READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Children Missing Out On Education - Procedure Guide

Updated January 2016
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Help &amp; Prevention</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Publicity</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notification - Named Contact</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CME/CMoE Notification Procedure</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying if a child is on a school roll</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying child at risk of missing out on education</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting information on the EMS database</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining the child’s needs</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying suitable provision and places</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing Provision</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring Provision</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracking children who are between providers</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendices Index

1. Common Transfer File                        | 22   
2. Threshold Criteria                          | 24   
3. Useful Definitions - Missing or Absent?     | 26   
4. Underpinning Legislation and Guidance       | 27   
5. Glossary of Acronyms                        | 30   

2
Introduction

This guidance is intended for the public, schools, professionals and practitioners. It is written to help the Council in its implementation of effective systems for identifying and maintaining contact with children resident in Reading missing education or not receiving a suitable education.

Children (child) and Young People in this document refers to all Reading resident children and Looked After Children in the care of Reading Borough Council who are not on a school/academy/free school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision) OR are on roll of a school but not in full time education. It does not cover children of pre-school age (i.e.; children under 4 at the start of the academic year) nor does it include those children who are over 16.

Data is shared with services tracking young people who become NEET over the age of 16 and young people who have a learning difficulty or learning disability up to 25 years of age. These groups are not covered in this guide. However the transfer of information on school leavers who are children missing out on education (CMOE) is covered in the context of transition to other monitoring roles/services.

All Local Authorities are required to make arrangements to enable them to establish the identities of children residing in their area who are not receiving a suitable full time education. In relation to children and young people ‘suitable education’ is defined as “efficient education suited to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special needs the child may have”. Local Authorities have a statutory duty to arrange suitable full time education for children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them. This duty was restated in the Children, Schools and Families Act of 2010 “Local Authorities must ensure that all children who fall within the scope of section 19 receive suitable full time education unless reasons that relate to their medical condition mean that this would not be in the best interests”.

For children who not only go missing from education but who may also be missing from home, residential or foster care, there is a specific policy and procedure in the LSCB Protocol “Missing Children and Young Persons Joint Protocol 2014” (see LSCB website) which was agreed between all nine Thames Valley LSCBs. There are also the Berkshire LSCB Child Protection Procedures as well as Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy meetings and the Missing Children’s Panel that meet regularly.
This procedure guide considers two categories of children missing out on education:

1. Reading resident children on a school roll but not attending/not getting suitable and/or sufficient education.
2. Reading resident children not on a school roll and not being educated at home.

Following this CMOE guidance will help the Council to meet statutory duties relating to the provision of education and the safeguarding of the welfare of children, which may be relevant to children missing from or missing out on education. We will routinely monitor how much educational provision our children & young people are receiving - and particularly for part time education - the quality and appropriateness of this provision.

Background

All local authorities must have robust measures in place both to identify quickly when a child is not receiving suitable education and to follow through with effective enquiry and tracking systems.

Implementation of the duty to identify children who are not receiving a suitable education is also embedded in the local authority’s overarching Early Help and Preventative strategy for Children’s Services and Education/SEN strategies to ensure that these children receive the full range of services needed.

This procedure guide describes the procedure for identifying children missing out on education plus those at risk of missing out. It also describes how we help them move back into education (or alternative provision) and maintain contact to prevent them slipping through the net.

We aim to ensure suitable, good quality full time educational provision for all children and young people who are medically fit for it and as near to full time for others as their health needs allow, based on their EHC Plan pathways for pupils with Special Educational Needs or Individual Health Care Plans.

The November 2013 Ofsted Report on Children Missing Out on Education contained 4 recommendations for Local Authorities:

- To have a central record of all children not accessing full time education in the usual way, and to maintain good information about the achievement and safety of any child or young person not accessing education in the usual way.
- To identify clear lines of accountability for the quality and amount of provision for all children of compulsory school age who do not access education in the usual way. To have a named person at a senior level responsible for this.
- To share information across local authority boundaries in a timely and appropriate way and ensuring the involvement and commitment from all schools in the area to information sharing and monitoring. Agreements are in place with neighbouring LAs.
• To ensure that every child is on the roll of a school, regardless of circumstances (unless electively home educated).

Five areas of work help to achieve a robust system to identify and maintain contact with children missing out on or at risk of missing out on education:

- Strategic Management & Leadership
- Networks & Points of Contact
- Information Systems
- Good quality, flexible, adaptable and full time alternative provision and monitoring of that provision
- Effective pupil tracking and monitoring systems within and between all types of school and the local authority.

The main focus of this document is on procedures and systems within the Council for children missing out on education. However this is within the context of the wider remit of the Local Authority (LA) to safeguard the welfare of all children.

Identification of Early Help and Prevention to reduce the likelihood of Children Missing out on Education

The team of Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) are part of multi-disciplinary Children Action Teams and work in partnership with schools, parents and other professionals to identify and support vulnerable children and their families where school attendance is an issue. If there is no improvement in attendance and/or where attendance remains irregular the local authority will take appropriate enforcement action.

There is also support to children and families from the Troubled Families Programme and Children Action Teams (CATs) which could also include Primary Mental Health Workers, the Youth Engagement Service, parenting support, and family work. Referrals will be made as appropriate to other services within the Council such as Social Care, Health, SOURCE, Youth Offending Service and to the voluntary sector.

All of the nurseries and Children’s Centres and most of the early year’s settings do transition into school work. One of the key purposes of the children’s centres is preparation for “school readiness.”

