

Sefton Council



# **Identifying and Maintaining Contact with Children Missing from Education**

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## **Part 1: Introduction**

Sefton Council, Schools and other partners are committed to safeguarding children and they seek, through best practice, to help minimise the disruption to pupil learning and achievement. Identifying and maintaining contact with children missing education procedures are to ensure that children missing, or at risk of missing education are identified, tracked and re-engaged in appropriate full-time education with lasting success, and that children who move in and out of Sefton are tracked until they are engaged in education elsewhere.

### **Sefton Council is committed to ensuring that:**

- Tracking procedures are monitored to ensure best practice with regard to safeguarding children and young people;
- Schools are made fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to missing/lost pupils and are properly supported to meet these responsibilities;
- Work with other agencies is carried out so that the Local Authority knows of all children of statutory school age and their education provision is identified;
- All pupils of statutory school age who go missing or are lost from schools in Sefton and move within the borough or to other areas are speedily located;
- Support is provided to other Local Authorities to locate their own missing/lost pupils;
- Existing systems will be developed to limit the opportunity for children to go missing when they fall out of the education system;
- Schools notify the Attendance and Welfare Service of its intention to implement a reduced timetable, or arrange an alternative provision for a pupil;
- Children in alternative provision receive at least 25 hours per week;
- Clear and up-to-date records are kept of the numbers of children receiving alternative education and for those missing from education;
- Urgent and effective action is taken to protect children where they are missing from school or their attendance noticeably reduces;
- Working effectively so all those involved in the care of children work together to help them return to or remain in suitable education.

Independent Schools, located in the Borough are legally required to advise the Local Authority about the details of all children admitted and removed from the roll of their school. The Independent Schools are also required to complete a Sefton Child Missing Education Proforma, (App 6).

### **In summary the procedures in this policy support:**

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006, which places a duty on Local Authorities to make arrangements to enable them to identify children and young people of compulsory school age missing education in their area;
- These procedures are in line with the Local Authority's statutory duty under Section 436A of the Education Act 1996, as amended by Section 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which requires all local education authorities to make arrangements to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area who are not registered at a school, for example, at home, privately or in alternative provision, and are not receiving a suitable education;
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on Local Authorities to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

## **The policy should be read in conjunction with:**

- The Education ( Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 amended 2016;
- Children Missing Education – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, DFE 2016;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory Guidance for schools and colleges September 2016;
- Sefton Local Safeguarding Children’s Board Interagency Policies and Procedures.

## **Definition for Children Missing Education (CME)**

**The DfE defines Children Missing Education as:** ‘Children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school; and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more)’.

## **Who are Children Missing Education?**

Sefton recognises that all children missing education are vulnerable and recognises that particular groups of children may be more at risk of becoming CME and will target these groups accordingly. These groups include children and young people:

- with high mobility;
- excluded from school;
- involved in the Youth Justice System;
- involved in persistent anti-social behaviour;
- at risk of harm;
- who are privately fostered;
- at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation, Trafficking, FGM, Extremism or Radicalisation.

There will be instances where Sefton Council or school is unaware of children with complex issues, who may come to the attention of other agencies e.g. community organisations, and include children and young people:

- at risk of forced marriage, and honour-based violence;
- at risk of sexual exploitation, including children who have been trafficked to or within the UK;
- involved with their families in the witness protection programme and may be required to relocate without explanation or trace;
- from families who are involved in fraud, social difficulties, crime and anti-social behaviour;
- young runaways;
- are from migrant worker families who may not be familiar with the education system;
- are newly arrived immigrant families;
- are from families who disappear without trace when asylum has not been granted or if accommodation has not been allocated in their preferred location.

These children can only be identified via multi-agency involvement, thus requiring strong partnership working and clear referral procedures.

## **Part 2: A multi-agency approach to Children Missing Education**

**2.1** The responsibility for reducing the risks of children missing education is carried out through different multi-agency frameworks where all agencies share information on the identification of children and young people missing education.

