

Child Missing from Education Policy

Oak Hill CE Primary School



'Jesus said, 'I have come that you may have life in all its fullness'

(John 10:10)

FAITH – VALUES – ACTION

Approved by: FGB **Date:** 28 June 2023

First approved on: 28/06/23

Next review due by: June 2026

Signed by:

Victoria Leather, Chair of Governors

Oak Hill Church of England Primary School recognises the importance of specific safeguarding measures for Children Missing Education (CME); all staff are aware that CME can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities and know our school's unauthorised absence and CME procedures.

This policy outlines the procedures Oak Hill Church of England Primary School will follow in the event we believe or are concerned that a pupil registered at our school could be a Child Missing from Education.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's [Attendance Policy \(September 2022\)](#), [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy \(September 2023\)](#) and the local authority's [Children Missing from Education Guidance \(September 2023\)](#)

1. Any 'missing' children are amongst the most vulnerable and at Oak Hill School we feel it is vital that practitioners in all services work together to identify and re-engage these children back into appropriate education provision as quickly as possible. We will monitor attendance through daily registers including addressing poor or irregular attendance, referring poor attendance to the local authority and investigating any unexplained absences as part of our wider safeguarding duties. We will keep our admissions register accurate and up to date, ensuring our register is changed as soon as changes are made to the roll of pupils.
2. A Child is classed as CME if they are:
 - 2.1 of compulsory school age **and**
 - 2.2 not on a school roll **and**
 - 2.3 not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at school, for example, at home, privately or in alternative provision
3. CME may include a child who has left a custodial establishment or private schooling or has arrived into Gloucestershire and whose parents have not been able to secure a school place. CME also includes those children who are **missing** (family whereabouts unknown) and are children who are usually registered on a school roll or in alternative provision.
4. CME might therefore include a child who is not at their last known address **and either**:
 - 4.1 has not taken up an allocated school place as expected; or

- 4.2** has 10 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation; or
- 4.3** left school suddenly and the destination is unknown.

5. Some children may face obstacles to their entitlement to education for a variety of reasons. This can be children from families:

- 5.1.** fleeing domestic abuse;
- 5.2.** who are homeless, perhaps living in temporary accommodation, houses of multiple occupancy or Bed and Breakfast;
- 5.3.** involved in anti-social behaviour;
- 5.4.** not yet established in the UK and may not have fixed addresses or be familiar with the education system;
- 5.5.** who can be highly mobile, eg in the armed forces, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families

or children who are:

- 5.6** under the supervision of the youth justice system;
- 5.7** affected by substance or alcohol misuse;
- 5.8** unaccompanied asylum seekers;
- 5.9** victims of bullying or discrimination on the grounds of race, faith, gender, disability or sexuality;
- 5.10** at risk of sexual exploitation, including children who have been trafficked to, or in the UK;
- 5.11** at risk of 'honour' based violence including forced marriage;
- 5.12** at risk of female genital mutilation;
- 5.13** children looked after/children in care;
- 5.14** privately fostered;
- 5.15** young carers;
- 5.16** permanently excluded from school

or children who have:

- 5.17** long term medical or emotional problems;
- 5.18** parents with mental health problems or
- 5.19** parents with learning difficulties.

6. Oak Hill School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection and the safeguarding of pupils. The health, safety and welfare of all our children are of paramount importance to all who work in our school. At Oak Hill School we will investigate the whereabouts of any pupil not indicated as present in the register for whom we have not previously had any communication regarding the absence.

7. These investigations will follow steps as laid out in the checklist below and refer to the flowchart found in Appendix A:
 - 7.1 Checking again for any previous correspondence regarding a pupil's absence e.g. Check internal school records, Class teacher, SENCO, Health, etc
 - 7.2 Ensuring a telephone message has not been left regarding absence
 - 7.3 Contacting parents / carers using the registered home telephone number from school records. If no response is obtained, a message will be left (if possible) and school staff will continue to step 7.4
 - 7.4 Should no response be obtained from home telephone numbers we will then try contacting parents / carers using other registered emergency contact numbers from school records. If no response is obtained a message will be left (if possible) and school staff will continue to step 7.5
 - 7.5 Checks with friends or siblings of the pupil, to gather any information
 - 7.6 Should responses or information still not be obtained we will continue to attempt contact by phone at hourly intervals throughout the day
 - 7.7 If after following these steps no contact can be made, school staff will contact the Local Authority's CME Officer within the Access to Education Team for advice on further action to be taken.
8. Records of attempts from step 7.4 to contact parents/ carers will be kept in the school office.
9. We will try to establish a family's whereabouts within 10 school days if a child on our school roll has stopped attending and no contact can be made with the parent to establish a reason for the absence, or if they have not returned from holiday within 10 school days of the expected date of return. If the child's whereabouts remain unknown, we will make a referral to the local authority's CMA Officer in the Access to Education Team (Appendix B). Referrals should be sent to:

