

Guidance for Children Missing Education

This guidance is for professionals who are completing a Children Missing Education (CME) referral into Bradford CME team. This guidance should be read in conjunction with [DfE Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities](#).

What are Children Missing Education?

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.

What should you do if you believe a Child is Missing from Education?

- It is the responsibility of schools, health services and other partner agencies to act when they are aware of or believe that a child is missing from education. It is expected that all partner agencies will make [reasonable enquiries](#) in an attempt to establish the whereabouts of the child. This should include attempts to trace the child such as telephone calls, letters, home visits, checking with multi-agency colleagues etc.
- As much basic information should be collated as possible including names, addresses, contact details, details of other significant people in the child's life such as relatives, friends etc.
- Reasonable enquiries should commence as soon as you believe the child to be missing from education.
- If after completion of your reasonable enquires, the child's whereabouts are still unknown then you should complete a Child Missing Education referral form.

Completion of CME referral form

- The CME referral form can be found on Bradford Schools online (BSO) [here](#).
- The CME referral form must be completed electronically and submitted via secure email to CME@bradford.gov.uk
- Please complete the form with detailed but succinct information. If we do not believe there is enough information included to support our further enquiries, we may have to send the referral back for further information which causes delay in tracing the child.
- School must not remove a child from roll until communication is received from the Local Authority.
- **If you are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child, you must follow your internal safeguarding procedures.** This may include making a referral to Children's Social Care or contacting the police if appropriate.

Further guidance for schools

Children who have been continuously absent for 20 schools days and cannot be traced

If the following criteria have been met then a CME referral should be made:

- The pupil's whereabouts are not known

- The absence is not being authorised by school
- The school has made enquiries and can evidence that it has exhausted its enquiries.
- The Headteacher does not have any grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable causes

School do not need to wait until the full 20 school days have elapsed before making the referral - the referral should be made as soon as they have exhausted their enquiries.

NB: This criterion is also applicable for new pupils who do not attend school on or after the expected/agreed start date.

Pupils who move house

NB: For many children who move within Bradford, due to the limit on school places, it is wholly possible that your school will still be the nearest suitable school that is available. This means that you should not remove the child from your roll until the child starts at their new school and you have confirmation of this from the new school. Whilst a parent may wish to apply for a place at a different school, this process could be lengthy and it will usually be in the best interests of the child to remain at your school until they can start at their new school, thus avoiding a gap in their education. If the child's new address is within the statutory walking distance of your school (2 miles for under 8s and beyond 3 miles for over 8s), the child will not be entitled to free travel to school. If the child's new address is over the statutory walking distance of your school, the child may be entitled to free travel to your school, if there is not a closer available space. More information on Travel Assistance is available on the [council website](#).

Temporary Accommodation:

In the case of families being made homeless and moving to temporary accommodation, within or outside Bradford, schools should speak to the parent to establish the family's circumstances and seek advice from the Travel Assistance Team as to whether temporary free travel arrangements can be made for the pupil in order to support their continued attendance at the school until they move to a nearer school, or until more permanent housing arrangements are made. Schools should not remove the pupil from roll until or unless it is confirmed that the child has started at a new school.

Permanent move within Bradford:

In cases of families moving within the city of Bradford, schools should not remove the pupil from roll until it is confirmed the pupil has started at a new school. Schools should seek to confirm the new address within Bradford, support the family with making applications for new schools if appropriate. Updates in relation to the allocation of new school places should be sought from the Admissions team.

Permanent house move outside of Bradford but within the UK:

In cases of families moving outside of Bradford, schools should not remove from roll unless:

- a) They have ascertained a full forwarding address and have confirmed with the receiving local authority that they are aware that the family are now in their area. For example, they are processing a school application for the pupil in question.
- b) They have confirmed that the pupil has started at a new school.

- c) The CME team notifies you that they have confirmed the pupil's whereabouts in another local authority.

Permanent house move outside of the UK:

In cases of families moving outside of Bradford, schools should not remove from roll unless:

- a) The parent notifies you in writing that they are moving abroad; and is able to provide details to satisfy the school that the child is not going to be CME; and there are no safeguarding concerns (See Annex A).

Pupils who fail to return from leave of absence and cannot be traced

If a pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted; the Headteacher does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and despite the school making reasonable enquiries the child's whereabouts are still unknown then a CME referral should be made.

The child should not be removed from roll until the CME team notify the school in writing that

- a) Despite the Local Authority's reasonable enquiries, the child's whereabouts remain unknown, or
b) The child has been located but is no longer living within reasonable distance of the school.

Bradford Schools Online

Out of school register

All children known to Bradford MDC as missing from education are placed on the 'Out of school register'. This 'Out of School register' is available to view on Bradford Schools Online [here](#). **NB:** You must be logged in to access the register.

All schools will receive an email every Monday indicating the number of missing pupils who have been added to the 'Out of school register' each week. There is an expectation that school will check the register on a regular basis to establish if they have admitted any children missing education (CME). If schools have admitted a pupil that is recorded on the Out of school register, they need to notify the CME team as soon as possible.

On/off roll proforma

Schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register at a non-standard transition point under any of the fifteen grounds set out in the regulations, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with:

- a. the full name of the pupil;
- b. the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- c. at least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives;
- d. the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- e. the name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable; and
- f. the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register

(Annex A: Grounds for deleting a pupil from the school admission register within the [Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities](#))

All schools are required to notify the local authority within five days when a pupil's name is added to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. Schools will need to provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil.

The on/off roll proforma accessed via Bradford Schools Online was created to allow for schools to easily notify the local authority of pupils of statutory school age joining the school or leaving the school at non-standard transition points.

The on/off roll proforma can be accessed on Bradford Schools Online [here](#). **NB:** You must be logged in to be able to access this proforma.

Children who are believed to be CME should not be removed from roll until the Local Authority has confirmed to school that they have exhausted their enquiries.

Common Transfer Files

When a child is removed from roll, school should upload the Child's Common Transfer File (CTF) to the DfE School to School (S2S) Missing Children Database.

If you require further information relating to Children Missing Education please contact 01274 438877 or email CME@bradford.gov.uk

ANNEX A: Children leaving the country

In the case of children leaving the country, this information should be gathered. It is important to gather at the very least a full, forwarding address and details of whom the pupil will be travelling with and living with. If you are able to gather this information; and you have completed your enquiries which confirm that the pupil has left; and you have no safeguarding concerns about the family then you are able to remove from roll. Please ensure you complete the BSO off roll proforma in full.

If you are not satisfied that the family are indeed leaving the country to their said destination once you have exhausted your enquiries then a CME referral should be made. Please attach this form the CME referral with the information in order to share what information you have managed to gather.

Proposed date of departure from UK:	
Actual date of departure (if already left):	
Point of departure – Airport, coach station etc:	
Time of Departure:	
Flight numbers and name of airline:	
Have you seen copies of tickets? Please attach copies of tickets if possible:	
What country are they returning to?	
Who is leaving the UK (please name)	
If child is not leaving with parent(s) who is accompanying them?	
What is their relationship to the child? If applicable.	
Why is/are the parent(s) not leaving with the child(ren)? If applicable.	
Who will be caring/responsible for the child(ren)?	
Address of where they plan to reside?	
Name and contact details of the school they have enrolled their child/ren or plan to enrol their child/ren at?	

NB: Please give consideration to the possibilities of; forced marriage, that those presenting themselves as parents/family/carers are not genuine, child trafficking, child sexual exploitation, that the child(ren) may not be leaving the country as reported and any other potential safeguarding risks.