### **2.2 Why do children become CME?**

Each year a number of pupils “disappear” from education. Children and Young people fall out of the education system because they:

- simply move and their families do not tell either the new or old local authorities;
- are unable to attend their preferred school as no places are available and do not take up the offer of an alternative place;
- never enter the education system because they fail to start appropriate provision at the start of compulsory school age (there is no requirement for parents to inform local authorities that they intend to educate at home if the child has never attended school);
- be withdrawn by their parents who elect to educate at home and both parents and the school fail to notify the local authority;
- cease to attend school due to disputes, parental dissatisfaction, unofficial exclusion or removal from school roll;
- have fled the area as part of a planned/unplanned safety arrangement;
- fail to complete a transition between providers, for example from primary to secondary school or from a school to alternative provision;
- move area and do not register with a school, or depending on their circumstances may not see re-enrolment at school as a matter of urgency;
- enter the country and do not register with a school;
- move into or out of the Looked after Children (LAC) system without prior notice or planning;
- be excluded or withdrawn from independent schools;
- not wish to be found and may change names and move quickly from place to place.

### **2.3 The role of the Children Missing from Education Co-ordinator**

Sefton Council have a dedicated Children Missing Education Co-ordinator whose role is to receive notifications of children possibly missing education and to manage local procedures in line with statutory guidance. The Children Missing Education Co-ordinator is Carole Blundell. She can be contacted at [CME@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:CME@sefton.gov.uk)

Her role involves:

- Chairing the Monitoring & Placements Group;
- Overseeing and monitoring the referral system for children out of school, at risk of missing education and those reported missing, destination known or otherwise;
- Making appropriate enquiries of the Capita One database to trace children missing education. Overseeing, maintaining and updating the children missing education database and acting as a Link Officer with schools and other agencies referring or tracking pupils out of school;
- Working with schools, alternative provision and other agencies to ensure that procedures and practice are in place to minimise the possibility of children and young people going missing from education;

- Use the lost pupil data base to monitor lost pupils and communicate within Sefton and nationally, regarding these pupils;
- Attends the Multi-Agency Child Sexual Exploitation Meeting [MACSE] which discusses children and young people who are at risk of being sexually exploited and who regularly go missing from home and care, providing intelligence on this issue;
- Attends MARAC to share information about vulnerable children and ensure their needs are met;
- Attends CARMAC, (Children at risk multi-agency conference, Youths at Risk) to share information about vulnerable children and ensure their needs are met.

## 2.4 Referrals to the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator

Children who are without education, come to the attention of the Local Authority through various routes: For example:

- School Secretaries/Administrators;
- Designated Senior Persons;
- Registered Social Landlords;
- Sefton Homeless Service;
- Missing People Helpline;
- Accident and Emergency Department;
- Parent Partnership Services;
- Children's Social Care;
- Police;
- Youth Offending Teams;
- Fire and Rescue Services;
- Health Visitors/School Nurses;
- UK Border Agency;
- Assessment and Monitoring Officers, SEN;
- Connexions;
- Complementary Education Services;
- Library Services;
- Young Carers;
- General Public;
- Sefton Women's and Children's Aid (SWACA);
- Voluntary and community organisations;
- Health Authority, Admissions, Connexions, SEN, the Community.

If agencies or members of the public become aware of statutory school aged children resident in Sefton, but not on the roll of a school, a Children Missing Education Referral Form needs to be completed (**Appendix 1**). This form has been placed on the Internet and the Intranet.

## 2.5 Procedure to be used by the CME Co-ordinator when a "Notification of a Child Missing Education" form is received.

Statutory or voluntary bodies, or individual members of the public, have the opportunity of contacting the CME Co-ordinator directly regarding a child who they believe may be missing education. The notification form and accompanying notes are available on the Sefton Council website and may either be completed on-line or printed and sent to the CME Co-ordinator.

When a form is received the following procedure will be used:

- If the child is shown as being on roll of a school on the CAPITA ONE database, inform the referrer that the child is still on roll;
- If a definite address is indicated, and the child is not traced on the CAPITA ONE database, the CME Co-ordinator will visit the indicated address to confirm whether the child is actually residing there;
- If the child is not traced on the CAPITA ONE database and no definite address is indicated, the CME Co-ordinator will contact the referrer and try to obtain further background information;
- On completion of the enquiries the referrer will be advised whether or not the child has been located.

## **2.6 Out of School Register and Monitoring and Placement Group**

An 'Out of School' register is held which identifies those pupils who are known to the Local Authority without any education provision. This is circulated and discussed at the Monitoring and Placement Group on a fortnightly basis to identify who is the most appropriate professional to take a lead as key worker for the particular case, based on the individual circumstances of the child or young person. An assessment may be required if a child's needs are unclear, and can help identify other services which may need to be involved. A lead professional will be identified, if appropriate, to provide a single point of contact for the family.