The Youth Offending Service works with young people, schools and in liaison with other services such as the Police and Education Welfare Officers and participates in Attendance Panels and re-integration meetings for example. They deliver the Positive Parenting Programme (Teen) Reading-wide as a rolling programme.

The School Improvement Team together with the Virtual Head Teacher for Looked After Children, supports children throughout their education.
The Virtual Head - Children Missing Out on Education has the strategic lead for CMOE, School Admissions, Attendance and Exclusions, Elective Home Education and the LSCB link with schools.

There is a robust Fair Access Protocol in place which is supported for secondary placements by a 3 weekly meeting (PAM) which all schools attend and which also has cross border representation. The Primary FAP has been reviewed (October 2015) with primary head teachers.

We aim to ensure that every child is on the roll of a school, regardless of circumstances, unless parents have elected to educate their child at home.

Existing good practice broadly falls into the following categories:

- reducing the likelihood that children fall out of or have reduced engagement with the education system, by e.g. audits of the rolls and registers of schools and sharing information across LA boundaries in a timely way. Also cross-matching data reports from systems to identify children who may be missing out on education;

- identifying and locating children missing out on education, by e.g. truancy sweeps, notification of exclusions and the provision of named points of contact to receive notification of children from other agencies;

- re-engaging the child(ren) with appropriate educational provision, by e.g. multi-disciplinary panels, Admissions and Re-Admissions meetings, TAC/F (Team Around the Child/Family) meetings and pastoral support.

- checking the sufficiency and quality of part time education, where provided.

**General Publicity**

Every November the School Admissions Team routinely supplies an application pack to all Reading resident parents whose child attends a Reading nursery school, nursery class within a primary school or PVI who are eligible for admission to a reception class in the following September. This information, available on the website, is sent to GP surgeries, community centres, all EY settings (including PVIs), libraries etc. Secondary transfer application packs are sent to all Reading schools Reading resident parents of year 6 pupils.

Publicity and promotion of the route to notify the Council of children who may be missing out on education is provided to agencies to tell them how to inform the Council about children missing from education and the importance of employing this route consistently and whenever necessary. It may be the case that another agency is aware of the arrival or existence of a child living in the local authority but not in education, before the Council is aware.
Other agencies who might pick up knowledge about children missing out on education in Reading include: Schools (including Academies and free/community schools and Independent schools) and Cranbury College (Pupil Referral Unit), Housing Associations, Homeless Hostels, Women’s Refuges, Accident and Emergency, NHS Walk-in services, Health Visitors, School Governors, Parent Partnerships, Police, Youth Offending Service (YOS) and Probation, Education Welfare Officers local and national, as well as members of the public. Within the Council this may include Children's Action Teams, Edge of Care teams, Children’s social care (Access & Assessment), SEN case officers, the Council’s contact centre, MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).

The Council’s new website in 2015 will include refreshed and updated information on how to notify the Council of children missing education, as well as targeted and routine promotion to external agencies and internal Council departments.

It is key that Council staff, schools, the NHS and other partner agencies and the general public understand who and how to notify a concern.

**What happens when we know that a child may be missing out on or at risk of missing out on education?**

- We have a named role (plus back up) to whom notifications are made and
- Clear responsibilities on the named person(s) for appropriate action

**Named Role**

The **School Admissions Manager** is the role/person to whom referrals are made should there be a concern about a child who may be missing out on or at risk of missing education. This person is able to take notifications from within the Local Authority boundaries, from colleagues within the Council and other agencies. Other local authorities around the country can also make enquiries through the Admissions Manager.

**Admissions Manager - phone 0118 937 3666 (internal phone number is 73666)**

**Notification - Responsibilities**

Where a child is on a school roll and is absent from school i.e. missing from school, the school must do an S2S alert.

If it is truancy - the school must contact the Education Welfare Service.
If a child is permanently excluded or fixed term excluded the school must notify the Virtual Head Teacher for CMOE and the Performance & Data Team who then put the information onto EMS.

If a child has been potentially involved in a crime and is e.g. bailed or remanded, the Police and YOS contact the school and YOS alert the Council.

Traveller Families - are notified via the ASB officer or by word of mouth via a member of the public. If the family are “roadside” or in a property, then we visit and take details. The families are often known to us from a previous visit.

Any member of the public phoning in with concerns is dealt with via MASH or the Access and Assessment Team if there is social worker involvement or via Admissions (and put onto EMS).

Once Notified: Summary Responsibilities

The Admissions Manager puts the name of the child in the CME module of the EMS computer system, if notified they are missing out on education. This can also be done by the relevant case worker such as an EWO.

Each child on the central “CMOE List” is allocated a lead professional who works with that child & family and monitors and provides updates on any specific developments for that child.
CME/CMoE Notification Procedure

Reported by CME Officer from other LA

Reported by member of public or other agency

Contact made to Named CME Officer currently Emily Nicholls by email or telephone call
0118 937 3666 cme.reporting@reading.gov.uk
Case investigated and logged

Child known?

NO

No Reading address supplied not on EMS or known to Social Care - remains responsibility of other LA to track or logged for future reference

Child is at the address no school place. Report back to CME Officer who will advise Admissions Team. That team ensure child is placed in school. Admissions Team will be responsible for monitoring CME. Admissions team notify EWS of school allocation

Child not known on EMS or Social Care but Reading address is supplied - CME Officer requests Education Welfare Officer to visit address

Established that child is on roll of a school regularly attending school - not CMoE

YES

Child not attending regularly reduced timetable report to EWS to investigate that team responsible for monitoring - if reduced timetable ensure school is following protocol

Virtual Head for Children
Missing out of Education informed by email if added to CMEO register - monitored via regular meetings
What Happens after Notification?

