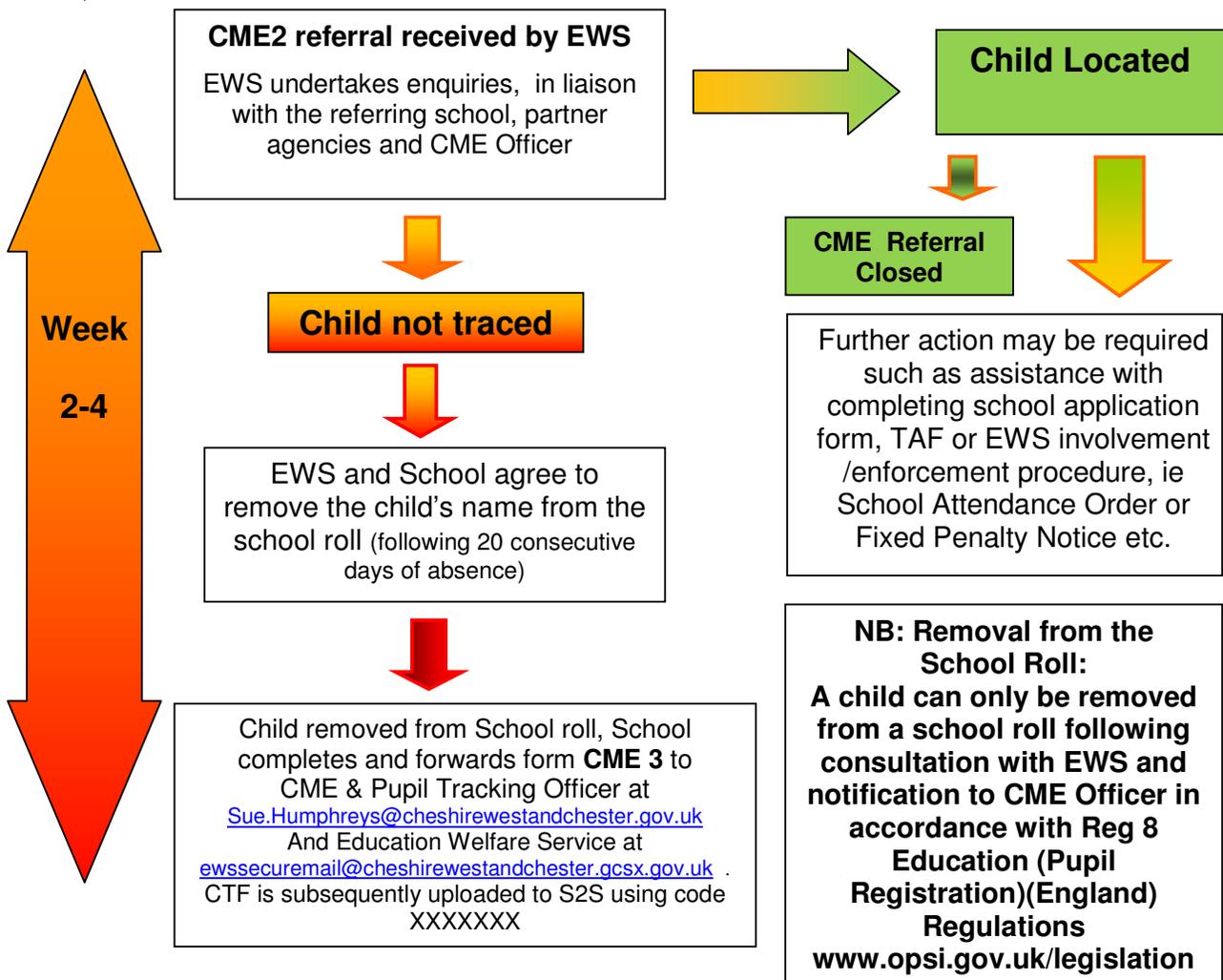
The Prevent Duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers – June 2015
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf

School Inspection handbook September 2015
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015>

CME Process CME1



CME Process CME 2



CME Process CME 3

CME 3 notification received by CME & Pupil Tracking Officer

- CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will
- add notification to CME Tracking spreadsheet.
- Check and confirm all information received is correct
- Review all available data systems; ESCR, K2S & CYPD etc

If Child Located

- School and all relevant professionals contacted with current information
- All data systems will be updated
- CTF uploaded to S2S
- CME referral closed

