SHANKLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Children Missing from Education Policy

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Children Missing from Education: A Definition

All children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, privately or in alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as four weeks or more).

Source: DfES 2004

Foreword by Councillor Robert Arckless
Policy Board Member, Children's Services

All elected members of Northumberland County Council share a responsibility as corporate parents for the young people in our care. Many of us value close links with local schools and colleges.

I have a particular responsibility as lead member for Children's Services to the most vulnerable youngsters.

We are fortunate to have such a committed and focussed team of professionals in Children's Services. Their work is widely recognised as making a significant contribution to keeping children safe.

Policies and procedures are outlined in this document. I hope that it will be helpful to our partners as they seek guidance. Northumberland County Council cannot work in isolation. We need the active involvement of all our partners to ensure that when it really matters we can make a difference to keeping our youngsters safe.

That partnership includes our schools, the voluntary sector, statutory agencies and the public.

We are committed to supporting our young people in the education system and as they progress to adulthood.

I am grateful to everyone who helps to make our aspirations in to reality and share the goal of improving the life chances of our children and young people.

ROBERT ARCKLESS
November 2013

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PART A: NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL POLICY ON REDUCING THE RISK OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE GOING MISSING FROM EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Children fall out of the education system because they:

- Fail to start appropriate provision and hence never enter the system;
- Cease to attend, due to exclusion (for example illegal unofficial exclusions) or withdrawal; or
- Fail to complete a transition between providers (for example being unable to find a suitable school place after moving to a new LA).

Their personal circumstances or those of their families may contribute to the withdrawal process and the failure to make the transition.

Children go missing when they fall out of the education system and there is no systematic process in place to:

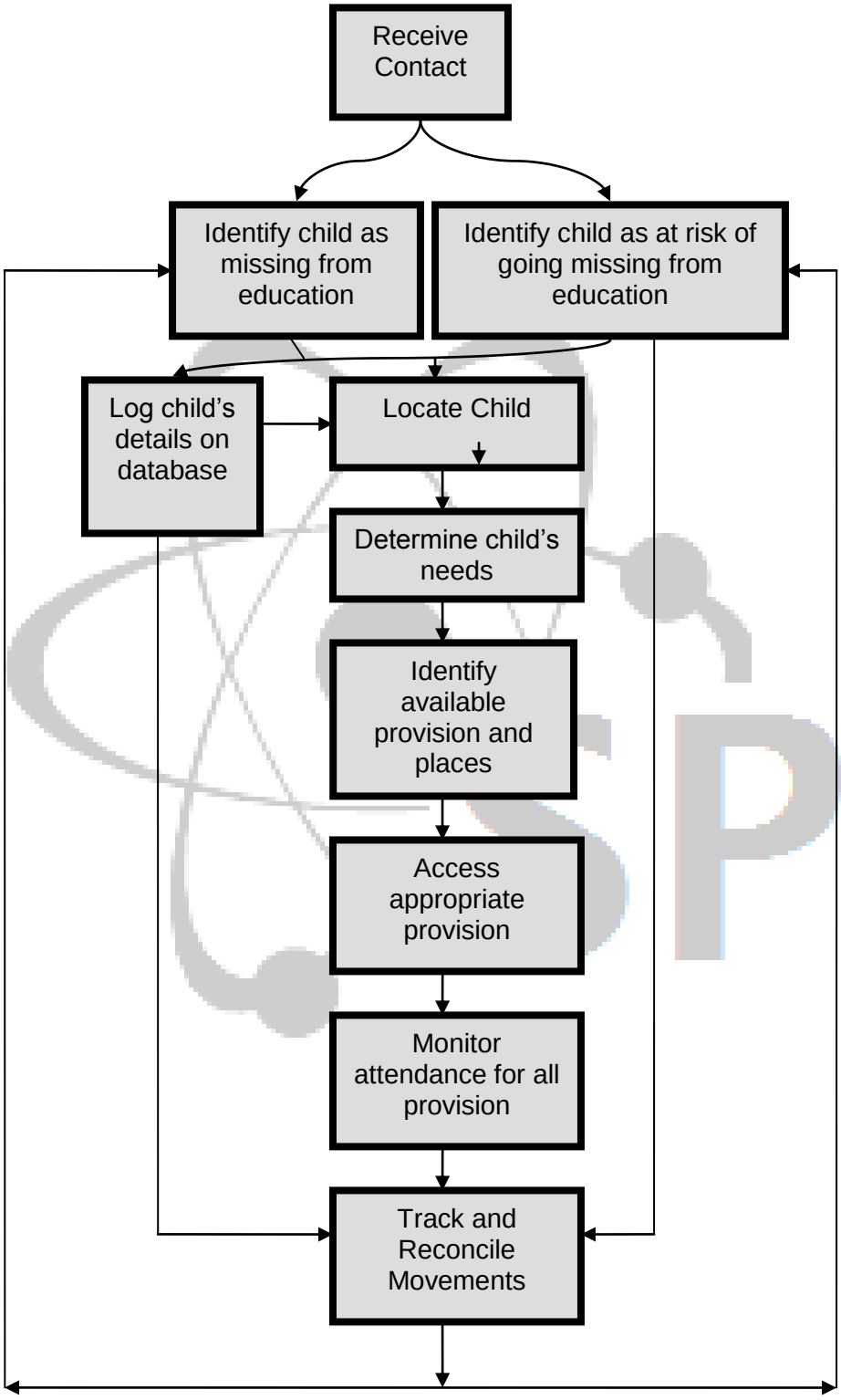
- Identify those children; and
- Ensure that they re-engage with appropriate provision (which may include services outside of school to meet their needs).

Good practice in reducing the risk that children fall out of the education system broadly falls into three categories:

- Measures to reduce the likelihood that children fall out of the education system, such as audits of the rolls and registers of schools;
- Measures to identify and locate children missing from education, such as truancy sweeps and the provision of a named point of contact to receive notification of children from other agencies; and
- Measures to re-engage the missing with appropriate educational provision

DFE guidance in respect of children missing from education identifies a number of proven steps that are involved in minimising this risk. These are summarised in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Process steps involved in reducing the risk of children going missing



NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL POLICY IN RELATION TO THESE PROCESS STEPS

1. In order to facilitate the process by which the Local Authority is notified about a child missing or at risk of going missing:

(i) The County Council will provide a named officer who is the point of contact across the Local Authority for missing pupils, and whose responsibilities are clearly identified.

(ii) The County Council's procedures that relate to missing children will identify clear responsibilities for each step in the notification process.

(iii) A designated senior officer of the County Council will be responsible for monitoring the information.

(iv) All possible stakeholders will be provided with information about how to inform the Local Authority about children missing from education, and reminded of the need to notify the Local Authority if they suspect a child is missing from education.

2. In order to facilitate the process by which the Local Authority determines whether or not a notified child is registered with an education provider:

(i) The name of all school aged children on education provider rolls will be kept on a central database which is frequently updated, against which the name of the notified child will be checked.

(ii) This database will include the names of children whose parents decide to educate their child at home (elective home education), and schools will be reminded at regular intervals of the need to inform the Local Authority within ten working days of receiving notification from the parent that the child is receiving elective home education.

3. In order to facilitate the process by which the Local Authority determines that the notified child is registered with an education provider but is at risk of going missing:

(i) The Local Authority will annually remind schools of the importance of monitoring attendance patterns of children in groups vulnerable to poor attendance – for example, young people who have committed offences, children living in women's refuges, children with long term medical or emotional problems, and young carers.

(ii) Designated officers responsible for looked after children, traveller children, permanently excluded children, teenage mothers, children on the child protection register and children receiving their education in recognised forms of alternative education provision will monitor the attendance patterns of children in these groups.

4. In order to facilitate the process by which the Local Authority records the details of an identified child on the database in a way that enables subsequent monitoring of their status:

(i) The Local Authority will maintain within its database a record of the educational status of children and young people included in it who do not have a school place.

5. In order to facilitate the process by which children are located when it is believed they are resident within the Local Authority:

(i) The Local Authority will work collaboratively with partner agencies and schools to develop clear protocols and an understanding of the appropriate legislation that provides a framework for the sharing of information.

6. In order to facilitate the process by which the Local Authority assesses education needs of, and determines an appropriate form of provision for, a child who has been found missing from education:

(i) A Common Assessment Framework has been developed in order to enable professionals from different agencies to work more effectively together in building up a picture of a child's needs over time.

(ii) The Local Authority's starting point – when determining an appropriate form of provision for a child – will be that a child should re-engage with mainstream school provision with accounts taken of parental and child preference and individual circumstances. Alternative forms of education will be considered and arranged in appropriate cases.

7. In order to facilitate the process by which the Local Authority locates an available place in provision appropriate for a child:

(i) The Local Authority will maintain an updated central database of the availability of school places.

(ii) The Local Authority will establish and maintain a directory of alternative provision and their eligibility criteria.

8. In order to facilitate the process by which an appropriate place is brokered for a child who has been found missing from education:

(i) The Local Authority will ensure that school admission procedures are clear.

(ii) The Local Authority will seek to foster local, collaborative arrangements between schools to ensure that potentially vulnerable, hard to place children can be rapidly reintegrated.

9. In order to facilitate the process by which the Local Authority maintains visibility of children who may cease to attend or who may cease to be registered with an education provider:

(i) The Local Authority will operate an agreed system with schools, Pupil Referral Unit and external providers in which the LA will be notified about attendance problems.