We identify if the child is on a school roll:

- The Admissions Team know where Reading children are placed (i.e. on roll) including Academies, Free Schools, those children at a school outside the borough and those electively home educated. Therefore they can quickly identify if a named child is NOT on a school roll.

However, the local authority does not have access to registers held by Academies or Independent schools unless they have bought into the service offer from the local authority for the Education Welfare Service.

If there is minimum information it may be necessary to check the child’s name and other details, if available, against all educational provider rolls in the local area. EMS is frequently updated and can be checked by the staff members whose role requires access.

The school2school (s2s) site, has a secure messaging system to exchange information.

We have access to status information including through partner agencies, across local authority boundaries and multi-disciplinary teams, all shared via information sharing protocols.

Parents Can Choose to Provide a Suitable Education

Parents have a duty to ensure that their children receive a suitable full time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996). Some parents decide, as they are entitled, to provide suitable education by educating their children at home. If they withdraw their child from school to do this and the child is of compulsory school age, the name of the child can only be deleted from the admissions register of the school when the parents inform the school of their intentions in writing.

It is then the duty of the school to inform the Council (Virtual Head - CMOE or Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher) immediately. Although children and young people with statements of special educational needs can be home educated, permission needs to be granted by the Council if they attend a special school. The statement must stay in force and the Council must ensure that parents can make suitable provision, including providing for their child’s special educational needs. If the parent’s arrangements are suitable, the Council is relieved of its duty to arrange the provision directly, but still remains responsible for ensuring the child’s needs are met. It does this by an annual review.

It is within the parents’ rights not to have to inform the local authority if they take the responsibility to home educate if the child has never been registered at a school, however if the child’s name comes to the attention of the Council as someone who may be missing
education, then the Council has a duty to investigate this and contact the parents to find out if the child is receiving a suitable education with a view to providing further monitoring and support as appropriate. It is in the interests of the child, parents and the Council if the initial contact is clear, but not threatening.

The local authority can intervene if it has reason to believe that parents are not providing a suitable education and may issue a School Attendance Order (SAO) (under section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996).

**Identify a child at risk of or missing out on education:**

- We have access to registers (attendance records) for all maintained schools/providers including Pupil Referral Units (PRUs).
- However, the local authority does not have access to the registers of Academies, Free schools, Independent schools (unless they have bought into our EWS) BUT all schools have a safeguarding duty to report CMOE.
- We have agreed multi-agency/disciplinary thresholds concerning children at risk of going missing from education (see below).
- We request information on children receiving part-time education; a spreadsheet return is sent to head teachers to report these termly.

**Attendance Registers**

Regular screening of registers provides backup to the service offer between Education Welfare/Education Social Work Services concerning improving attendance. EWOs check registers on their school visits - at least once a term for primary schools and at least once every other week for secondary schools. “Truancy Sweeps” involving various partner agencies are also an effective method of identifying those children at risk of missing out on education.

**Multi-Agency/Disciplinary Thresholds**

Children who are excluded from schools should not miss education and the Council is committed to ensuring that children who are permanently excluded from day 6 of the exclusion receive full-time education. Where a pupil is given a fixed period exclusion of 6 days or more, schools have a duty to arrange suitable full time education for the pupil from the 6th day for each period. Work should be sent home for the first 5 days. However, local head teachers have agreed an exclusion tariff which means they rarely exclude for more than 5 days. If they do, they notify the Virtual Head Teacher for CMOE.

Some pupils are unofficially excluded by schools (e.g. a school might ask a parent to take a
child home instead of an exclusion or to consider home educating or finding and alternative school for a child to avoid permanent exclusion). This is illegal and should be challenged when this has been identified by the Council. An unofficial exclusion increases the risk that a child may go missing from education. The vast majority of Reading schools do report all exclusions to the local authority. The Virtual Head - CMOE must also be informed of any pupils receiving part time education; if parents report these directly the Virtual Head contacts the school (please refer to Reduced Timetables and Unofficial Exclusion Guidance).

**Looked After Children (LAC)**

These young people are in the care of the Council so there are systems in place that can quickly deal with any issues around education placement for looked after children. It is important that their school place is kept open until there is agreement between the school and the authority with responsibility for their care that this place is no longer necessary.

If a Looked After Child (LAC) goes missing from their care placement, the relevant department from Children’s Social Care will follow the guidance of the “Missing Children and Young Persons Joint Protocol.”

The Council is under a statutory duty to ensure that an educational placement is secured prior to any change in care placement, including when a young person is moved from a care placement in one Local Authority to one in another Local Authority or, if placed in an emergency that an educational placement is secured within 20 school days.

All schools should have a designated teacher for LAC. These teachers are ideally placed to assist when identifying those looked after children currently in school who may be at greater risk of going missing from education. This is supported by the Virtual Head Teacher for Looked After Children. We have a contract with WelfareCall who will check on attendance with schools and notify the Virtual Head Teacher for LAC of any concerns.

**Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan**

Should a child who is subject to a Child Protection Plan be at risk of going missing from education or missing out on education, the school must immediately liaise with the appropriate local children’s social care team.

Children’s social care has the lead responsibility for children subject to a Child Protection Plan and if such a child goes missing, they will follow child protection procedures and in conjunction with the LSCB would take steps to locate the child. For CMOE the first contact from the school will be to the social worker, if the child is not at school.