If Child Found

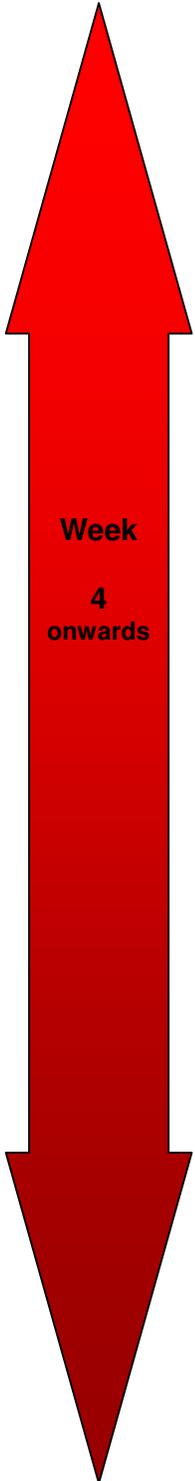
- Advise all relevant professionals and schools
- Amend data systems with updated information
- Ensure CTF uploaded via S2S to appropriate destination
- CME Referral closed

If Child Not Found

- CME & Pupil Tracking Officer will :
- Liaise with relevant Local Senior leads
 - Liaise with Health Professionals
 - Check K2S and S2S Missing Pupil Databases
 - Previous schools
 - Pursue enquiries with Local Benefits, Housing, Border Agency, other Local Authority Colleagues (EHE, GRT, SEN etc)

If Child Not Found

- Post National Missing Pupil Alert on DfE S2S
- If aware of social care concerns, liaise with Local Safeguarding Manager
- Update all data systems
- Upload CTF to Missing Pupil on S2S
- Pupil remains on CME list and is subject to continual review



For school use only

To be used for pupils who have gone 'missing' or where a forwarding school or address is not known.

Name of pupil:

DOB:

Age:

Address:

Tel No:

Name(s) of parent(s) / carer(s):

Name of sibling/s & DOB/s :

Please check the following:

- Refer to internal school records and contact any other Agencies known to pupil/family, ensuring Social Care is contacted if there are any safeguarding concerns or family already known to Social Care, as soon as concerns arise
- Make telephone checks to all emergency numbers, sending letters and emails where required
- If any siblings at another school, check with that school to gain possible information
- Check with friends and relatives of the pupil

If after 10 school days, or if all enquiries have been exhausted and the whereabouts of the pupil is still unknown, please refer to the Education Welfare Service by completing CME 2 Referral form and forwarding to

ewssecuremail@cheshirewestandchester.gcsx.gov.uk

REFERRAL

To be sent to Education Welfare Service following 10 school days of absence or when school's own checks have failed to locate a missing pupil or new school or home address is unknown

Date:

Name of Referrer:

Name of School:

Tel No:

Child/ren's Names:

First Name	Surname	DOB	M/F

Name of Parent / Carer:

Address:

Tel No:

Date child/ren last attended school:

Siblings

First Name	Surname	DOB	M/F

Please indicate if currently:

Looked After		From Travelling Family	
Subject to TAF/Child Protection Plan/CIN		Stated	

Referral Form to be sent to Education Welfare Service at:
ewssecuremail@cheshirewestandchester.gcsx.gov.uk

NOTIFICATION

Notification of Removal from School Roll The Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) Regulations 2006

Please ensure this form is emailed to the CME Pupil Tracking Officer

Sue.Humphreys@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

and Education Welfare Service

ewssecuremail@cheshirewestandchester.gcsx.gov.uk

each time you remove a pupil from school roll

(except when ending statutory education, or transition to High School within Cheshire West and Chester Local Authority)

Name of School	
----------------	--

The name/s of the following child/ren has/have been removed from the school roll:

Name(s)	
Date of Birth(s)	
Current Address	
New address	
New school	
UPN(s)	
Reason for removal	
Date of last attendance	
Date taken off School Roll (please ensure this is the same as entered on Simms)	

Please indicate if currently:

Looked after		Subject to Child Protection Plan	
Statemented		Subject to Child in Need Plan	
TAF in place		From Travelling Family	

If new school known please upload CTF direct to new school via S2S website.

If new school or education setting not known please upload CTF via S2S website referring to Department of Education Guidance for appropriate coding, ie MMMMMMM or XXXXXXXX

If school or education setting unknown, missing pupil procedure and referral to Education Welfare Service **MUST** have been completed prior to removal from school roll.

Name:

Designation:

Date: