



CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION (CME) POLICY March 2019

This policy is reviewed every 3 years, or sooner if there are statutory guidance updates.

It is due for review March 2022.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Helen Cullen', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Signed
Helen Cullen
Headteacher

SEXEY'S CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION POLICY

This policy has been developed with the school's Christian values and principles, as a Church of England School, at its foundation.

Introduction

All children, regardless of their circumstances are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Section 436A of the 1996 Education Act (added by section 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) requires the

Local Authority to establish the identities of children within the area who are not registered at a school and are not receiving suitable education other than at a school. Children of compulsory school age within this category are regarded as Children Missing Education (CME) and should be returned to full time education. The Local Authority have procedures in place to prevent children at risk of becoming CME.

Rationale

Sexey's work with children and families to ensure that we:

- Meet statutory duties relating to the provision of education and safeguarding the welfare of children missing education.
- Have robust multi-agency systems in place to identify and track children missing from education or at risk of doing so.
- Establish monitoring and reporting systems for all children missing from education and at risk of becoming CME.

Definitions

Children Missing Education (CME) refers to 'any child of compulsory school age who is not registered at any formally approved education activity (e.g. school, alternative provision, elective home education), and/or has been out of any education provision continuously for a period of not less than twenty school days'.

CME is defined if the child is:

- On a school roll, not attending and the family's whereabouts are unknown.
- Of compulsory school age; and
- Not on a school roll; and
- Not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at school, e.g. at home, privately or in alternative provision.

Examples include:

- A child who has moved to Somerset with no school identified.
- A child who has left private schooling with no school identified.
- A child who is deemed not to be receiving suitable education whilst being Electively Home Educated.
- A child who was due to take up an allocated school place but has failed to attend, despite school checks.
- A child who has 10 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, despite school checks.
- A child who is not at their last known address despite school checks.
- A child who has suddenly and unexpectedly left school and their destination is unknown despite school checks.

Compulsory School Age

A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between 1st January and 31st March they are of compulsory school age on 31st March; if they turn 5 between 1st April and 31st August they are of compulsory school age on 31st August; if they turn 5 between 1st September and 31st December they are compulsory school age on 31st December. A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year they reach sixteen.

A Parent is defined in Section 576, Education Act 1996 as:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Any person who has care of a child (having care of a child or young person means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person, irrespective of their relationship).

The Education Welfare Service (EWS) Role

Safeguarding children and vulnerable members of society is a key priority for Government. The Home Office, 'Missing children and adults, a cross government strategy', outlines the government's objectives for all agencies to comply with:

- Prevention – reducing the number of people who go missing – for the Education Welfare Service, this means working closely with all agencies to break the cycle for those who repeatedly go missing.
- Protection – reducing the risk of harm to those who go missing - for the Education Welfare Service, this means ensuring that the cases of CME are investigated thoroughly and as quickly as possible to locate pupils and close cases.
- Provision – providing missing people and their families with support and guidance - for the Education Welfare Service, this means signposting families to appropriate supportive agencies.
- Sexey's will seek support from the local authority's Education Welfare Service (EWS), part of Support Services for Education (SSE) for guidance and advice on CME. The EWS has procedures and adheres to the DfE guidance 'Children Missing Education. Statutory guidance for local authorities September 2016'. The EWS has a designated officer who manages all CME concerns.

Our School's Duties

We have statutory safeguarding responsibilities under the Education Act 2002. We will investigate any unexplained absences. If a child fails to attend school, school staff will try to establish the family's whereabouts before making a CME referral.

In order to fulfil these responsibilities the School will as applicable:

- Use its contact telephone numbers to attempt to speak with the parent/carer or other family member.
- Send an email to parents.
- Speak to siblings and/or known relatives within the School.
- Speak to friends of the child who is not attending.
- Speak with School staff of known siblings at other schools.
- Make home visit(s) to attempt to ascertain if the family are still in the same home at different times of the day.
- Enter into discussions with the Education Welfare Officer.