(ii) The Local Authority will operate an agreed system with schools concerning deregistration procedures for pupils who are either continuously absent from school, or about whom the school receives notification from the parents that the child is in receipt of elective home education. (See Removal of names from Roll (iii)).

10. In order to facilitate the process by which the Local Authority maintains visibility of children who have ceased to be registered with a provider so they are registered with a new provider:

(i) The Local Authority will operate an agreed system with schools which:

- Monitors whether children leaving a first or middle school are subsequently enrolled at a middle or high school following phase change.
- Involves schools notifying the Education Welfare Service when a child 'goes missing' and the school's own enquiries have not located the child.

(ii) The agreed system will involve operational procedures for:

- The Education Welfare Service, when locating a missing child
- Schools, when arranging Common Transfer File (CTF) transfer either to a new school or to the National Lost Pupil Database*.

(iii) The CTF system will be based on the DFE secure school to school Data Transfer website (S2S)*.

(iv) The Local Authority will have an identified officer as database administrator for S2S who will support schools who encounter difficulties with Lost Pupil Database searches.

*** For details of the school to school (S2S) website and the Lost Pupil Database, please refer to the Student Data Transfer section of your SIMS Manual or contact the Data and User Liaison Officer at County Hall for advice.**

PART B: PROCEDURES TO IDENTIFY AND LOCATE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO GO MISSING FROM EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Every child matters, and therefore it is important to ensure that every child has access to the universal services to which they are entitled, including education. We must therefore guard against children and young people 'going missing' from the education that will help them achieve wellbeing in childhood and later life.

This guidance sets out Northumberland County Council's procedural systems for ensuring the appropriate engagement of education services with children who go missing, or are at risk of going missing, from education. Children missing from education in this document refers to all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (for example, through elective home education or alternative provision) and who have been out of any education provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as four weeks or more).

The Children Act (2004) places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children and to share information with regard to this area of concern, which is at the heart of all five outcomes of the Act – being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, being able to make a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing.

Northumberland County Council has long established policies and procedure to ensure appropriate engagement with education services, and this document seeks to draw these together in a single guidance document for use by staff in the Education Service , schools and colleagues in a range of partner organisations.

Please read it carefully so that you will be confident about the part you need to play.

If you have any queries or questions about this guidance then please address them to:

Social Inclusion Officer
Education Service
Children's Services Group
County Hall
Morpeth
NE61 2EF
Telephone: 01670 624187

SECTION 1

How Children and Young People Go Missing from the Educational System

There are various ways in which children and young people can go missing from the educational system. They can:

i) Fail to start appropriate provision at age 4 or 5;

ii) Fail to register with a school following a phase change; or

iii) Cease to attend school for whatever reason;

iv) Fail to register with a new school following a move.

In the latter case a move could be within Northumberland, from another LA or to another LA.

In addition it is acknowledged that there are groups of children and young people who, because of their circumstances, are perceived to be at greater risk of going missing.

These procedures are designed to address all of these circumstances. They are concerned with identifying instances where children and young people go missing; monitoring those 'at risk' of going missing'; and identifying those already missing with a view to ensuring all children and young people receive an appropriate education. They reflect those statutory duties resulting from the Children Act 2004 and were originally issued by the LA in 2005 and then again, in update version, in 2009. Not surprisingly, however, as good practice has emerged from experience, they have needed to be reviewed and this updated version is the outcome of the review process.

SECTION 2

The Role of the Social Inclusion Officer

The Social Inclusion Officer (SIO) within Education, Children's Services, is the 'Named Person' for Children Missing from Education.

In respect of missing children the SIO has four principal duties:

1. To raise awareness of these procedures within Education, the wider County Council, with FACT partners, with other appropriate agencies and with the public at large.

2. To provide a single point of focus for information relating to children and young people missing from education irrespective of circumstance, i.e. whether they go missing from County schools, fail to appear in a reception class or whether they are identified or notified as living in County but not receiving education, be it by appropriate Officers, by schools, by other agencies or by members of the public.

3. To maintain records of all children and young people reported as missing from education and to ensure that either:

    i) arrangements are made for the individual to re-engage with appropriate professionals within the educational system; or

    ii) following the unsuccessful conclusion of 'reasonable enquiries' the Common Transfer File (CTF) for the individual is uploaded to the national 'Lost Pupil' database by the school attended last.

4. To revise and update this protocol at appropriate intervals to take account of changed circumstances, be they:

    i) changes to internal processes and procedures;

    ii) changes to external relationships with partner organisations; or

    iii) changes in terms of government policy, guidance or legislation.

SECTION 3

Procedures to Identify and Locate Children and Young People who Go Missing

At any one time there are over 50,000 children and young people benefiting from the education service in Northumberland. In any school year upwards of 10,000 children and young people will either start at a new school as they start their school career, experience a phase change, move school due to relocation of the family home or move school for a host of other reasons. For the vast majority of these young people the change is achieved smoothly. However in a very small number of cases each year children and young people leave or cease to attend Northumberland schools without advising the school as to their intentions. They simply drop out of the school system. In other cases, families with children and young people of school age will move in to Northumberland and fail to register their children at an appropriate school or to notify the local authority that their child is being educated at home.

The following procedures have been developed to try and ensure that no child simply 'goes missing' without appropriate investigations being instigated and that children and young people moving into the area and not registering with a school are identified. In the case of this latter group, the County Council is highly reliant upon referrals from partner organisations and associated agencies and from the general public. It is therefore extremely important that all agencies collaborate and actively work together to ensure that no child or young person misses out on education or any other universal service to which they are entitled.

This Section covers:

- Children failing to take up an allocated Reception Class place
- Children and young people not completing an appropriate phase change
- Children and young people who cease to attend school
- Children and young people failing to register with a new school following a move

3.1 Failure to take up a Reception Class Place

Allocation of a Reception Class place is only made following completion of a Common Application Form, or preference form for mid-year admission. The names of children offered places are notified to schools in accordance with the Admissions Timetable. Each school is therefore aware of the children expected to take up places each September. If a child fails to take up a place then the following procedure should be followed in order that the child might be located and confirmation sought that they are receiving an appropriate education.

N.B. Please note that the information in this section is concerned with children who are due to enter the reception class in a mainstream school. In cases where a child has a statement and fails to take up a place in either a special school or a specially resourced mainstream school (special unit) then the special school/special unit concerned should contact the SEN Section within the Education Service instead of the Admissions Team (Table 1, Step 2). The SEN Section will then liaise with the EWS.

Table 1

	Action Required	Responsibility
Step 1	If a child fails to take up a place in reception as expected, the school should advise the Admissions Team NO LATER THAN the 3rd week of September, using the appropriate Form 5 (see Appendices).	**School**
Step 2	On receipt of the notification, the Admissions Team check database records to determine if LA has any further details regarding possible whereabouts of the child: i) If admission to another school is established and verified then the reporting school in Step 1 should be notified, using Form 6. ii) If these enquiries do not locate a child in a confirmed placement, referral to Social Inclusion Officer should be made using Form 6, section 2. Steps 2 i) and 2 ii) should be completed by the end of September.	**Admissions Team**
Step 3	The Social Inclusion Officer requests the Education Welfare Officer to make a home visit. i) In the event of these enquiries locating a child and establishing that parents do not now wish their child to commence school until his/her 5th birthday (statutory school age) then the EWO will diary follow up enquiries no later than 2 weeks after the child's 5th birthday. In the	**SIO**

	event of the child being of statutory school age but not enrolled in a school at this stage, the EWO should complete the Form 7 and forward to the SIO. ii) In the event of the parents of a child of 5 years of age simply overlooking the pre-arranged date to attend reception class, the EWO should provide the necessary reminder and advice, as appropriate, and make a follow up diary entry with a view to monitoring the child's status. The EWO should complete the Form 7 and forward it to the SIO. iii) In the event of these enquiries failing to locate the child, then the EWO should initiate the missing child procedure, see Form 3.	
Step 4	Advise the SIO of the outcome of these investigations using the Form 3.	**EWO**
Step 5	The SIO will advise the school of the result of this investigation using Form 6: i) If the child is traced to a new school, arrange for CTF transfer if appropriate (i.e. if the child was previously registered in a nursery class), or ii) If the child cannot be traced, add to the local Missing Children Register and, if appropriate, arrange for the child's details (CTF) to be uploaded to national Lost Pupils Database (i.e. if the child was previously registered in a nursery class) See Table 4 for more details	**School** **SIO/School**

3.2 Failure to make the transition from Year 4 to Year 5, Year 6 to Year 7 or from Year 8 to Year 9

Currently Northumberland County Council operates a system with first, middle and high schools in some parts of the county and primary and secondary schools in others. It also has 2 all age academies in Blyth and Ashington . In consequence, the vast majority of children/young people will normally experience at least one, possibly two phase transfers in their school career. As with admission to a Reception Class, transition from Year 4 to Year 5 or from Year 6 to Year 7 or from Year 8 to Year 9 is managed using the Common Application Form procedure, which is used to allocate school places and subsequently to advise schools of the children and young people to expect at the start of the new school year. Difficulties can arise because a Common Application Form is not returned, and therefore a place in a new school cannot be allocated, or because an allocated place is not taken up. Table 2 describes the procedure where an application form has not been returned whilst Table 3 sets out the procedure to be followed where

an allocated place is not taken up. In both cases the aim is to locate the individual to ensure they continue to receive an appropriate education.