## **2.7 Arrangements for the transition of young people of school age who live in Sefton and are entering and leaving secure establishments (including those who cease to be school age while in custody).**

Section 18A of the Education Act 1996 (inserted by 48 of the ASCL Act 2009), places a duty on 'host' Local Authorities (those with a Prison Service Young Offenders Institution in their area) to secure suitable education and training provision for young people in custody. The ASCL Act 2009 also provides for 'home' and 'host' Local Authorities to ensure the appropriate sharing of information about those young people, to enable their engagement in appropriate education and training whilst in custody and on their re-integration into the community.

In Sefton, if children or young people are likely to be receiving a custodial sentence the Business Support Team of the Youth Offending Service will contact the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator. The Information regarding children and young people's education who are entering secure establishments will be sent electronically to the Business Support Team (**Appendix 2 - Flowchart**).

In April 2015, Sefton published the new duties regarding Young People in Custody who have identified special educational needs, that include:

- maintaining and reviewing an EHC Plan when a child or young person enters custody; and
- arranging appropriate special educational provision for the young person while he or she is detained (if they have an EHC Plan before or during the period of detention);
- If the EHC Plan for a detained person specifies health care provision the Health Services Commissioner for the custodial establishment must arrange appropriate health care provision for the purposes of the EHC Plan (**Appendix 2**).

The case will continue to be tracked and monitored at the fortnightly Monitoring and Placement Group Meeting. Relevant information from review meetings will be considered.

This will enable children and young people in custody to move successfully back into mainstream provision or training. Prior to the child or young person (school age) leaving custody there will be a meeting with the case manager and a member of the Attendance and Welfare Service with identified staff from the secure establishment to look at the arrangements for the young person prior to release. If the young person ceases to be compulsory school age the most appropriate agency in Sefton will be identified. The plan put into place will ensure that all children and young people leaving custody will continue to complete their programmes of education and training (**Appendix 2**).

## **2.8 Children and young people who are entering or returning from a Tier 4 CAMHS placement**

When a school aged person is admitted to a Tier 4 CAMHS placement, the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator (CME) must be notified. The CME Co-ordinator will notify the young person's school and then add the case to the agenda for the next Monitoring & Placement Group Meeting that is held fortnightly. The case will be included for discussion at each meeting in order to prevent drift, and to ensure that a plan is in place for the young person to access a suitable education when they are discharged.

When the young person is due to be discharged, prior to the pre-discharge meeting, CAMHS should notify the CME Co-ordinator. The CME Co-ordinator will inform the M&PG of any plans that are in place or are to be implemented for reintegrating the young person back into education.

## **2.9 Receiving looked after children who are placed in Sefton by other Local Authorities**

Children who are looked after by other Local Authorities, who are placed out-of-authority in Sefton, without education provision, have their educational needs considered at the Monitoring and Placement Group, to help identify a placement. If the child has a statement of special education needs, Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) the SEN section of the receiving Authority liaises with the placing Authority in the placing Authority's role as the corporate parent. For looked after children placed out-of-authority the Inter-Authority Recoupment Regulations provide that, for children with EHC Plans, the Local Authority to which the child belongs, must pay to the providing Authority (i.e. the Authority maintaining the statement of SEN (EHC) Plan. This will generally mean that all the costs of the statement will be covered, including the costs of home/school transport where the statement provides that the Local Authority will pay for it.

## **2.10 Travellers/Elective Home Education (EHE)**

The Complementary Education Service provides educational support for Traveller children who attend school. It monitors and visits EHE families including Travellers to ensure that parents are providing a suitable education.

If it becomes apparent that children have moved from the site and the destination is unknown, CME procedures will be followed and the CME Co-ordinator will be informed.

Schools should follow the normal referral process for referring children with non-school attendance issues to the Attendance and Welfare Service.

The Complementary Education Service will refer EHE children who are deemed not to be receiving a suitable education, or are difficult to contact, to the Attendance and Welfare Service.

## **2.11 Raising of the Participation Age and Vulnerable Groups**

The Monitoring and Placement Group, since September 2013, monitors all young people in Youth Offending Institutions who have reached the end of year 11 and are not in employment, education and training (NEET). This ensures young people in these groups do not become NEET and provides an audit trail for participation.