Following the completion of these attempts to locate the child:

- The School will complete a CME referral (Appendix A) and registration certificate and email them to missingchildren@somerset.gov.uk. (Any partner agency or service involved with children has a duty to notify the Local Authority of any child or family who are missing from education).
- A CME referral must be completed if there are 10 days of continuous unexplained absence.
- If all attempts by school have been completed prior to the 10 days, the EWS may accept the CME referral earlier.
- Sexey's school will not delete a child from the school roll until advised by the CME officer. - Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- To support the EWS all referrals to CME (Appendix A) and EHE (Elective Home Education) exit forms will be sent into the Central Team, Education Welfare Service as soon as 'in house' checks have been completed, to ensure these children are safeguarded.
- Should parents approach the School for a place but the School has no places, School Admissions should still be updated stating that the School has been approached by a parent with details of the child including DOB, carers and address. This enables the EWS to track these children and support them in securing a place in education.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding of all children is paramount and this policy must be considered in accordance with the Schools safeguarding procedures. For serious concerns about the immediate safety of a child contact must be made to Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224 or the Police.

The Somerset Safeguarding Children Board provides guidance and protocols relating to situations that may result in CME. For example, Child Protection, Child Sexual Exploitation, Children Missing from Home or Care in Somerset, Forced Marriage, Honour & Ritual Killings, Female Genital Mutilation (inc Breast Ironing), Child Slavery or Trafficking and any form of child harm.

Safeguarding concerns can be discussed with the EWS or the Education Safeguarding Advisor.

Please refer to Sexey's School Safeguarding Policy for the school's approach.

Appendices

Appendix A : *Children Missing Education CME Referral Form*

Appendix B : *Process for Elective Home Education*

Related Policies

Safeguarding Policy
Attendance Policy

Further Information and Guidance

Safeguarding

<http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/>

Children missing education. Statutory guidance for local authorities September 2016

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

School Attendance

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/overview>

Missing Persons Strategy

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/117793/missing-persons-strategy.pdf

POLICY REVIEW

Policy Holder: Assistant Head (Pastoral).

Subsequent amendments have been made:

Amendment	Detail	Date	Made by
a			
b			
c			
d			
e			



Appendix A

CONFIDENTIAL

**Children Missing Education (CME)
Referral Form**

This form must only be completed after school has undertaken checks as explained in the Guidance for Schools document and in the following circumstances:

- A child who was due to take up an allocated school place but has failed to attend.
- A child who has 10 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation.
- A child who is not at their last known address.
- A child who has suddenly and unexpectedly left school and their destination is unknown.

Incomplete forms will be returned to schools.

A registration certificate must be attached to this referral form along with any recent correspondence from parents or carers.

Schools must contact Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224 or children@somerset.gov.uk without delay if they have child protection concerns or the Police if they have good reason to believe that a crime may have been committed.

Student's last date of attendance:			
School:			
Pupil's FORENAME:			
Pupil's SURNAME:			
UPN:	DOB:	Gender:	
Ethnicity:			
Language:			

Previous School(s):	

Sibling's Name:	Sibling's School	Has school been contacted?
		Yes / No
		Yes / No
		Yes / No
		Yes / No

Name of Last Known Contacts	Address & Telephone Numbers	Parental Responsibility?
		Yes / No
		Yes / No
		Yes / No

Confirmation of School Investigations Completed:	
Telephone calls made to any numbers held on record †	Yes / No
Conversation with siblings and/or known relatives within the same school	Yes / No
Conversation with child's friends	Yes / No
Conversation with school staff at sibling's schools	Yes / No
Home visit attempted	Yes / No

Please provide ANY information you have from your investigations, including your source of information or possible known area(s) where the family may have moved to.			
E.g. any other agency involved? any recent correspondence from parents/carers (if so, please attach with CME form)			
Have you discussed with EWO to determine if this is an attendance issue or a CME issue?	Yes / No	Name of EWO:	

Completed By:			
Designation: Office		Date:	
Agreed by Headteacher:			

Forms should be emailed to MissingChildren@somerset.gov.uk

Please attach a registration certificate

Appendix B : Process for Elective Home Education