N.B. Please note that the information in this section is concerned with children who are due to transfer from mainstream school to mainstream school. In cases where a child has a statement and fails to take up a place in either a special school or a specially resourced mainstream school (special unit) then a special school/special unit concerned should contact the SEN Section instead of the Admissions Team (Table 3, Step 2). The SEN Section will then liaise with the EWS.

Table 2 - Common Application Form Not Returned

	Action Required	Responsibility
Step 1	If, by the deadline date for submitting applications for the next phase of education, a form has not been received, the First, Primary or Middle school or Academy that the child attends should be contacted and asked to remind the parent about the urgency of submitting the form.	**Admissions Team/School**
Step 2	If this reminder by the school does not produce a Common Application Form within 10 days, then Admissions Team will write to the parent/guardian (enclosing a reply paid envelope), stressing the need for urgent action (after first confirming contact address with school).	**Admissions Team**
Step 3	If this letter does not produce an application within a further 10 days, then the case should be forwarded to the EWO, using Form 1.	**Admissions Team**
Step 4	The EWO will make a home visit to ascertain whether: i) The child is present and, if so, then proceed to Step 5; or ii) The child is missing, and, in which case, proceed to Step 6.	**EWO**
Step 5	If the child is present then the EWO should assist the parent or guardian to complete a Common Application Form and consider whether the family is in need of on-going support and/or referral to other universal services, eg: by completing Common Assessment Form.	**EWO**
Step 6	If the child is not located, then the EWO will initiate the Missing Child Procedure making reasonable enquires using Form 3.	**EWO**
Step 7	The EWO will advise the SIO of the outcome of investigations, using Form 3.	**EWO**

Step 8	The SIO will advise the school of the result of the investigations using Form 6. i) If the child is traced to a new school, the previous school will arrange for CTF transfer, or ii) If the child cannot be traced the SIO will add the child's name to the local Missing Children Register and advise the school to arrange for the child's details (CTF) to be uploaded to national Lost Pupils' Database	 **SIO/School** **SIO/School**

Table 3 - Allocated Place Not Taken Up

	Action Required	**Responsibility**
Step 1	If a child/young person fails to take up the place arranged by no later than the end of the 3rd week in September, the school should advise the Admissions Team using Form 5.	**School**
Step 2	On receipt of the notification, the Admissions Team will check database records to determine if the LA has any further details regarding the possible whereabouts of the child. i) If admission to another school is established and verified then the reporting school in Step 1 and the pupil's previous school should be notified, using Form 6 and no further action taken. The previous school should use this information to prepare and send a Common Transfer File to the new school. ii) If these enquiries do not locate the child in a confirmed placement a referral should be made to the SIO, using Form 6 ii). Steps 2 i) and2 ii) should be completed by the end of September.	**Admissions Team** **Admissions Team**
Step 3	SIO will ask the EWO to make a priority home visit to ascertain whether: i) The child is present but not enrolled in a school. If so, then proceed to Step 4; or ii) If the child is missing, if so, proceed to Step 5.	**SIO/EWO**
Step 4	If the child is present but not enrolled in a school, the EWO will inform the SIO using Form 7 and ask parents to complete School Preference Form. EWO will monitor case until it is confirmed by Admissions Team that child has taken up a school place.	**EWO/ Admissions Team**

Step 5	If the child is not located, the EWO will inform the SIO using Form 7 and will initiate the Missing Child procedure.	**EWO**
Step 6	The SIO will advise the school of the result of the investigation, using Form 6 and: i) If the child is traced to a new school, the previous school will arrange for CTF transfer, or ii) If the child cannot be traced, the SIO will add the child's name to the local Missing Children Register and the school will arrange CTF transfer to national Lost Pupils Database.	**SIO/School** **SIO/School**

EMS Checks

As an extra safeguard against children and young people going missing from Education at phase transfer the LA will undertake an annual cross matching of EMS data each year. This will involve matching records for Year 5, 7 and Year 9 students in the new school year with the records for Years 4, 6 and 8 respectively in the old school year. Where a record exists in the old school year but not in the new school year then investigations will be conducted to ensure that the record for the child or young person concerned has been appropriately transferred to a new school or the Lost Pupil Database in accordance with the procedures set out in previous sections. Where an appropriate transfer has not taken place then the matter will be investigated. The detailed process is as follows:

Table 4

	Action Required	**Responsibility**
Step 1	Each October, SIO will run EMS report to cross-match Year 4 – 5, Year 6 - 7 and Year 8 – 9 records and produce a list of any 'missing' records. SIO will then establish whether any of these records have transferred to other schools and will investigate any unmatched records.	**SIO**
Step 2	Make enquiries of schools to ascertain any available information as regards individual children/young people.	**SIO**
Step 3	Acting on information supplied by EMS search/schools, SIO to contact known addresses seeking information as regards school currently attended.	**SIO**

Step 4	If family contacted and new school verified, arrange for previous school to transfer of pupil record (CTF) via S2S. If family cannot be contacted or details of new school obtained/verified, the case should be forwarded directly to the EWO using Form 1	**SIO**
Step 5	EWO to make home visit to ascertain whether: Child is present but not enrolled in a school. If so, then proceed to Step 6; or Child is missing. In which case proceed to Step 7	**EWO**
Step 6	If child is present but not enrolled in a school, inform SIO using Form 4 and ask parents to complete School Preference Form. EWO will monitor case until it is confirmed by Admissions Team that child has taken up a school place.	**EWO/ Admissions Team**
Step 7	If child not located, inform SIO using Form 7.	**EWO**

3.3 Children and Young People who Cease to Attend School

Young people may, quite properly, leave school on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they achieve their 16th birthday. They might also leave on transfer to a new school phase, in which case the arrangements set out in Tables 2 and 3 will be used if they fail to make application for a new school place or fail to take up a place which has been allocated to them.

These circumstances apart, children and young people will cease to attend a school for a wide variety of reasons. This could be because the family has relocated to another area or has moved abroad; the child has moved into private education; a child on an extended holiday might fail to return; or the child of a travelling family might accompany his or her parents on their travels or fail to return after a period of travelling. Alternatively, previous poor attendance might evolve into non-attendance. However, a variety of other circumstances could also apply.

In the vast majority of cases, the school will have been given notice prior to the child or young person ceasing to attend and will have been provided with details of the school to which the child or young person will transfer. Occasionally, however, this might not be the case and a school may consider removing a child from the school roll whilst being uncertain as regards their whereabouts. This action can only be taken after a minimum of 4 weeks and should be taken in consultation with the SIO (who may also be making enquiries into the young person's whereabouts).

Whatever the circumstances, it is clearly important to avoid a child or young person simply 'going missing' from education.

To guard against this the Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006 prescribe in detail the grounds on which the name of a pupil of compulsory school age can be deleted from the admissions register. These are set out in detail in Appendix 2. Allied to these regulations and where the child or young person is of statutory school age, the DFE has established detailed requirements for the electronic transfer of pupil data between schools.

The alternative scenarios detailing school and LEA responsibilities and requirements for data transfer are set out in Table 5 below.

Where there is genuine concern that the safety or well being of a child or young person who has ceased to attend is at risk, it is essential that action is taken as quickly as possible. Consultation with the SIO and/or the relevant service (if the child or young person is known to Social Services) is required to ensure effective investigation of the circumstances involved and the reduction of harm.

Table 5 - Children and Young People who Cease to Attend School

Part 1 - Reasons requiring action by School and SIO/EWO
N.B. See Appendix B

Reason for ceasing to attend school	**Action Required**	**Responsibility**	**File Transfer Requirements**
The school has been notified *in writing* by the parents that the pupil is receiving elective home education previously known as education otherwise.	Within 10 days, advise SIO in writing of parental decision and date removed from school roll.	**School** **SIO**	 Arrange transfer of pupil record to EHE Register within EMS

That he/she ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he/she is registered	Step 1: if address is **known**, school to contact family to ascertain details of new school. If successful contact is made and new school confirmed, treat as "pupil has been registered at another school". Step 2: if address is known, is outside Northumberland, but family not contactable, refer to SIO using Form 7. Step 3: If address is known and is in Northumberland, but family is not contactable, refer to EWO using Forms 1 and 2. Step 4: EWO makes reasonable enquiries and if unable to establish whereabouts of child, initiates 'Missing Child' procedure using Form 3.	**School** **School** **School** **EWO**	Transfer CTF to new school via S2S Upload CTF to Lost Pupils Database <u>but only</u> after discussion with SIO
Failure to attend school within 10 school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which leave has been granted. (Applies in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence exceeding 10 school days for the purpose of a holiday or, in the case of Traveller Children, to travel with their parents.)	If permanent address available, school to make reasonable enquiries to establish whether the child is simply ill or their return delayed. If so agree a revised date for return. If a firm date cannot be agreed or if unable to contact family refer to EWO, using Forms 1 and 2. EWO to make further enquiries and, if child's circumstances cannot be satisfactorily determined, initiates 'Missing Child' procedure using Form 3.	**School** **School** **EWO**	None Upload CTF to Lost Pupils Database <u>but only</u> after discussion with SIO
That the pupil has been continuously absent from the school for a period in excess of 20* school days during	(i) school makes its own enquiries and concludes that it needs to refer the absence to the EWO using Forms 1 and 2; the date on which the school asks the	**School**	