**Children at risk of Sexual Exploitation or known victims**

SEMRAC (Sexual Exploitation and Missing Risk Assessment Conference) is a multi-agency operational group, who meet regularly to consider level of risk to victims, facilitate multi-agency discussion, sharing and mapping of information and intelligence and considers
disruption activity. SEMRAC also have an oversight of intervention plans in place e.g. CP, CIN. If a school-age child on the register goes missing the Virtual Head - CMOE contacts the school’s Safeguarding lead to share information. It is important that such children do not receive repeated exclusions or reduced timetables which increase the risk.

Children Supervised on Statutory Orders in the Youth Justice System

Any young person supervised by Reading Youth Offending Service (YOS), serving either a community or custodial sentence and at risk of going missing from education or already out of mainstream education, will have their case identified by the worker (Education, Training and Employment) within the YOS and a relevant education placement will be sought in conjunction with Children’s social care.

It is essential that a school place is kept open if the child goes into custody or secure setting until there is agreement, between the school in consultation with the Virtual Head for CMOE, the Education Welfare Service and the YOS that this place is no longer appropriate (i.e. the child stays on the school roll). Children stay on roll whilst in custody (November 13 Ofsted report) and only come off roll if they are still in custody after 4 months or at date beyond statutory school age.

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<th>Recording the child’s details on CMOE module in EMS</th>
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<td>• We have a single shared database (EMS) with clear protocols for access by appropriate professionals to update with information so there can be regular management monitoring of the status of these children.</td>
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CMOE Module

A central list of children who are CMOE for any reason is held by the Council on the Children Missing Education Module of EMS (which complies with data protection principles).

The school2school (s2s) site, is also a secure messaging system.

The module in EMS records the following appropriate dates:

- date referred in;
- date of assessment, if necessary;
- date when provision determined;
- date moved into provision
- Short case notes of actions

The timescale for getting notification information onto EMS was reviewed in January 2015 and it was agreed that a child’s details must be added to EMS within 5 working days of RBC being notified that a child was a CMOE. Updates on progress must be added as soon as
possible and within 5 working days.

A report is run routinely on CMOE and this is progress checked by the Virtual Head Teacher for CMOE. For individual cases, monitoring of actions and progress happens via 1:1s and supervision and the full list is available for the CMOE Panel meetings (see the Monitoring section for further details).

The Council ensures an assessment is made by the school or in combination with the school, of the child’s educational needs and that a determination is made on appropriate forms of provision OR to re-engage the child in full time education.

- A key worker and lead professional are identified
  - The key worker makes every effort to contact the parent/guardian or child identifies the child’s needs or re-engagement in education or refers the contact to the local authority in which the child is resident.
  - We have clear threshold criteria for admission to provision or allocation of service e.g. children’s social care, specialist provision such as access to CAMHS

Key Worker/Lead Professional

Adds the name to the CMOE module in EMS or the initiation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) allocates a Key Worker/Lead Professional to each child to help ensure that action is taken and the child’s progress is tracked and monitored while the process of accessing or re-accessing provision takes place.

Identify Needs

The ideal is to re-engage children with mainstream provision as soon as possible and for many children this will be the correct option. Parental and child preference should be taken into account.

Schools also have a duty to take an active part in this process and should contact the parents at the earliest opportunity in order to set up a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) meeting. At this meeting an action plan or a Behaviour Support Plan will be agreed and written up taking into account the reasons the child or young person has become disengaged from education in order to assist the process of successful reengagement. A review of the Individual Education Plan (IEP), Provision Map or early Annual Review should be arranged for pupils with Special Educational Needs. This may take the format of a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) but a new IEP will be agreed with behavioural as well as learning targets. If a move to an alternative school is considered to be the best way forward then the school must follow the agreed process either in consultation with the SEN team for pupils with statements or the Fair Access Protocol (Primary or Secondary) for all other pupils.
The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) should be used to help in assessing strengths and needs and improving services to children, young people and families. It enables practitioners to join up with any other professional who might have already completed an assessment for the child and share concerns with them in order to develop a more appropriate response in collaboration with the young person and the family.

An assessment is made as to whether the child/family meets the threshold criteria for e.g. Children’s Action Team or Multi-Systemic Therapy involvement, or could be part of the Troubled Families Programme.

**Identify available provision and places:**
The Council locates an available place in provision appropriate for the child OR re-engages the child in the current place of provision.

We have:

- Access to current information about availability of school places via EMS
- A directory of alternative provision and support including access criteria which is used by lead professionals
- A 2 year pilot until 2016 where Cranbury College commissions and oversees up to 10 alternative provision packages based on referrals via the SEN Panel for children with an EHC plan and the local special school is unable to support the pupil on a full time, alternative package.

**Access appropriate provision:**
The Council brokers access to the identified place and quality is monitored.

- We have a Fair Access Protocol - Pupil Admission Panel (PAM)
- The respective roles and responsibilities of LA, school and parents are understood
- Multi-agency panel brokers access to alternative provision

Information is available from the Commissioning team on work to ensure a range of sufficient and good quality alternative options for provision (which would reduce the likelihood of children missing out on education).

School places - the School Admissions Code 2012 no longer requires in year admissions to be co-ordinated by the home local authority and this has introduced a risk factor as Reading Borough Council will no longer be informed about in year admission of
Reading children to other local authority schools. Reading Borough Council continues to co-ordinate all applications for community primary schools and works with other primary schools to co-ordinate their applications. All the Reading secondary schools continue to co-ordinate for all in year applications.