## **2.12 Procedure to be used by the CME Co-ordinator when a missing pupil enquiry is received from another Council and where a full address within Sefton is indicated.**

In this situation the following procedure will be initiated:

A check on the **CAPITA ONE** database to ascertain whether or not the child is on a school roll; if it is confirmed that the pupil is on roll the standard letter regarding a missing pupil will be sent to the originating authority;

If the pupil is not shown as being on a school roll the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator will:

- Place the pupil's information on Sefton's Out of School Register;
- Visit the indicated address to confirm whether the family is actually residing there;
- Add the pupil's details to Monitoring and Placements Group agenda;
- Monitor and track the pupil until they are in receipt of education provision.

If the pupil is found at the indicated address the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator will contact the originating authority.

If the pupil is not found at the indicated address the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator will advise the originating authority that the child has not been found.

If the originating authority indicates any child protection issues the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator will immediately notify Social Care.

If the originating authority indicates that the pupil has a statement of Special Educational Needs/EHCP the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator will immediately notify the SEN team.

## **2.13 Procedure to be used by the CME Co-ordinator when a missing pupil enquiry is received from another Council and where no full "Sefton" address is known.**

Although the DfE have advised CME contact officers that "round robin" enquiries should not be used, if such an enquiry is received or a specific enquiry without an address in Sefton being known, the following procedure will be followed:

- a check on the CAPITA ONE database to ascertain whether or not the child is on a school roll;
- if it is confirmed that the pupil is on roll, the originating authority will be informed;
- if the pupil is not found, no response will be made if the enquiry was a "round robin" (this decision is made on the advice of DfE);
- if an indication was given that the pupil was possibly living in Sefton a response will be sent back to the originating authority if the pupil is not traced within **ONE** term.

- 2.14** The Children Missing Education Co-ordinator will maintain and monitor a number of systems and databases. Details recorded will include:
- Date referred to the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator (Out of School Register);
  - Actions taken to locate the child;
  - Date of education assessment, if required;
  - Date and form of provision determined;
  - Date of establishment of provision;
  - Date of confirmed attendance.

## **2.15 Tracking and cross boundary arrangements**

This section discusses the arrangements that are in place for children missing education who attend Sefton schools but live in another Local Authority area.

If a child goes missing from a Sefton school, but lives in another Local Authority area, the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator will refer the matter to the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator for that Authority.

If a child is permanently excluded from a Sefton school, but lives in another authority, The CME Co-ordinator informs the home authority of the permanent exclusion and forwards pupil details, to enable the home authority to arrange education provision by the 6<sup>th</sup> day.

If a child attends a Sefton school, but lives in another authority and is absent due to long term medical needs or pregnancy, the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator will inform the home authority to access support for the child. Their details will be logged until education support is identified.

Where a child is removed from a Sefton school roll because the parent has notified them in writing the family are moving to another Local Authority area, the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator will retain the details of the child either until a child's attendance at an alternative school has been confirmed, or the child's details have been passed on to the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator responsible for the area in which the family now resides.

## **Part 3: Responsibilities of all education provisions**

Schools also have safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils.

Schools have a key role in ensuring that children do not become CME. All schools are required to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers.

From 1st September 2016, under The Education (Pupil Registration (England) (Amendment)) Regulations 2016, all schools, including independents, are required to:

- Inform their LA when they are about to delete a pupil's name from the admission register under all fifteen grounds;
- Record details of the pupil's residence, the name of the person with whom they will reside the date from which they will reside there, and the name of the destination school (where they can reasonably obtain this information);

- Inform their LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school;
- Provide information to their LA when registering new pupils within five days, including the pupil's address and previous school (where they can reasonably obtain this information). The Education (Pupil Registration (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

#### **Part 4: Deleting a pupil from a school roll**

The following is an extract from The Education (Pupil Registration (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 which sets out the grounds for deletion from roll.

#### **Deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register as set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) amendment Regulations 2016**

- 1 8(1)(a) - a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.
- 2 8(1)(b) - except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school.
- 3 8(1)(c) - where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.
- 4 8(1)(d) - in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.
- 5 8(1)(e) - except in the case of a boarder, that he 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 is registered.
- 6 8(1)(f) - in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that — (i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted; (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
- 7 8(1)(g) - that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

- 8 8(1)(h) - that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and —
- (i) - at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2); (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is;
- 9 8(1)(i) - that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.
- 10 8(1) (j) - that the pupil has died.
- 11 8(1)(k) - that the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and— (i) the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school; or (ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.
- 12 8(1)(l) - in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school.
- 13 8(1) (m) - that he has been permanently excluded from the school.
- 14 8(1) (n) - where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.
- 15 8(1)(o) - where— (i) the pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or an Academy; (ii) charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the pupil; and (iii) those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.