which both school staff and LA staff have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate the pupil **NB Where the outcome of the Vulnerability Assessment (Form 2) indicates concerns about the safety and wellbeing of the child, the EWO and SIO should be consulted and the timescale (in excess of 20 school days) should be accelerated and other agencies e.g. social services, police notified of concerns.*	EWO to make additional enquiries on its behalf is recorded as Day 1 of joint enquiries. (ii) If, after 20 days (Day 20), of joint enquiry it has not proved possible to locate the child, the EWO must inform the SIO of this using Forms 1, 2 and 3. (iii) The SIO will liaise with the EWO and school to obtain agreement on (a) whether the school should now upload the child's details on to the LPD, or (b) whether the period of joint enquiry should be extended to an agreed date NB. The above decisions will depend on the nature of the information obtained during the joint enquiry and the leads that emerge. The decision to upload the child's details onto the LPD on a faster timetable than the above should be taken where the circumstances warrant this, but always in consultation with the SIO.	**EWO** **SIO** **School/SIO**	Upload CTF to Lost Pupils Database <u>but only</u> after discussion with SIO
That the pupil has been permanently excluded and the period in which the parents could appeal against the exclusion has expired	Delete pupil from the school roll (but not EMS).	**School** **SIO** **Data Team**	Arrange transfer of pupil record to Excluded Pupils Register within EMS

Part 2 - Reasons requiring action by School only

The pupil has completed nursery phase but is not transferring to a reception class at the school.	Delete pupil school roll (but not school EMS)	**School**	Transfer CTF to new school via S2S
The pupil has died, **or** there is medical evidence that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend the school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age **or** the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and intends to cease to attend the school	Delete pupil school roll (but not school EMS)	**School**	None
Another school confirms that the pupil has been registered there.	Delete pupil from original school roll (but not school EMS)	**School**	Transfer CTF to new school via S2S
The LA has identified an alternative school for a pupil registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a School Attendance Order	Delete pupil from school roll (but not school EMS)	**School**	Transfer CTF to new school via S2S

3.4 Failure to Register with a New School following a Move

- Referrals from Partner Agencies and Members of the Public

The procedures outlined in the previous sections are concerned with tracking children and young people who might go missing from education. Just as important is identifying children and young people of school age moving into Northumberland whose families have not taken steps to access appropriate education provision.

In paragraph 17.97 of the Victoria Climbie Inquiry Report 2003, Lord Laming recommended that:

> "Front line staff in each of the agencies which regularly come into contact with families with children must ensure that in each new contact, basic information is recorded. This must include the child's name, address, age, the name of the child's primary carer, the child's GP, **and the name of the child's school if the child is of school age. Gaps in this information should be passed on to the relevant authority in accordance with local arrangements".**

As recommended by Lord Laming, it is vitally important that any agency coming into contact with children and young people should make appropriate enquiries and follow local procedures as set out in this booklet. If a child leaves school to move elsewhere and this is not followed by a request from a receiving school for transfer information, then the original school should initiate the missing child procedure, using Form 1 and should contact the SIO. If a member of the public expresses concern about a school age child not attending school any agency notified of this concern e.g. EWS, should refer to SIO (using Form 7).

The Social Inclusion Officer is also the named adviser for children missing from education under the Co-ordinated Support Protocol operated in turn under the auspices of the Northumberland FACT (Families and Children's Trust). If you are concerned about a child or young person you work with, or have had contact with, and are unsure what to do, you can telephone the SIO for advice. Contact details are given in the introduction.

- Truancy Sweeps

In common with all other LEAs, the County Council conducts regular Truancy Sweeps jointly with the police using powers contained in Section 16 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Working with the police, schools and other agencies, target areas are agreed for the sweeps, which are conducted periodically during each school year.

The exercise involves teams of Education Welfare Officers and Police Officers in uniform working in tandem. Children and young people of school age, whether accompanied or not, are approached to ascertain why they are not in school.

Records are maintained of all those approached and their reasons for being out of school. Many will have a valid reason. They may, for example, be participating in a work experience placement or travelling to or from a medical or dental appointment.

Others might be engaged in legitimate educational activities such as educational visits and surveys, or they may be registered as receiving education at home or be traveller children granted leave of absence for the purpose of travelling.

A significant proportion will not be able to offer a valid reason and their details are noted for future follow-up. In a small number of cases, they are returned to their appropriate school using powers provided under the Act.

Following conclusion of the Truancy Sweep, EWOs work with schools and individual young people to monitor future attendance and take appropriate remedial action.

In a small number of cases, children and young people are identified as not being registered with a school and not receiving education at home. In such circumstances, the Social Inclusion Officer is notified using the Missing Child Notification Form (Form 7).

SECTION 4

Procedures to Monitor 'At Risk' Groups

The previous Section set out procedures for dealing with children and young people missing from education. In addition it is acknowledged that there are groups of children and young people who, because of their circumstances, are perceived to be at greater risk of going missing. These include:

- Young people who have committed offences
- Children living in women's refuges
- Children of homeless families perhaps living in temporary accommodation, houses of multiple occupancy or Bed and Breakfast
- Young runaways
- Children with long term medical or emotional problems
- Unaccompanied asylum seekers and refuges or children of asylum seeking families
- Young carers
- Children from transient families
- Teenage mothers
- Victims of Forced Marriage-Please see appendix 3
- Victims of Sexual Exploitation-Please see appendix 4
  Young people accessing Alternative Provision/part time timetables *

The Dfe now regards young people accessing part time timetables or AP as being at risk of going missing from education. Schools are expected to accurately record the attendance of this group of students on a daily basis and monitor their whereabouts through close liaison with Alternative Education Providers.

The expectation is that agencies or services providing an interface with children and young people falling into any of the above categories will closely monitor the situation and inform the Social Inclusion Officer should they suspect that a child has gone missing, using Form 7 **without delay**.

Within the Northumberland context, the groups identified as being at particular risk are:

- Children and young people with a poor school attendance record
- Looked After Children
- Traveller Children
- Excluded Pupils
- Young offender
- Children and young people awaiting the allocation of a school place
- Children and young people whose parents have opted for Elective Home Education
- Children on whose behalf the County Council has commissioned educational placements outside the maintained school sector, either in independent or non-maintained special schools, or with education providers that are an alternative to school.

Recognising this risk the County Council has developed specific procedures aimed at identifying the individuals concerned in order that they might be provided with the help and support they need, thus minimising the likelihood that they will “go missing”.

A brief overview of the support arrangements for each of these groups together with an action checklist is provided below.

Children and Young People with a Poor School Attendance Record

The vast majority of children and young people in the County have extremely good school attendance records. However, the County Council is mindful that, if left unchecked, poor attendance can deteriorate into non-attendance and the possibility of a child or young person missing out on a vital part of their education.

Education Welfare Service plays a pivotal role in relation to monitoring and maintaining good attendance. The service not only works with children, young people and their families on an individual case work basis but will support schools with a range of strategies aimed at promoting good attendance. One such strategy is the Fast Track to Attendance Procedures which is aimed at providing early intervention in cases of persistent non attendance.

Table 6

	Action Required	**Responsibility**
Step 1	Poor attendance pattern noted and reported to EWO	**School**
Step 2	Meeting convened with parents, young person, school staff and EWO (other professionals may attend) to agree a parenting contract Parent advised that failure to attend may be used in evidence should the matter go to court	**EWO**
Step 3	Monitoring of parenting contract	**EWO/School**
Step 4	Review meeting arranged with parent after 6 weeks	**EWO**
Step 5	Monitoring continues: If conditions met, advise EWO who sends letter to parents advising that no further action to be taken If conditions not met, advise EWO and proceed to Step 6	**School** **School/EWO** **School**
Step 6	If no extenuating circumstances, a Penalty Notice issued If penalty paid, no further action taken	**EWO**

	If unpaid after 42 days proceed to Step 7	
Step 7	Initiate prosecution procedure	**EWO**

Looked After Children

It is the expectation of the County Council that, when a Looked After Child from another Local Authority is placed in Northumberland, that Local Authority informs Northumberland County Council that the child is now living within it's jurisdiction, in accordance with the Boarding-out of Children (Foster Placement) Regulations 1988.

As part of meeting its statutory duties in respect of Northumberland Looked After children, the County Council has developed a number of procedures aimed at ensuring that looked after children obtain maximum benefit from their school years.

In particular these procedures provide for 'fast track' admission arrangements and a specific protocol to monitor carefully the school attendance of looked after children and to take early action where a pattern of non-attendance is identified.

The protocol provides for the monitoring of attendance by Education Welfare Officers who must alert the Education Service for Looked After Children (ESLAC) where a looked after child or young person has 5 consecutive days of absence or five days of absence in any school half-term period.

On receiving the referral the ESLAC Team manager will liaise with the child's social worker to decide if further action is needed. If action is required then a multi-agency meeting is convened within five working days, to include a Personal Advisor (PA) from the Locality Inclusion Support Team where the looked after child attends a high school.