The School Admissions Code in place from December 2014 incorporates changes to ensure that all previously looked after children are considered as highest priority for admission to parents preferred school. It also allows Admission Authorities to consider children on pupil premium as category of the over-subscription criteria but that is not a statutory requirement and Admission Authorities may adopt if they wish. All changes in the code relate to admission policies for September 2016 admissions onwards.

School admissions are governed by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and in order to improve the admissions framework for the benefit of parents and children, a number of important changes were introduced the Education Act 2002. The School Admissions Code 2012 takes into account those changes, and of associated regulations.

Local Admission Policies in Special Circumstances

The Education Act 2002 made Admission Forums mandatory, to promote local discussion between all those with an interest in admissions. Forums have an important advisory role. They consider how well admission arrangements serve the interests of local parents and children, including vulnerable and challenging children and children whose parents move to the area and apply after the normal allocation of places. They aim to reach local consensus on how best to meet the needs of all those seeking a place in their area, so that all pupils have a fair opportunity to realise their potential. They consider proposed co-ordinated admission schemes and draft admissions literature for parents. The Code gives guidance on the constitution and the role of Admission Forums. The 2012 code no longer requires local authorities to have a School Admission Forum but Reading Borough Council agreed to continue their role albeit without any legal remit. This provides an independent monitoring of the Fair Access processes for unplaced pupils.

The Council has a coordinated approach to dealing with vulnerable children so that potentially vulnerable children, such as those who have been excluded from school, are effectively provided for in admission arrangements to mainstream schools. Its objective is to secure the rapid reintegration into an alternative school, wherever possible, of pupils who have been excluded from other schools and it has established borough-wide protocols to ensure that all mainstream schools play their part in the education of such pupils. The approach taken by the Council is communicated to all interested groups, including parents and guardians and takes account of parental preference other than for parents of children who have been permanently excluded from two or more schools, for a period of two years following the second exclusion where no such legal obligation exists.

Re-engagement actions include the relevant multi-disciplinary teams mentioned earlier e.g CATs, MST, Cranbury College.
**Multi-Disciplinary Panels**

The Council has a robust system for brokering support, including “Managed Moves” through the Fair Access Protocols for the children/young people on its list entitled “hard to place”. A panel called Pupil Admissions Meeting (PAM) meets to re-integrate secondary-aged pupils. The Children Missing Out on Education (CMOE) Panel Meeting also tracks if there are concerns about delay or inability to meet the child/young person's needs.

The Council’s Children Missing Out on Education (CMOE) Panel Meetings monitors the progress of individual children and ensures that appropriate action, by the lead professional, is taken to promote their return to full-time education. The objective for children who are ‘out of school’ is to ensure their speedy return to mainstream provision or to a special school if the child/young person has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health and Care Plan naming a special school.

SEMRAC (Sexual Exploitation and Missing Risk Assessment Conference) is a multi-agency operational group, who meet regularly to consider level of risk to victims, facilitate multi-agency discussion, sharing and mapping of information and intelligence and considers disruption activity. SEMRAC also have an oversight of intervention plans in place e.g. CP, CIN.

**Cranbury College**

Cranbury College will take children who are permanently excluded, have long term medical conditions, statement children not on a school roll and children with no school roll coming out of a PRU elsewhere if this is appropriate.

**Quality Monitoring**

Where the school commissions an Alternative Provision, Ofsted will check that the school is monitoring the quality of that provision and outcomes. Schools should be able to provide evidence. Where the local authority commissions a provision, the Commissioning Team will quality check e.g. the support provision. A person with an educational background monitors the educational provision.

### Monitoring attendance for all provision:

- Annual register audits in each of our schools are done by EWOs. We do not audit alternative provision (other than Cranbury College - PRU) or independent schools.
- Schools, Cranbury College and external providers notify The Council about attendance problems - information goes onto EMS.
- Guidance issued to schools and other providers annually (and re-issued if new regulations come into place) to ensure pupils are only deregistered within the law.
In line with the duty on all Children’s Services to safeguard the welfare of children, both the school and the local authority are expected to follow the procedures designed to track the whereabouts of the child and to record that they have completed these procedures. This includes checking with relatives, neighbours, private or public landlords and other local agencies who are involved with the notification of Children Missing Out on Education. If there is reason to believe the child is at risk of significant harm then action in line with child protection procedures should be taken.

- If the child is located and the current school is still the appropriate school then steps should be taken to engage the child and the parent to improve attendance.

If the child is located, but has moved, and a new school is necessary but in the same local authority, the necessary steps should be taken to access a new school as previously mentioned and steps taken to transfer the Common Transfer File (CTF) - see later section.

- If there is strong evidence to suggest the child has moved to a different local authority then contact should be made with the Named Contact in the new authority.

- In the absence of the location of the child being found these procedures will also prompt reference to the transfer of information to the Police and Children’s social care (Access & Assessment/MASH) and the transfer of information via school2school (s2s) and the Lost Pupil Database. Until a child is located The Council will maintain a record of their details.

All schools, including Independent, Academies and Free Schools must inform local authorities of the details of pupil who are regularly absent from school or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation. All schools, including Independent, Academies and Free Schools must notify the LA if a pupil is deleted from the admissions register. Ofsted have said that ALL schools have a responsibility to share information with the local authority about any child who is out of school for 15 days or more.

At an individual level, electively home educated children are monitored at least annually and SEN children have an annual review. Exclusions are notified to the Virtual Head Teacher of CMOE as they happen and the VHT contacts schools. This role receives a weekly list of new CMOEs. The role also does monthly reviews of exclusion data and decides which children and/or schools to target based on trends.