## **Part 5 Children Missing Education – off rolling procedures for schools**

Schools cannot remove a pupil from roll until all reasonable enquiries have taken place over a period of no less than four weeks. If this process has not been followed schools will be required to reinstate pupils back on to the school roll. If the new address of a family is known, in another area of the authority, the child must not be removed from roll.

If a child leaves a Sefton School without a destination school, or when a child does not return from a holiday, the school should follow the Children Missing Education Procedures.

A Child Missing Education Pro-forma **should not be** completed for a child who is:

- of non compulsory school age;
- being home educated (confirmed in writing by parent to the school and school informing the CME Co-ordinator) – see the procedures in place for EHE;
- moving to an Independent school (registered with the DfE) and it is confirmed that he/she is on roll there;
- moving area and is confirmed as attending another school;

- living at the given address, and has stopped attending the school, the child must not be removed from roll – a CME form is not required in this case as the school should proceed with non school attendance interventions as appropriate.

### **Who should be referred as a CME?**

A Child Missing Education Pro-forma **should** be completed for:

- 1) A child (of compulsory school age) missing school providing that enquiries have been completed and it is established that the child is **no longer living at the given address**. Following completion of reasonable enquiries, by the school if the child is not located (has moved away), the child can be removed from roll after twenty school days (unless there are child protection/safeguarding concerns). A CME pro-forma must be completed by the school clearly stating that the child is no longer living at the address. A discussion is to take place with the CME Co-ordinator prior to the child being removed from roll;
- 2) A child who has been confirmed as having moved abroad;
- 3) A child who has not returned from extended leave on the agreed date and enquiries have been completed within a period of the next ten days. Where a child is found at the address, who has returned from abroad, he/she must **not** be removed from roll – Attendance and Welfare Service interventions should be employed including legal sanctions if appropriate. A child can be removed from roll after this period if they have still not returned from abroad. Conversations need to take place with the CME Co-ordinator prior to removal from roll;
- 4) A child who has moved to a private unregistered provision.

For all 4 of these categories, a Child Missing Education Pro-forma (**Appendix 6**) should be completed and emailed securely to [CME@Sefton.gov.uk](mailto:CME@Sefton.gov.uk)

Forms must **not** be sent before the reasonable enquiries are completed and the outcomes of the enquiries are known.

The reason for wanting to remove from roll should be clearly stated and any relevant and current child protection information must be completed including actions taken for:

- Missing;
- Female Genital Mutilation/Honour Based Violence/Domestic Abuse;
- Gang/crime involvement;
- Child Sexual Exploitation;
- Other child protection/safeguarding issues must be specified;

**A child must not be removed from roll, even if moved out of the area (until registered with another educational provision) where:**

- he/she is a Looked After Child ( Child in Care);
- there is a Statement of Educational Needs (SEN), now EHC Plan;
- there are Child Protection concerns.

### **Reasonable enquiries**

Reasonable efforts must be made in collaboration between the CME Co-ordinator and school to identify the child's current whereabouts/destination this may include the following: (please refer to **Appendix 6** – CME Pro forma and **Appendix 6a**- CME Flowchart).

- checks with the pupil's friends, siblings, and known relatives at this school and other schools;

- contact the extended family;
- checks with members of school based staff who the child may have had contact with e.g. SENCO, School Nurse etc.;
- checks with other agencies with known involvement;
- home visits & enquiries with neighbour(s) (min of 3 non contact visits made at different times of day to be evidenced);
- telephone calls to any numbers held/identified;
- letters sent to the family.

## **Elective Home Education**

Pupils who cease to attend a Sefton school to become electively home educated or to attend a non-maintained school or one outside England and Wales.

Parents have a duty to ensure that their children receive a suitable full time education either by regular attendance at school **or otherwise** (under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996). Some parents decide, as they are entitled, to provide suitable education by educating their children at home. The parent does not have to inform anyone if their child has never started school.

If the child's name is provided to Sefton Local Authority as a child who may be missing education, then the Attendance and Welfare Service is required to contact the parents/carers to find out if the child is receiving an education.