Table 7 – Admission Arrangements: Reception Class and Phase Change

	Action Required	Responsibility
Step 1	Common Application Form to be completed and submitted to Admissions Team	**Social Worker**
Step 2	Application Form processed and offer made in accordance with Admissions Code of Practice	**Admissions Team**
Step 3	Offer is accepted and place allocated	**Social Worker/Admissions Team**
Step 4	(Except for initial admission to a maintained nursery or first school) previous school arranges for transfer of records to new school in accord with Admissions Code of Practice	**Previous School**

Table 8 – Admission Arrangements:
In-Year Admissions

	Action Required	Responsibility
Step 1	In Term Transfer Form completed and submitted to Admissions Team, following consultation with ESLAC.	**Social Worker**
Step 2	In Term Transfer Form fast tracked by Admissions Team and offer of place made, in accordance with the Admissions Code of Practice.	**Admissions Team**
Step 3	Liaison with school and carers and provision of a Personal Education Plan to school and ESLAC.	**Social Worker**
Step 4	ESLAC liaise with previous school to transfer records to new school	**ESLAC**

Table 9 – Absence from School

	Action Required	Responsibility
Step 1	Updated list of looked after children provided to Education Welfare Officers each week, with poor attenders highlighted	**ESLAC Team Manager**
Step 2	Attendance monitored and ESLAC Team Manager advised of cases of 5 days absence in a single term or 5 consecutive days	**EWO**
Step 3	ESLAC Team Manager to liaise with Social Worker to consider if further action required. If No, take no further action If Yes, proceed to Step 4	**ESLAC Team Manager**
Step 4	Multi-agency meeting arranged within 5 working days	**ESLAC Team Manager**

Traveller Children

Northumberland's Traveller Education Family Liaison Officer (TEFLO) provides educational support to traveller children and their families. Wherever practical, the Service encourages travellers to enrol their children in local schools but this is not always feasible, particularly when a family is on the move. In such cases they provide advice on an appropriate curriculum and support with basic materials.

Table 10

	Action Required	Responsibility
Step 1	Traveller Education Family Liaison Officer (TEFLO) makes contact with traveller families and their children and records details of traveller children of statutory school age in the Register of Traveller Children	**TEFLO**
Step 2	If practical, arrangements are made for enrolment at local school. If enrolment takes place, arrange record transfer If not, proceed to Step 3	**TEFLO** **TEFLO/Data Team**
Step 3	Provide support materials and guidance as appropriate	**TEFLO**
Step 4	If family 'move on' pass on details through TES Network	**TEFLO**
Step 5	If at any time concerns arise regarding the welfare of a child or young person, seek advice through the Northumberland Co-ordinated Support Protocol	**TEFLO**

Excluded Pupils

The County Council has detailed procedures in respect of excluded pupils aimed at:

- Ensuring continuity of provision
- Ensuring that the school and County Council discharge their responsibilities in respect of those permanently excluded from school.
- Ensuring that the school discharges it's responsibilities in respect of those excluded for more than 5 days.

The Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Service is the responsible service.

In the case of fixed period exclusions of more than 5 days and permanent exclusions, the school is required to notify the County Council immediately of the exclusion decision, by submitting a formal Notice of Exclusion. Receipt of this notice allows:

- The pupil's details to be entered onto EMS.
- The EOTAS Service is able to check that the school is meeting it's responsibility provide full-time education from the 6th day of fixed period exclusions of more than 5 days.
- The EOTAS Service to plan full-time interim alternative arrangements for permanently excluded pupils.

Table 11 – Fixed Term Exclusions for more than 5 Days

	Action Required	Responsibility
Step 1	Advise Local Authority of exclusion immediately.	**School**
Step 2	Details of young person recorded on EMS. Social Inclusion Officer/Reintegration Officer and EOTAS Head of Service notified, together with Education Officer (SEN) if pupil is in receipt of a Statement of SEN and Virtual Head Teacher if reasons for exclusion relate to drugs/alcohol.	**Admin. Assistant (Social Inclusion)** **Admin. Assistant (Social Inclusion)**
Step 3	SIO ensures that school are aware of their obligations regarding provision of education	**SIO**
Step 4	If exclusion for 30 days or more, SIO (or EO(SEN) if appropriate) will attend Governors' Review of Exclusion	**SIO or EO(SEN)**
Step 5	SIO/RO (Reintegration Officer(or SEN Officer advises school on re-integration plans	**SIO/RO/SEN Officer**

Table 12 – Permanent Exclusions

	Action Required	Responsibility
Step 1	Advise Local Authority of exclusion immediately.	**School**
Step 2	Details of young person recorded on EMS. SIO/RO and EOTAS Head of Service notified, together with Education Officer (SEN) if pupil is in receipt of a Statement of SEN or is at School Action Plus on the SEN code of Practice and Virtual Head teacher if reasons for exclusion	**Admin. Assistant (Social Inclusion)** **Admin. Assistant (Social Inclusion)**

	relate to drugs/alcohol.	
Step 3	SIO/RO visits young person and family to explain procedures and discuss education during exclusion and alternative school placements.	**SIO/RO**
Step 4	SIO or EO (SEN) liaises over date of Governors' Review of Exclusion and attends meeting as LA representative.	**SIO/EO (SEN)**
Step 5	Provisional arrangements made to offer continuing full-time education by sixth school day following date of exclusion, pending outcome of Governors' Review of Exclusion	**EOTAS Service Manager**
Step 6	Governors' Review of Exclusion (and possibly independent Appeal): If exclusion overturned, arrange return to school and update EMS. If exclusion confirmed continue to Step 7.	**RO/Admin. Assistant (Social Inclusion)**
Step 7	SIO/RO /SEN Officer (if pupil has statement of SEN) to discuss alternative placement with Headteacher of proposed receiving school, draw up and then monitor Re-integration Plan Once admission complete, remove from Excluded Pupils Register.	**RO/SEN Officer** **Admin. Assistant (Social Inclusion)**

Children and Young People in receipt of Elective Home Education

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 spells out parental responsibility to ensure their children receive a suitable education:

> "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:
>
> (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
>
> (b) to any special educational needs he may have
>
> either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

A small but significant number of parents choose to discharge this responsibility by educating their children at home.

The County Council has a duty to ensure that any child or young person being educated at home is receiving a suitable and efficient education. If the County Council has good reasons for considering that the education provided by parents is not suitable, it can serve notice on the parent(s) that if they do not make arrangements for appropriate education i.e. enrol their child in school, the County Council can name a school in a School Attendance Order.

The County Council's legal duties in respect of children and young people educated at home are discharged by the Elective Home Education Team (EHEd). In addition to discharging the County Council's legal responsibilities, EHEd provides advice and guidance to parents deciding to home educate and will offer regular contacts, providing advice and support about their provision on request.

Details of all pupils in the County educated at home are maintained in the Elective Home Education Register within the EMS database.

Table 13

	Action Required	Responsibility
Step 1	i) The Local Authority is advised by the school, within 10 days of deregistration, that child or young person is to be educated at home ii) If the child has not commenced reception class the parent should inform the Local Authority in writing.	**School** **Parent**
Step 2	Details of the child/young person are entered on to the Elective Home Education Register within EMS	**SIO**
Step 3	Letters are sent to school requesting records and to the EWO and other agencies known to be involved with the child/young person, enquiring about any concerns which may be relevant to the child/young person being electively home educated.	**SIO**
Step 4	A visit/contact will be offered within 1 month by an EHEd Advisor, for the parent to explain their personal philosophy and to indicate their plans for appropriate provision.	**SIO**
Step 5	Provision is deemed suitable, a report is compiled and a copy is sent to the parents, continue to Step 6. The EMS register is updated, and it is recorded that suitable education is in place	**EHEd Advisor** **SIO**

	If the provision is deemed unsuitable continue to Step 7.	
Step 6	Further visits/ contacts are offered at intervals of 6 months and reports sent to the parents. The EMS register will be updated accordingly.	**SIO**
Step 7	A visit/contact is arranged after a further 3 months. If the provision is deemed suitable, a report is compiled and copy is sent to the parents. Further visits/contacts will be offered at intervals of 6 months. The EMS register will be updated to record that suitable education is in place If the education provided continues to be deemed unsuitable, continue to Step 8	**SIO** **EHEd Advisor** **SIO**
Step 8	If the education provided is considered unsuitable a further visit will be arranged for 1 month's time. If the provision is remains unsuitable at this point continue to Step 9 If the provision is considered suitable at this visit repeat Step 6 (but only whilst there is a reasonable expectation that suitable provision can continue to be delivered)	**SIO** **SIO/EHEd Advisor**
Step 9	The SIO will discuss with parents the admission of the child/young person to an appropriate local school. Letter to be sent to parents giving them not less than 15 school days to enrol their child in school. The normal admissions procedure will apply. If the child is not in school in the time specified and a total of 6 months has passed since the provision was first deemed unsuitable, continue to Step 10	**SIO** **SIO**
Step 10	Issue School Attendance Order Following the child/young person's admission to school the SIO will amend the EMS register.	**SIO** **SIO**

Children Placed Outside the Maintained Sector in Independent/Non-Maintained Special Schools or in Alternative Education Placements

In a small but nonetheless significant number of cases, a child's education will involve attendance at either:

(i) an independent or non-maintained special school; or

(ii) with an education provider that is an alternative to school.

In the case of (i) this may involve weekly boarding arrangements during term time, although sometimes residential arrangements also include weekends and holiday periods. This can depend on the distance involved between home and school, and whether other factors apply such as social care arrangements. Not all places in this sector are made on a residential basis, however, and where daily commuting between home and school is practicable then suitable transport arrangements are made.