The Council quality assures and reviews overall progress to reduce the numbers of children who are missing out on education via CMOE Panel Meetings, by reports to DMT and LSCB and by the Council’s performance management framework i.e. one to ones, appraisals, team and service plans.

The Council’s Children Missing Out on Education (CMOE) Panel Meeting has multi-disciplinary representation. The Panel convenes 6 times a year and a target area for case discussion prior to the next meeting is selected so that the meeting can focus on specific solutions for this particular group or individuals. Work is done between meetings to progress check all
individual cases. The CMOE Panel meeting also considers children with very poor attendance. Monitoring is undertaken by Senior Managers.

**What we do to try and find Reading resident children not on a school roll and not notified to the local authority as being educated at home**

This category may include:

**Possibly unknown to the local authority:**
Children with a Reading address who have never been on a school roll and are not declared as being home educated; Traveller community children who arrive in Reading

**Unknown:**
Children who have moved into Reading but no one knows about them

**Known (or some information known)**
Children who have moved into Reading and there isn’t a school place available immediately. Children who applied for a school place but their preferred school is full. Children who were allocated a school place but did not turn up. Children with a Reading address but who say they are on a school roll outside Reading borough. Children whose families say they have moved abroad, but may actually still be in Reading.

What we do:

- Publicise via our website and leaflet, contact routes for others/the public/partners, including Police, GPs, Health Visitors, Home Start and voluntary agencies to contact us about concerns about a CMOE, to raise awareness (an awareness raising session is planned for March 2015)
- Continually raise awareness with other Council services e.g. Housing, Environmental Health that children may be missing education and how to notify the named initial contact
- Cross check data from other sources every September, to see if e.g. children who leave Children’s Centres go onto a school roll.
- Follow up on children who did not turn up to their allocated school.
- If an Access & Assessment Team referral identifies a child missing education then information is passed on to the Admissions Officer
- Add children known to have moved into Reading without a school place onto the EMS so progress in finding a school place can be tracked
- Identify any overlap of information on CMOE arising from the protocols for Children Missing from Home, Children Missing and CSE Panels
Track and Reconcile Movements between schools:

Key are:
- Effectively using the available inter-local authority exchange of Information via S2S
- Maintaining a Lost Pupil database of child/young person who move without a known destination

Monitoring at the transfer between Key Stage 2 and 3 is vital to ensure that year 6 children are registered into a year 7 (secondary) place. Through protocols with its schools the Council ensures that all children leaving a primary school are subsequently registered at secondary school. For those children who do not receive an offer or who miss the deadline for the coordinated approach it will be up to the child’s home local authority to ensure they are offered a place. Schools play a key part as they must report any child leaving their roll at the end of the key stage without provision, to the Reading Borough Council’s Admissions Team.

Co-ordinated admission arrangements will mean that children who leave a Reading school for the independent sector or to attend schools in other authorities will be known to Reading Borough Council and their new schools recorded onto EMS. Children who move schools at other than normal ages of transfer to other local authority schools can currently be tracked through co-ordinated admission arrangements.

Transfer of Information Between Schools

For pupils that transfer between schools on an ad hoc basis, the Department of Education has provided a secure internet site to securely transfer the Common Transfer File (CTF) which contains an agreed set of data per pupil known as the Common Basic Data Set (CBDS). If a school does not know where the pupil is transferring to, data can be uploaded to a specific area of this database known as the Lost Pupils Database (LPD). If a pupil moves out of the system (e.g. to an independent school) the data is held in a separate area of the database so that if the pupil re-enters the system, their details can be retrieved. It is the duty of the head teacher of the child’s previous school to send the information (the common transfer information and educational records including Child Protection records) within 15 school days of the child ceasing to be registered at the school.

Lost Pupil Database

The Council has named individuals who can search the Lost Pupil database if a child arrives at a school and for some reason is not able to give accurate details about their educational history. It is the Council’s responsibility to monitor the data base and to provide guidance for schools to ensure procedures are followed in using the s2s and Lost Pupil Database.

Head teachers of both Primary and Secondary Schools are reminded a part of routine publicity about the statutory responsibility placed on governors and teachers for the management of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. This is underpinned
by a statutory responsibility to use an electronic Common Transfer Form (CTF) to send information to the receiving school and to collect it from the sending school via the DfE secure School to School Data Transfer website (s2s).

**Guidance on De-registration Procedures**

The name of a child of compulsory school age may only be deleted from the attendance register on the grounds prescribed by the [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-and-skills-acts-2004-to-2009). This means that:

- Where a child has been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than 20 school days and that the absences are unauthorised, his name may not be deleted from the admission register until both the school and the local authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate the child and then only as long as the child is not absent because of sickness or any unavoidable cause. This is a joint process between the school and the local authority.

- Where a head teacher/proprietor of a school has received written notification from the parent that a pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school, the school must inform the local authority within 10 school days. The pupil’s name will then be deleted from the admission register and be recorded on the Education Management System (EMS) as EHE.

**Information Sharing**

In order to locate children and young people when it is believed they are resident in the Reading borough, a network of stakeholder/partner agencies have signed up to Reading’s Information Sharing Protocol and have contact with and attend a variety of multi-agency and multi-disciplinary meetings. As a result of this, together with the CMOE monitoring meeting and Fair Access protocols, each of these agencies should be clear under what legislation and circumstances they are entitled to share information.
APPENDIX 1 Common Transfer File Procedures in Reading

1) Should a child leave a Reading school without notice being given by the parent or without the school being advised by the parent which new school the child is to attend - that is, should the child go “missing” or become “lost” - the school should follow the procedures for notifying these children to the EWS service and the Admissions Manager. Should the child be subject to a Child Protection Plan or should the school have particular child protection concerns about the child the school should first immediately notify the relevant Children’s social care team.

