

Reasonable Joint Enquiries for Children Missing Education (CME)

The 2016 DFE Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance states that local authorities and schools should agree roles and responsibilities locally in relation to making joint enquiries. Please note the process below is specifically for potential CME cases, which are defined as when the child stops attending without explanation and school have no knowledge of their whereabouts; and are not persistently absent children who would be dealt with under the school's normal attendance procedures.

First 0-10 school days of absence

Actions to be taken by school

N.B. If you have any safeguarding concerns about the child you MUST immediately contact First Response

In the 0-10 day period schools should:-

- Employ their first day contact processes
- Make contact with known relatives, significant adults
- Make enquiries with classmates of the child (if appropriate)
- Liaise with school(s) attended by siblings.
- Arrange home visit(s) by school staff
- Send letter(s) home
- Check with previous school(s) if appropriate
- Make contact with agencies known to be working with family, including MOD if military family

If these actions have been completed and the child has still not been located, the matter should be referred to the Local Support Team. Schools should request Education Welfare Worker (EWW) support from the LST to establish the reason for the unknown absence and lack of information. This request must include a record of the reasonable enquiries made so far.

Between 10-20 school days

Actions to be taken by EWW

- Undertake unannounced home visit(s)
- Make enquiries in local community e.g. neighbours, community groups.
- Make enquires with other local agencies e.g. Housing, Women's Aid, Police, Children's Services etc.

If the child is not located after the above joint enquiries have been made, and twenty school days (four school weeks) have elapsed, the school has a duty to refer the matter to the CME Team using the referral form found at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/childrenmissingeducation and it is at this point that the child can be removed from roll.