CMA Officer

Access to Education Team

Shire Hall

Westgate Street

Gloucester GL1 2TP

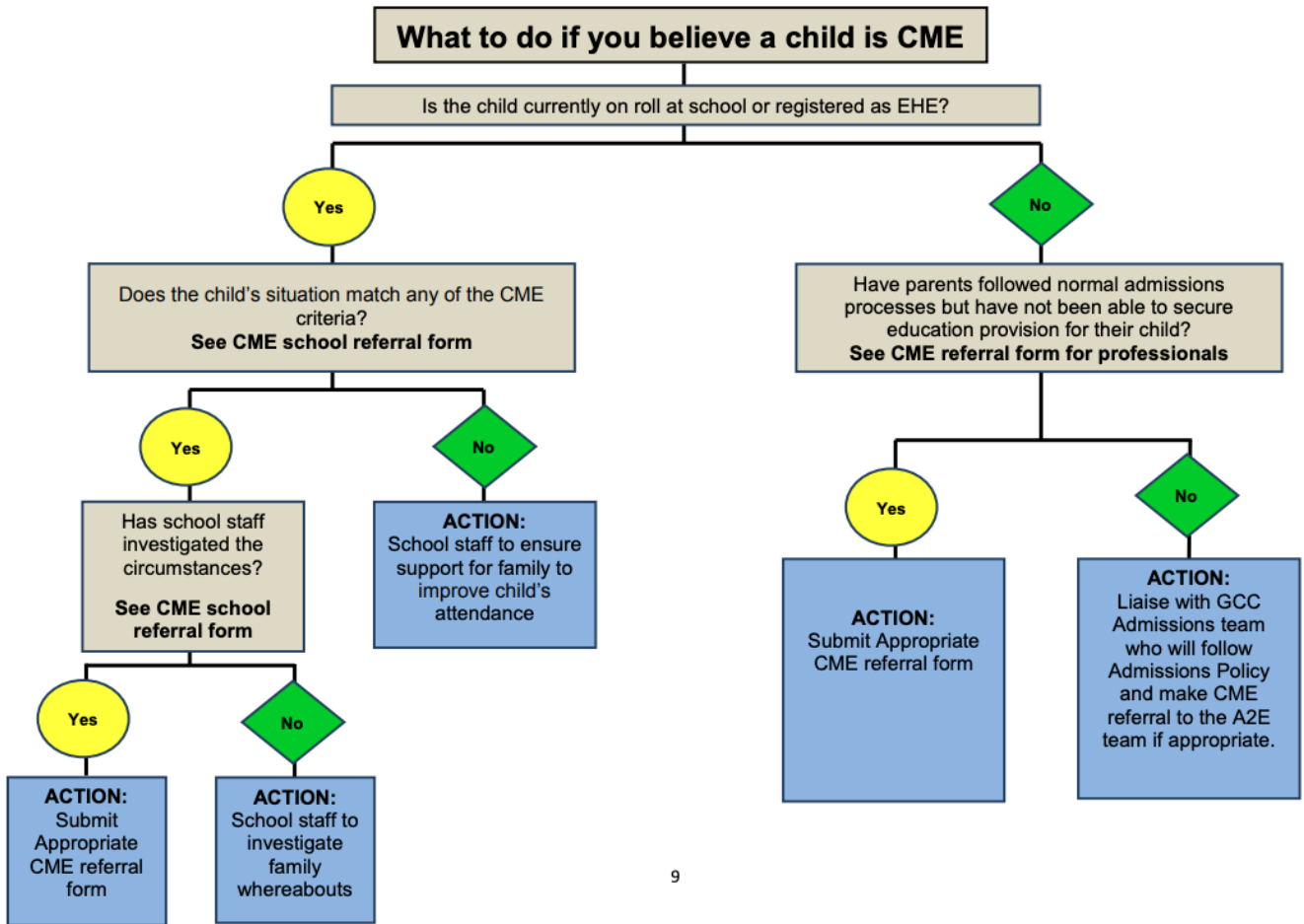
01452 328774/426015

missingpupils@gloucestershire.gov.uk

10. Children who go missing from school or are absent from school are not automatically missing from home or care. We will refer to our Attendance Policy and working closely with parents or guardians.

Adopted		
Signature		Headteacher
Signature		Chair of Governors
Date		

11. APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

SCHOOL CME REFERRAL FORM – CHILD WHOSE FAMILY WHEREABOUTS ARE UNKNOWN

(This form should **not** be used for matters of persistent absence – please contact the Inclusion Service inclusionservice@gloucestershire.gov.uk for all absence queries)

Details			
	School		
Child and family details	Forename(s):		Surname
	DOB:		Gender:
	Date last in education		Date last seen
	Parent(s) names and all contact details		
Supporting details (Please tick if appropriate)	Child in Care		
	Formerly/Currently known to Social Care		
	Special Educational Needs		
	Traveller		
CME criteria (Please indicate)	All attempts to contact the family have failed (see checklist below)		
	Family known to have moved away but neither destination school nor new home address is known		
	Child did not take up allocated school place and attempts to contact have failed		

Checklist		
Action	Date completed	Outcome
Carry out first day calling (if this is an automated system the school should make telephone contact manually)		
Attempt to get in touch with all known emergency contacts (at various times of day) <i>Provide contact details</i>		

Gather further information including details of siblings from other agencies, wider school community (e.g. staff, other pupils, friends)		
Home visit within 5 school days if appropriate		
Social Media searches – e.g. contact details of a parent or school noted on Facebook		

Any other additional information relevant to this referral:

If a child is subject to a child protection plan, is a child in care or there are reasons to be concerned for the child's safety, inform Social Care immediately and follow GSCB procedures.

If child is not located following checks, please send referral form to the Access to Education team, **no later than the tenth day of absence** and continue checks as appropriate. The Access to Education team will make further enquiries and attempts to locate the family including contacting other LAs and CME Officers. In rare cases where the child cannot be located the CME Officer will publish a message on the national Schools 2 Schools secure website.

Please return this with any attachments or relevant information to:

Access to Education Team, Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 2TP
 Email: missingpupils@gloucestershire.gov.uk