2) Education Welfare Service (EWS) will work with the school and make reasonable efforts to try and identify the child’s current whereabouts/destination.

3) After four weeks should such efforts prove unsuccessful then the school should remove the child’s name from its roll and create a “lost” common transfer file (CTF) with XXXXXXX as the destination. This lost CTF should be immediately uploaded onto the DfE’s s2s secure site where it will be held in the Lost Pupils Database.

4) Should a child join a Reading school without that school receiving a CTF from the child’s previous school then the receiving school should contact Data Collections Officer Knowledge Management, Civic Centre 0118 9374206 x74206 and request that a search be made of the Lost Pupils Database for a matching record using names or former names, date of birth or gender.

5) Should a Reading school which has previously sent a lost child CTF to the Lost Pupils Database be subsequently contacted by a school at which the lost child has subsequently registered then either:

   ▪ the school which sent the CTF to the Lost Pupils Database should create a new CTF file and send this to the receiving school and request the LA ICT Services team to download the original CTF from the Lost Pupils Database and delete it; or
   ▪ the receiving school should request its own LA to download the original CTF from the Lost Pupils Database: or
   ▪ the school needs to notify the named CME officer for further action to be taken

The Council recognises that these procedures will only function effectively if all Reading schools are committed to adhering to the principle that:

WHENEVER A CHILD JOINS OR LEAVES A SCHOOL THEN A COMMON TRANSFER
FILE (CTF) MUST ACCOMPANY HIM/HER

The Council will therefore ensure that all READING schools, inclusive of private, voluntary or independent:

- are made fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to missing/lost pupils and
- are properly supported to meet these responsibilities.

The Council will closely monitor the operation of its missing/lost children procedures in order to ensure best practice with regard to safeguarding children.

6) Where a Reading child accesses a neighbouring cross-border school, robust Service Offers need to be in place to identify processes and procedures to follow for those children at Risk of Going Missing from Education at the earliest opportunity.
Appendix 2

Threshold Criteria

Children’s Action Teams
The Children Action Teams’ (CAT) handbook includes details about criteria for services.

MST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inclusion criteria for Multi-Systemic Therapy - If the answer to any of these questions is no, this is not a suitable referral to MST.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Is the young person aged 11 - 17 years?  
Is the young person in school year 7 or above? |
| Can a primary stable care giver be identified? (i.e. the young person is NOT living independently?) |
| Is the young person at risk of coming into custody or care of the local authority or going to residential schooling? If yes, please give further details including what the evidence of this is (eg. siblings in care; parents care history; previously LAC; CP plan). |
| Is there current evidence that the young person is displaying anti-social behaviour (ie severe behaviour problems) in more than one context (at school, home and in the community)? |

**Physical aggression**
Is there evidence of physical aggression / violence / assaults / physically threatening behaviours? Include aggression towards other people. Include aggression with and without a weapon.

**Violations of family rules / expectations**
Is there evidence of serious violations of family rules?  
Include coming home late /out overnight /running away /reported missing.

**Property damage**
Is there evidence of destruction of property? Vandalism? Include property damage at home / school / in the community.

**Criminal behaviours**
Is there evidence of robbery, theft or other criminal behaviours? Drug related offending? Is the young person known to YOS? Is the young person NOT complying with a court order?

**Violations of school rules**
Is there evidence of serious violations of school rules? Include multiple fixed term exclusions, at risk of permanent exclusion, poor relationships with staff, truancy.

**Out of mainstream education**
Include permanent exclusion, not in mainstream classes, not in mainstream school (PRU, ESBD school).
**Peer relationships**
Include high association with anti-social peers / Low affiliation with pro social peers/gang membership.

**Other relevant anti-social behaviour**
Is there evidence of verbal aggression/verbal threats?
Is there evidence that the young person is using drugs and/or alcohol?

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**Troubled Families Programme Eligibility Criteria**
- Parents and/or children involved in crime or ASB
- Children who have not been attending school regularly
- Children who need help
- Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion and/or worklessness
- Families affected by domestic abuse
- Parents and/or children with a range of health problems
Appendix 3

Police definitions of “Missing and “Absent”

11. Since April 2013 police forces have been rolling out new definitions of ‘missing’ and ‘absent’ in relation to children and adults reported as missing to the police. These are:

- **missing**: anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character, or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another; and

- **absent**: a person not at a place where they are expected or required to be.

12. The police classification of a person as ‘missing’ or ‘absent’ will be based on on-going risk assessment. Note that ‘absent’ within this definition would **not** include those defined as “away from placement without authorisation” above: a child whose whereabouts are known would not be treated as either ‘missing’ or ‘absent’ under the police definitions. Guidance on how police forces will apply these definitions to children was issued by ACPO in April 2013. Paragraph 19 below explains how local protocols for safeguarding young runaways or children missing from home or care should reflect these definitions.