In the case of (ii) this involves placements within Northumberland which involve independent or voluntary organisations where the emphasis is on vocational training, work experience and community involvement. A number of placements are also arranged in conjunction with the Further Education sector.

Whilst all placements in relation to (i) will only be made through a child's statement, a statement is not a pre-requisite for arrangements to be made with the alternative providers commissioned in (ii). An increasing number of placements in alternative education provision are being made on behalf of permanently excluded pupils for whom such arrangements are more appropriate than a return to the school system. In some cases the local authority has commissioned the place, in other cases high schools have taken the initiative to do so – for example, to prevent a child from being excluded. A number of placements involve full time attendance at the alternative provision, whilst others involve the student's time being divided between the alternative provision and school.

In all cases, however, the education provider concerned must maintain a register of the child's attendance and to contact either the school or the appropriate named officer within the County Council as and when concerns develop in relation to the child's attendance. Whether the school or a named officer is contacted will depend on whether or not the student is on the roll of the school. The relevant body which is responsible for monitoring the placement (for example, with responsibility for arranging to review to the statement) must ensure that arrangements are in place to monitor patterns of student attendance.

These concerns might cover a wide range of circumstances – for example, a child attending a residential special school might refuse to return to the school at the beginning of the week, or a child attending either an independent school or an alternative education placement on a daily basis might develop a poor attendance pattern. In all such cases, school or the named officer must consider the circumstances and determine an appropriate course of action after consulting with partner services such as the EOTAS, EWS, ESLAC, SEN Section, Social Care and School Transport Section, as appropriate. The trigger points for action will vary according to the

circumstances, but routine monitoring arrangements are of paramount importance and must be clearly established at the time of placement.

Children who emigrate with their parents or leave the maintained school sector to attend private schools and/or schools in Scotland

A number of children who are resident in Northumberland cease attending a school maintained by the County Council either emigrate, move into the private school sector or the Scottish state system. In any of these cases, the maintained school should upload the child's details onto the Lost Pupil Database.

As part of his/her routine monthly checks of the Lost Pupil Database, the Social Inclusion Officer will confirm with the new school that the pupil has moved to there, their start date and that they are attending.

At the end of each academic year the Social Inclusion Officer will ask every maintained school to inform him/her of the names of children whom the maintained school is expecting to move at the beginning of the next school year into either the private sector or the Scottish system. The Social Inclusion Officer will then seek confirmation of this from the private or Scottish schools by the end of the 3rd week in September. This information will then be incorporated into the County Council's EMS database.

If the private school or Scottish school do not confirm that the child is now attending and if they have had no contact with, or explanation from, the child's parents then the previous school must complete a child missing from education referral form and return this to the Social Inclusion Officer. The Social Inclusion Officer will then refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer in order that reasonable enquiries are made. If these are unsuccessful the child's details will remain on the Lost Pupil Database.

SECTION 5

Procedures to Re-Engage Children and Young People Identified as Missing from the Educational System

Just as important as identifying children and young people missing from education, is taking steps to ensure they are re-engaged with the system at the earliest possible opportunity.

Children and young people 'missing from education' might be identified in a number of ways:

- They might have moved into Northumberland and made application to be admitted to a school (either mainstream or special);
- They might be permanently excluded from school;
- They might be identified by an education service provider, e.g. Education Welfare Service or the Traveller Education Service; or
- They might be identified by a partner agency or a member of the public and notified using the Missing Child pro forma

In every case details will be recorded by the SIO who will follow the procedures set out in Table 14.

Children and Young People missing from education might also be lacking access to other universal services from which they might benefit. Once there whereabouts has been determined consideration should be given as to whether the Common Assessment Process should be initiated in individual cases.

Table 14 – Reintegration Procedure

	Status/Action	Responsibility
Step 1	Has an Admissions Application Form been Completed? If No go to Step 2 If Yes go to Step 3	**SIO**
Step 2	Has contact been established with Family? If Yes post Application for completion and monitor its return. Then proceed to Step 3 If No consider visit from EWO to secure completion and proceed to Step 3	 **SIO** **SIO/EWO**
Step 3	Has the child/young person a statement of special educational need? If Yes refer to SEN Team who will agree and progress appropriate provision. If No proceed to Step 4	 **SIO/SEN/ EOTAS**
Step 4	Has the child/Young Person been permanently excluded from school? If Yes refer to Social Inclusion Officer/Reintegration Officer. If No proceed to Step 5	 **SIO/RO**
Step 5	Are there any other circumstances which might require specialist intervention? If Yes make appropriate referral If No proceed to Step 6	 **SIO/RO**
Step 6	Refer application to Admissions Team	**SIO/RO**
Step 7	Process Admission Application	**Admissions**

SECTION 6

Monitoring the Missing Children Register

One of the principal duties of the Social Inclusion Officer is the maintenance of Missing Children records. The records are updated on a continuous, basis. The focus of attention is:

(i) children whose whereabouts are known but who are not enrolled at school, nor are being educated otherwise (for example, privately, by elective home education, or through home tuition arrangements, or in alternative provision such as college, independent or voluntary provision, or youth project).

(a) children who are awaiting enrolment

(b) children who, either for their own reasons or their parents' reasons, are refusing to engage with the process of enrolment

(ii) children who have been absent from school for four weeks or more and whose whereabouts are not known.

(iii) children whose whereabouts are not known and he/she is absent from education or who has left education without a known destination. These are pupils whose details have been uploaded onto the Lost Pupils Database.

Appendix 1

SUMMARY OF FORMS AND WHEN TO USE THEM

Children Missing Education:
Summary Table of Forms and when to use them

Form	Description	Used by	When Used	Received by	Action
1	Referral to EWO to initiate 'missing child' enquiries	School – after making their own reasonable enquiries Admissions Team – after making their own reasonable enquiries	If child: – fails to take up school place – ceases to attend and there are no details of a new school for him/her – has been absent for 4 weeks without explanation – has failed to return to school following a holiday – has apparently moved to a new (named) school but this cannot be verified – if phase change application form is not received – if common application form is not received	EWO	Initiate 'Missing Child' enquiries
2	Vulnerability Assessment Form (VAF)	School	Completed with Form 1 on initiation of a 'missing child' enquiry	EWO	Assess significance of information provided and, if concerns are apparent, contacts SIO
3	(EWO procedure for locating missing child – enquiry checklist)	EWO	Following receipt of Forms 1 and 2 from school	SIO	Considers total information received and, where appropriate, continues with further enquiries
4	Response to 'missing child' enquiries	EWO	Following receipt of Forms 1, 2 and 3: records outcome of further enquiries	SIO	Child tracked/traced or, if not traced, discuss with school whether to continue enquiries or remove from roll and upload details to LPD
5	Missing child referral	School	Child fails to take up an allocated place	Admissions Team	Check EMS for sibling details – contact parents
6	Response to missing child enquiries (4) or missing child referral (5)	SIO or Admissions Team	To record outcomes whether child is tracked or not	School, or if no school, identified, SIO	If school identified - CTF transferred. If child not traced, school advised to remove from roll and upload to LPD.
7	Notice of child considered to be missing from education	School EWO Professional from other agencies	Child not enrolled in school and whereabouts not known	SIO	Check EMS, previous school or LA (if known)
8	Referral to initiate Missing Child enquiries	Private sector school	If child previously resident in Northumberland but current whereabouts not known	SIO	After discussion with school refer to EWS if appropriate

Form 1

Northumberland County Council
Education Service

‘Missing Child’ Referral to EWO

Please initiate ‘Missing Child’ enquiries as set out in County Council guidance on children missing, or at risk of going missing, from education, after all possible enquiries have been made by the school.

Reason for Referral (please tick (✓)/complete as appropriate) **Date:**_____

Failure to take up a place (reported by School or EMS check)	
Has ceased to attend school but no details of new school or new school’s details cannot be verified	
Has been absent for more than 4 weeks without explanation	
Has failed to return to school following a holiday	
Other (please give details)	

In each of the above cases, a **Vulnerability Assessment Form (VAF) - (see Form 2)** should be completed and forwarded to EWO with this referral.

Details of Child or Young Person

First Name…… Family Name……

School attended……

Date of Birth…… UPN …….. SEN Statement (Y/N)……

Ethnicity……

Previous Family Names ……..

Name of Parent(s) or Guardian(s) ……..

Last Recorded Address ……..

Alternative Contact Points from School SIMS ……..……..

……..……

Comments or Additional Information

Form 2

Northumberland County Council
Education Service
Vulnerability Assessment Form

When initiating missing child enquiries, the following questions should be considered:

Name: D.O.B:	Date:

		Yes	No
1.	Is the child/young person the subject of a child protection plan (on the child protection register)?		
2.	Is the child/young person looked after by the Local Authority?		
3.	Is there current social care involvement?		
4.	Has the child gone missing without their family?		

(If school is uncertain about 1 or more of the above, enquiries must be pursued with relevant agencies for clarification.)

If the answer is Yes to one or more of these questions then:

Action

- School/designated teacher for child protection/looked after children to inform: the school's Child Care Team within Children's Services as soon as possible; and
- School to contact and inform EWO and SIO.

If the answer is No to 1-4, continue to complete questions 5-9. In cases where the child has gone missing with their family, this information will assist in informing decision making about potential police involvement.