When parents withdraw their child from school to home educate, and the child is of compulsory school age, the name of the child can only be deleted from the admissions register of the school when the parents inform the school in writing as provided by the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, under Regulation 9(1)(c): "that he has ceased to attend school and the proprietor has received written notification from the Parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school".

It is then the duty of the proprietor (Head teacher) of the school to inform the Local Authority. A copy of the letter should be faxed to Carole Blundell, CME Co-ordinator, 0151 934 3365 within 10 working days under Regulation 13(3): "when the name of a pupil has been deleted from the admission register in accordance with regulation 9(1) (c) the proprietor (Head Teacher) shall make a return to the Local Authority, giving the full name and address of that pupil within the ten school days immediately following the date on which the pupil's name was so deleted".

Although children and young people with statements of Special Educational Needs/ Education Health Care Plan (EHC) can be home educated, the Local Authority remains responsible for ensuring that the education the child receives is suitable. The statement (EHC) plan must stay in force and the Local Authority must ensure that parents can make suitable provision, including providing for their child's Special Educational Needs. If the parent's arrangements are suitable, the Local Authority is relieved of their duty to arrange the provision directly, but it still remains the Local Authority's duty to ensure the child's needs are met. Sefton Council already have clear policies in place for monitoring these arrangements as set out in the flowchart, **(Appendix 3)**.

The Local Authority can intervene if they have reason to believe that parents are not providing a suitable education and may issue a School Attendance Order (under section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996) or alternatively an Education Supervision Order section 36, Children Act 1989.

## Common transfer file requirement

Common Transfer File Requirement - There is a statutory requirement to send specified information about a pupil moving school to the receiving school. Detailed guidance on compiling and sending the CTF, including use of the TeacherNet website is available at [www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk) page

A Common Transfer File (CTF) must be sent within 15 school days of the pupil ceasing to be registered at the old school, unless the new school is not known. In this case, a missing child investigation must be carried out by the school. Then a transfer file using **XXXXXXX** as the destination should be created and uploaded onto the secure site. If a request is made from the pupil's new school, it should be sent within 15 school days.

Schools should upload CTF files to the Lost Pupil section of the S2S secure website when:

- A child has moved into the independent sector;
- A child has moved on to elective home education;
- A child has moved abroad;
- A child has moved and their destination is unknown.

## Lost pupil database

All CTF files for children moving to the Independent sector, Elective Home Education, abroad or where the destination is unknown will be securely stored in the "Lost Pupil" area of the S2S website.

Schools must upload CTF files to this site. The Local Authority cannot accept hard copy school records of "Lost Pupils"; these must be archived by the last school and transferred on request. It is important that any new school views current child protection concerns in the context of previous concerns, therefore, it is particularly important that any child protection chronologies should be kept separate from the school file and transferred to the new school (once known).

## Child Protection

This policy and the multi-agency procedures within it do not replace any of the Local Safeguarding Board (LSCB) Multi Agency Procedures and are to be used in conjunction with them.

Existing safeguarding procedures and mechanisms for reporting and recording child protection concerns are to be observed at all times whilst understanding the relationship between the increased risks to children who are missing from education.

**IF AT ANY TIME A SCHOOL HAS CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS, IN LINE WITH SEFTON'S THRESHOLD GUIDANCE, THEY MUST REPORT THIS TO THE MASH TEAM on 0151 934 2514.**

## Part 6: Children identified with no educational provision

This section concerns professionals working together to identify children and young people of compulsory school age who have no educational provision to ensure they can swiftly return to a suitable form of education provision.

**6.1** Systems for identifying and maintaining contact with children missing education.

## **Sefton Council's systems for identifying and maintaining contact with children missing education and current developments for identifying those at risk of going missing from education.**

- All in year admissions are dealt directly through the Local Authority. All school admission applications for children moving into the Sefton area or moving schools within Sefton are logged and monitored by the Sefton Admissions Team. Each application contains information relating to current school attendance and house moves, dates etc.
- If the applicant (child), is not on a roll and waiting for an appeal for a particular school, they are automatically referred to the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator and are placed on the agenda of the Sefton Monitoring and Placement Group.
- In addition, the details for all families waiting for a school appeal and the appeal decisions are monitored by the Attendance and Welfare Service.
- The Local Authorities Education Management System, CAPITA ONE (EMS) provides the database by which a child's name can be checked to establish whether or not s/he is registered with an education provider or educated at home by the parent.
- An 'Out of School' register is held which identifies those pupils who are known to the Local Authority and are without any education provision. This is circulated and discussed at the Monitoring and Placement Group on a fortnightly basis, to identify who is the most appropriate professional to take a lead as key worker for the particular case, based on the individual circumstances of the child or young person. Collection of information from the previous school or educational provision will be requested.
- The most complex of cases may require the completion of an assessment to identify which services may be required to provide support to the child or young person.
- For permanently excluded pupils and some children who are looked after who may require alternative provision, the Monitoring and Placement Group will identify the next provision and monitor the case.