Please note that it is a Police decision as to whether someone is absent or missing. The advice would be that any parent or carer who has concerns for the whereabouts of a young person, they should contact the Police, who will decide how to respond to the situation.
Appendix 4
Legislation & Guidance

There are various statutory duties upon LAs and parents (supplemented by guidance) relating to the provision of education and the safeguarding of the welfare of children and which may be relevant to children missing out on education. The principal provisions are as follows:

Section 14(1) of the 1996 Education Act: schools must be sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide all pupils with the opportunity of appropriate education (s. 14(2)). “Appropriate education” means, broadly education which is desirable in view of the pupils’ different ages, abilities and aptitudes and the different periods for which they may be expected to remain at school (s. 14(3)).

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act: the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Section 437 (1) of the 1996 Education Act: if it appears to a local education authority that a child of compulsory school age in their area is not receiving suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, they must serve a notice in writing on the parent (“a school attendance order”) requiring him to satisfy them within the period specified in the notice that the child is receiving such education.

Section 19 (1) of the 1996 Education Act requires every local education authority to make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them. For these purposes, “suitable” education is defined as “efficient education suitable to the age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs the child (or young person) may have.” (s. 19(6)).

Section 19(4A) of the 1996 Education Act: “In determining what arrangements to make under subsection (1) in the case of any child or pupil, a local education authority shall have regard to guidance given from time to time by the Secretary of State.”

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 imposes a duty upon LAs and governing bodies to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. For these purposes, “functions” includes the powers and duties of LAs and governing bodies.

Education Act 2011

Children, Schools and Families Act of 2010: “Local Authorities must ensure that all children who fall within the scope of section 19 receive suitable full time education unless reasons that relate to their medical condition mean that this would not be in the best
interests”

School Admissions Code 2014

Green Paper - Support and Aspiration: A new approach to Special Educational Needs and Disability

DfE Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004 - 2005

DfE Guidance - Behaviour and Discipline in Schools - Guide for Headteachers and Schools Staff - 2011

DfE Guidance - Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked - 2011


Local Government Ombudsman Report - Out of School out of Mind Focus Report - September 2011

Child Centred System - Government’s response to Munro review of child protection - July 2011

Statutory guidance for local authorities in England: Children Missing Education November 2013

Pupils Missing Out on Education, Ofsted, November 2013

Guidance of the LA responsibility for arranging education outside of school is set out in Circular No. 11/99 Social Inclusion: the LEA role in Pupil Support: LAs decide what is suitable education out of school for a particular child, in consultation with parents, in line with their own policies, the efficient use of resources and having regard to this guidance. LAs cannot decide not to arrange any education, to make arrangements which do not provide suitable education for that child.

Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England - September 2012
(same link as below)

Guidance for LAs for schools on monitoring attendance is contained within www.DfE.gov.uk/behaviourandattendance/.

Good practice for Gypsy/Traveller Achievement and for Supporting Asylum Seeking and Refugee children which are part of the Department’s Aiming High strategy to raise Minority Ethnic Achievement: Aiming High: Guidance on Supporting the Education of Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children - A Guide to Good Practice
Ref: DfE/0287/2004 (Issued April 2004); Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Gypsy/Traveller pupils - A Guide to Good Practice Ref: DfE/0443/2003 (Issued July 2003). Details of how to obtain copies of these publications can be found on: www.standards.DfE.gov.uk/ethnicminorities

Guidance for LEAs to support school aged parents is contained within www.DfE.gov.uk/schoolageparents/

New guidance will soon be issued on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to coincide with the introduction of section 175 of the Education Act 2002. The guidance aims to: explain the effect of section 175 and the responsibilities it gives LAs, and the Governing bodies of schools and FE institutions in regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Working together to Safeguard Children DfE 2013

Keeping Children Safe in Education - July 2015

Guidance is now available from DCSF / teachernet “Guidance for Local Authorities and schools: Pupil Referral Units and Alternative Provision” reference LEA/0024/2005

The Children Act 2004 includes various provisions relating to safeguarding and promotion of welfare of children, including:
(a) a duty upon each children’s services authority to promote co-operation between it and various other bodies to improve the well-being of children so far as relating to (amongst other things) education and training;
(b) a duty upon various bodies (including children’s services authorities) to make arrangements for ensuring that their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and
(c) provision for the Secretary of State to put into place information databases for the purposes of arrangements under s.175 of the Education Act 2002 or (a) and (b) above, and a framework for the sharing of information contained in such databases for such purposes.

For checking if children have gone through the Border Agency:

ThamesValleyandSurreyDutyDesk@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Unofficial Exclusion and Reduced Timetable Guidance; January 2015, RBC

Statutory Guidance on Children who run away or go missing from home or care, January 2014 DfE
Appendix 5

Acronyms

Acronyms in this document, arranged in alphabetical order:

CAF  Common Assessment Framework
CAT  Children’s Action Team
CBDS Common Basic Data Set
CSS  Children’s Support Service
Cranbury College  Pupil Referral Service, Home & Hospital Teaching,
CMOE Children Missing Out on Education
CTF  Common Transfer File
DfE  Department for Education
EMS  Education Management System
ESO  Education Support Officer
EWO  Education Welfare Officer
EWS  Education Welfare Service
FE  Further Education
ICT  Information Communication Technology
IEP  Individual Education Plan
LA  Local Authority
LAC  Looked After Children
LSCB  Local Safeguarding Children’s Board
LPD  Lost Pupil Database
NHS  National Health Service
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAM</td>
<td>Pupil Admission Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRU</td>
<td>Pupil Referral Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>Pastoral Support Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>RBC</td>
<td>Reading Borough Council</td>
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<td>s2s</td>
<td>school2school</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAO</td>
<td>School Attendance Order</td>
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<td>YOS</td>
<td>Youth Offending Service</td>
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