		Yes	No
5.	Is this sudden and/or unexpected behaviour?		
6.	Have there been suspicions in the past concerning this child/young person and family which together with the sudden disappearance are of concern, e.g. drug/alcohol abuse, domestic violence, or an inability to protect a child or children from harm.		
7.	Was there a significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence?		
8.	Have there been any past concerns about the child/young person e.g. being bullied, or associating with significantly older persons.		
9.	Is there any health, religious or cultural reason to believe that the child/young person is at risk of harm?		

If the answer is Yes to one or more of the above:

Action

- School to contact EWO and SIO as soon as possible.
- Discussion between the EWO and SIO will arrive at a decision re appropriate police involvement.

If the answer is No to questions 1-9 attach forms 1 and 2 and pass on to EWO.

Name: _____ **Designation:** _____ **Date:** _____

Form 3

Northumberland County Council
Education Service

EWO Procedure for Locating a Missing Child

This checklist is to be used when trying to locate a child or young person who appears to be missing from education.

On completion of step 8, the **Referral Pro Forma (Form 1) and VAF (Form 2)** (which has been completed by the school), should be attached and forwarded to SIO with Forms 3 and 4.

Details of Child or Young Person

First Name…… Family Name……..……..…

Date of Birth…..... Previous Family Names ……...

Name of Parent or Guardian …….....

Last Recorded Address …….

Alternative Contact Points from EMS ……..…….

…….

		Date(s) Time	Action By	Details of Response/Result
1	Visit address provided			
2	Check alternative contacts			
3	Check with neighbours			
4	Check if known to Social Work colleagues			
5	Check with local Housing Department			
6	Check with GP through School Nurse			
7	Check with other agencies: e.g. Youth Offending Service, Community Beat Officer			
8	Advise SOI of outcome returning completed Forms 1-4 and notifying her of any other action taken			

Name: _____ Designation: _____ Date: _____

Form 4

Northumberland County Council
Education Service

Response to Missing Child Referral

From: EWO (Name)…….…… **To:** Social Inclusion Officer…..…….....

Date:……..

Details of Child or Young Person

First Name…….…… Family Name……..……

Date of Birth…….. UPN……

COMPLETE EITHER

1. The above-named child/young person has been located and is now attending the school identified below.

School Name	
Local Authority Number	
School Number	

OR

2. Despite undertaking extensive enquiries as set out in County Council guidance on children missing, or at risk of going missing from education, I regret to advise that the child/young person concerned cannot be traced. Copies of enquiry documentation have been forwarded via internal mail.

Name: …… **Designation:** ……

Date: ……

Form 5

Northumberland County Council
Education Service
'Missing Child' Referral to Admissions Team,
Education Service, County Hall, Morpeth NE61 2EF

Before making a referral using this standard template the school should ensure that all appropriate actions have been taken in accordance with County Council guidance on children missing, or at risk of going missing, from education provision.

School Name:

Reason for Referral – failure to take up a school place

Details of Child or Young Person

First Name…… Family Name……

Date of Birth…….…….…… UPN……. SEN Statement (Y/N)……

Previous Family Names……

Name of Parent or Guardian……

Previous School……..

Last Recorded Address……..

……

Comments

Name: _____ **Designation:** _____ **Date:** _____

Form 6

Northumberland County Council
Education Service

Response to Missing Child Referral

From: Admissions Team/SIO **To:** [School Name]…….....

Details of Child or Young Person

First Name……..…. Family Name……..…….

Date of Birth…….. UPN……

Complete Actions in Either

Section 1

The above-named child/young person is now attending the school identified below. Please remove the child/young person's name from your Admissions Register and forward CTF to new school.

School Name	
Local Authority Number	
School Number	

OR

Section 2

The above-named child/young person cannot be traced. Please now remove their name from the Admissions Register and forward CTF to national Lost Pupils Database using destination XXXXXXX.

Name: …… **Designation:** ……..

Date: …….

Form 7

Northumberland County Council
Education Service
Children Missing From Education
Trace Enquiry

Child's Full Name:		**D.O.B.**
Gender:	**UPN No:**	**Ethnicity:**
Siblings:		
Last Known Address:		
Last School:		**Date Last Attended:**
Additional Relevant Details:		**Parent(s) Names:**

Response:

The above child/children:

(a) has/have been found ☐

(b) has/have not been found ☐

If (a), school(s) registered at _____ **from date** _____

_____ **from date** _____

_____ **from date** _____

OR Home Educated ☐ **from date** _____

Alternative Education Programme ☐ **from date** _____

Are awaiting for appropriate arrangements to be made ☐

In Authority, - Address: _____

_____

Other Relevant Details _____

_____

_____

Name: _____ **Signed:** _____

Designation: _____ **Date:** _____

Form 8

Northumberland County Council
Education Service
Children Missing from Education Enquiry Form e.g.
Health, Police, Revenues, Housing

Date | **Name of Referrer**

Contact Telephone

Number	Name of Child	Date of Birth	NC Yr	Male/Female
1				
2				
3				
4				

Parents Names:	
Last Known Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Previous Address:	
Telephone Number:	

Child	Previous School Name	Local Authority	Length of time on roll	Date of Leaving	Special Educational Needs, YES/NO

Concerns/Comments

Request for:

Response

Name: _____ **Designation:** _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix 2

The Removal of Pupils' Names from the School Roll

THE REMOVAL OF PUPILS' NAMES FROM THE SCHOOL ROLL

If you require any clarification with regard to pupil registration or removal of pupil's names from the school roll, please contact:

Angela Cunningham, Senior Education Welfare Officer
Telephone: 01670 623367
Email: Angela.Cunningham@nothumberland.gov.uk

Given the concern nationally about missing children and the importance attached to the safeguarding of children, The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, set out clear grounds on which the name of a pupil of compulsory school age can be deleted from the admissions register.

Please note, when parents notify schools that they will be moving out of the area, necessitating a change of school for their child:

- If they can name the new school that their child will be attending, the original school should check that the child has indeed been admitted before removing their name from the school admissions register and transferring their Common Transfer File using the S2S system.

- If they do not yet have a named school for their child but can provide new address details, schools should contact the EWS with these details. The EWS will check (with another Local Authority if necessary, and ensuring that LA are aware of the need to track the child), that the family are indeed at that address. Once this is confirmed, the EWO will advise the original school that they can remove the child's name from the admissions register.

N.B. SCHOOLS SHOULD NOT REMOVE PUPIL NAMES FROM THEIR ADMISSIONS REGISTER SIMPLY BECAUSE PARENTS HAVE SAID THEY ARE MOVING ELSEWHERE.

In summary, the grounds on which the name of a pupil of compulsory school age can be deleted from the admission register are:

a) The revocation of a school attendance order (NB – this is an unlikely scenario).

b) The pupil has been registered at another school.

c) The pupil has ceased to attend the school and the headteacher has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving elective home education (previously known as education otherwise than at school).

d) The pupil has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he/she is registered.

e) In the case of a pupil granted leave of absence exceeding 10 school days for the purpose of a holiday in accordance with the regulations that:

   i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the 10 days immediately after following the expiry of the period for which leave was granted;

   ii) the headteacher does not have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any other unavoidable cause;

iii) both headteacher and local authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is.

f) That the school medical officer has certified that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age and that neither the pupil nor the parent have indicated to the school the intention of continuing to return to school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

g) That the pupil has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than 20 school days and:

i) at no time was the absence during that period authorised by the headteacher;

ii) the headteacher does not have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil is unable to attend school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause;

iii) both the headteacher of the school and the local authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is.

h) That the pupil is detained in pursuance of an order made by a court or of an order of recall made by the court or by the Secretary of State, that the order being for a period not less than 4 months, and the headteacher does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.

i) That the pupil has died.

j) That the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets.

k) That the pupil has been permanently excluded from the school, the time for bringing an independent review l has expired and no review has been brought within the timescale.

l) Where the pupil had been admitted to receive nursery education, that the pupil has not on completing his/her education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.

In the case of (d), (e), (g) and (h), great care needs to be exercised to ensure that all has been done, including the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer, to locate the pupil.

You will of course be aware of the DFE requirements with regard to pupil data being forwarded electronically to a pupil's new school within 15 school days of the pupil leaving. If the destination school is still unknown after this period and the enquiries referred to above have been exhausted, then the data file should be uploaded to the DFE Lost Pupils Database. For further information on this procedure, please refer to the Student Data Transfer section of your SIMS Manual.

APPENDIX 3

FORCED MARRIAGES-GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Although this guidance is specifically aimed at teachers, lecturers and other members of staff within schools, colleges and universities, much of the guidance and information within will apply to other staff working in education establishments. This includes staff providing education and training funded by the Learning and Skills Council (England) that is delivered by a range of organisations such as private providers, voluntary organisations and local authorities

HOW STAFF CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Young people, especially girls who are forced to marry, or those who fear they may be forced to marry, are frequently withdrawn from education, restricting their educational and personal development. They may feel unable to go against the wishes of their parents and consequently may suffer emotionally, often leading to depression and self-harm. These factors can contribute to impaired social development, limited career and educational opportunities, financial dependence and lifestyle restrictions.

Staff may become aware of a student because they appear anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem. They may have mental health disorders and display behaviours such as self-harming, self-cutting or anorexia. Sometimes they may come to the attention of the police having been discovered shoplifting or taking drugs or alcohol. Often students' symptoms can be exacerbated in periods leading up to the holiday season.

Students may present with a sudden decline in their performance, aspirations or motivation. Some female students may feel studying is pointless if they are going to be forced to marry and therefore be unable to continue with their education.

There may be occasions when a student comes to school or college but then absents themselves from lessons. Often young people at risk of forced marriage are living in virtual imprisonment. They may be subject to excessive restrictions and control at home. Some students may not be allowed to attend any extra-curricular or after school activities. Girls and young women may be accompanied to and from school/college, and even during lunch breaks. Therefore, school time is their only "free" time to do ordinary adolescent activities that other students do at weekends with their friends.

Some students may stop attending school or college and visits to the home by welfare officers or other members of staff may result in the professional being told that the student is out of the country. In some cases, the student may have been locked in a room of the house and not allowed to communicate with anyone outside.

Other students may show a decline in punctuality, especially if they are past compulsory education age, which may be the result of having to "negotiate" their way out of the house. Some students, particularly girls, are given minimal time to get to school so they do not have time to meet a boyfriend or talk to friends. There are occasions when older siblings (usually brothers) and cousins keep a close eye on girls to make sure that they do not meet anyone or talk to friends.

Some students may come to notice because their homework is incomplete or appears rushed. This may be the result of being actively discouraged from doing it by family members. These students may do their homework late at night, which frequently shows in school because they are lethargic, unable to concentrate and have a general appearance of tiredness.

Staff may become aware of conflict between the student and their parents about whether the student will be allowed to continue with GCSEs or A-levels. Sometimes there may be family arguments over whether the student can make applications to colleges or universities, and the distance of the college or university from the family home.

Another warning sign might be a family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early. Their parents may feel it is their duty to ensure that children are married soon after puberty in order to protect them from sex outside marriage. In these cases, there may be a history of considerable absence authorised by the student's parents. These absences may be for sickness, or extended family holidays overseas often interrupting the school term.

Students who fear they may be forced to marry often come to the attention of, or turn to, a teacher, lecturer or other member of staff before seeking help from the police or social services. Sometimes the student's friends report it to staff. Teachers, lecturers and other members of staff are in an ideal position to identify and respond to a victim's needs at an early stage. They can offer practical help such as referring the student to social services or to support groups, counselling services and black and minority ethnic women's groups but also by providing them with information about their rights and choices.

Educational establishments should aim to create an "open environment" where students feel comfortable and safe to discuss the problems they are facing – an environment where forced marriage is discussed openly within the curriculum, and support and counselling are provided routinely. Students need to know that they will be listened to and their concerns taken seriously.

Schools, colleges and universities can create an "open" and supportive environment by:

- ✓ Circulating and displaying copies of the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) and Forced Marriage Unit posters on forced marriage
- ✓ Displaying relevant information e.g. details of the NSPCC Asian Child Protection Helpline, Child Line, Careline and appropriate black and minority ethnic women's groups
- ✓ Ensuring that a private telephone is made available should students need to seek advice discreetly
- ✓ Educating teachers, lecturers and other staff about the issues surrounding forced marriage and the presenting symptoms – appropriate training should be included in continuing professional development (CPD)
- ✓ Referring students to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor or school counsellor as appropriate.
- ✓ Encouraging young people to access appropriate advice, information and support (page 100) Schools and colleges can introduce forced marriage into the curriculum by:
- ✓ Discussing different types of marriage (love matches, arranged and forced marriages) within relevant classes. These include:
  - Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) in England
  - Personal and social education (PSE) in Wales
  - Citizenship
  - Religious knowledge
  - Drama
  - History
  - Sociology.
- ✓ Introducing discussions about marriage within English literature classes for example when reading "Romeo and Juliet"
- ✓ Making books available such as *Unbroken Spirit*, *Shame*, *Daughters of Shame*, *Brick Lane*, *(Un)arranged Marriage*, *Arranged Marriage*, *Without Mercy* and *Sold* – see section 7.8 for further details

- ✓ Providing videos such as *Watch Over Me*, *Tying the Knot*, *Love Snatched* and *Narina's story* – see section 7.8 for further details

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU ARE CONCERNED THAT A STUDENT MAY BE FORCED TO MARRY

Staff may be concerned about a student because they are exhibiting some of the behaviour shown in the chart of potential warning signs and indicators. Alternatively, a student may approach a member of staff because they are going on a family holiday overseas and they are concerned about this. They are often told that the purpose is to visit relatives, attend a wedding or because of the illness of a grandparent or close relative. The student may suspect that this is a ploy and that there is an ulterior motive, which is to force them to marry.

Do not assume that a student is at risk of being forced into marriage simply on the basis that they are being taken on an extended family holiday. These assumptions and stereotyping can cause considerable distress to families. All efforts should be made to establish the full facts from the student at the earliest opportunity.

Once the full facts have been established, the member of staff should be able to decide on the level of response required. This may be to offer the student advice or to provide them with information about specialist advice and information services. However, there may be occasions when the level of concern is such that it becomes a child protection issue; in these cases, the appropriate child protection procedures will need to be followed.

What you should not do:

- × Treat such allegations merely as a domestic issue and send the student back to the family home
- × Ignore what the student has told you or dismiss out of hand the need for immediate protection
- × Decide that it is not your responsibility to follow-up the allegation
- × Approach the student's family or those with influence within the community, without the express consent of the student, as this will alert them to your concerns and may place the student in danger
- × Contact the family in advance of any enquiries by the police, the Forced Marriage Unit, adult or children's social care, either by telephone or letter
- × Share information outside information sharing protocols without the express consent of the student
- × Attempt to be a mediator.

WHAT TO DO WHEN A STUDENT STOPS ATTENDING SCHOOL

Local authorities in England have a duty to identify all children not receiving a suitable education. This duty will come into force in Wales from September 2009. This relates to children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll and who are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at school (this could involve, for example, home education, private education, alternative provision). Details of the steps local authorities need to take to meet this duty are described in "Statutory Guidance for local authorities in England to identify children not receiving a suitable education". Guidance in Wales will be published before September 2009.

There may be occasions when a student does not return to education after a holiday or they may stop attending school during term time. In these situations, staff may have a suspicion that forced marriage is an issue.

- ✓ If a teacher, lecturer or other member of staff suspects that a student has been removed from, or prevented from, attending education as a result of forced marriage, a referral should be made to the local authority adult or children's social care and the police
- ✓ Liaise with the local police domestic abuse unit
- ✓ Contact the Forced Marriage Unit
- ✓ Try to obtain as much information about the student as possible
- ✓ Establish if there is a history of siblings being forced to marry
- ✓ Consider speaking to the student's friends

Remember:
There may be occasions when an Education Welfare Officer or teacher visits the family in the UK to find out why the student in not attending school or college. The family may tell the teacher that the student is being educated overseas. Sometimes, the family may suggest that the teacher speaks to the student on the telephone. If this occurs, the teacher should refuse to speak on the telephone and (if the student is a British national) insist that the student is presented at the nearest British Embassy or High Commission. There have been occasions when students have not been able to talk freely over the telephone or a different individual has spoken to the teacher.

For further information, refer to the statutory guidance for local authorities in England to identify children not receiving a suitable education.

What staff should not do:

- × Remove the student from the register without first making enquiries and referring the case to police and local authority adult or children's social care
- × Dismiss the student as taking unauthorised absence

MAKING REFERRALS

It is not the role of teachers, lecturers and staff to investigate allegations of abuse of a student and therefore, if the student is under 18 years, all referrals should be made in accordance with Working Together. These referrals will usually be to children's social care or the police. The Forced Marriage Unit can also be contacted for advice and help in making the referral.

If the student is an adult with disabilities, referrals should be made in accordance with the local Multiagency Adult Protection Committee procedures and protocols to protect vulnerable adults from abuse.

Remember:

The student may not wish to be referred to a social worker, police officer or a guidance/pastoral/head teacher from his or her own community.

Consult other professionals, particularly an experienced manager/colleague, the local police child protection or domestic abuse unit. Advice can be sought without revealing the student's identity.

Speaking to the student's parents about the action you are taking may place the student at risk of harm. Therefore, do not approach the family as they may deny that the student is being forced to marry, move the student, expedite any travel arrangements and bring forward the forced marriage.

Report details of the case, with full family history, to the Forced Marriage Unit. Encourage the student to get in touch with the Forced Marriage Unit. The Unit gives confidential advice to individuals who fear they may be forced to marry.

Appendix 4

Child Sexual Exploitation: Spotting the Signs

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but does highlight some common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation. Signs include:

- Unexplained gifts
- Unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- Drug use, alcohol abuse
- Going missing, running away, homelessness
- Disengagement with school, not in school, truancy, exclusion
- Repeat sexually transmitted infections; in girls repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- Association with older men, older boyfriend
- Hanging out with groups of older people, anti-social groups, other vulnerable peers
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual, withdrawn)
- Involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- Contact with known perpetrators
- Self-harming, suicide ideation, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault
- Getting into/out of different cars
- Seen at known places of concern, or ‘hot spots’
- Moving around local areas, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- Involvement in gang fights, gang membership, abused by perpetrator groups or networks
- Engagement in offending, criminal activity
- Police involvement, holding a police record

NB: It is not the case that a set number of signs mean definitively that a child or young person is a victim of sexual exploitation. However, the more signs the greater the risk.