### **6.2 Identifying Children at risk of becoming missing from education.**

Some children are at greater risk of becoming a child missing education. The following groups have been identified as at risk. These include:

- Young offenders;
- Children at risk from Child Sexual Exploitation;
- Children at risk of becoming involved with gun and gang crime;
- Children living in refuges;
- Children at risk of radicalisation or extremism;
- Runaways;
- Children of homeless families;
- Children of Refugees and Asylum Seekers;
- Children of new immigrant families;
- Children looked after;
- Children from the Gypsy, Roma, Irish, Show People and Bargee Traveller Communities;
- Children who are privately fostered;
- Young carers;
- Pregnant teenagers and school age mothers;
- Children with psychological/mental health problems;
- Children who have been permanently excluded;
- Children whose parent/s are in prison;
- Children subject to witness protection arrangements.

### **6.3 Why do children go missing from education?**

- They fail to start appropriate provision and thus never become a part of the education system;
- They cease to attend their education provision due to an unofficial exclusion or removal from the school roll;
- They fail to transfer to alternative provision after a permanent exclusion;
- The parent/carer withdrawal of a child from the school roll with no details provided of alternative provision; or
- They fail to find alternative provision when moving to a new address within Sefton or moving into Sefton from Out of Borough.
- They fail to transfer from primary to secondary school.
- They could potentially be at risk from sexual exploitation.
- Forced Marriage.
- Female Genital Mutilation.

## **Part 7: Sharing Information**

This section will look at the legislation that enables information to be shared.

### **7.1 Information can be shared in accordance with the following legislation:**

- Current Child Protection legislation, which states that any child missing from education, is deemed to be a 'Child in Need';
- Section 27 of The Children's Act 1989, which states that a Local Authority may request help from any Local Education Authority and other agencies in exercising their duty to provide support and services to children in need and that Education staff have a duty to gather information regarding concerns;
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that it is the duty of the parent of every child aged five to sixteen to cause the child to receive efficient, full-time education, suitable to his or her age, ability or aptitude and to any special need he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise;
- The Children's Act 2004, which states that all public agencies should work together, exchange and share information for the welfare and protection of children in the area.

## **Part 8: Other sources of information on where to look for advice about Children Missing Education**

This section looks at other sources of information on where to look for advice about missing children.

**8.1** Children from families of members of the Armed Forces are likely to experience high mobility both within and outside the UK. Moves can be made at quite short notice, with future home address and school not known until just before the move. Schools and Local Authorities can make enquiries through the MOD Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS). CEAS can also liaise between Local Authorities, and with devolved authorities in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Service Children's Education (SCE) also keeps records of all pupils in Service schools overseas. Enquiries about children in Service schools overseas should also be made via CEAS. The CEAS helpline can be contacted on 01980 618244.

**8.2** Being removed from education is a recognised symptom for children and young people who may be facing a forced marriage. If this is suspected, Local Authority Children's Social Care should contact the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Forced Marriage Unit where

experienced caseworkers are able to offer support and guidance. They can be contacted on 020 7008 0151.

**8.3** Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a collective term for all procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. In the UK it is considered child abuse and is illegal. It is also illegal to take a child abroad to undergo FGM. Designated Persons for child protection in school should be aware of the guidance that is available in respect of FGM and should be vigilant to the risk of it being practised. If a child or young person stops attending or is removed from school and there is no contact from the family or they have not returned from a holiday by the date agreed, the school should inform the CME Co-ordinator by completing the necessary forms.

**Care should be taken not to approach the family or attempt to mediate if forced marriage or FGM is suspected.**

**8.4** In Sefton there are a number of routes for raising awareness with Council services, partners, other agencies and the public of the Children Missing Education Policy and Procedures.

- Circulating details of the notification routes to all relevant areas of the council and other partners on an annual basis and to post this information on the intra and internet;
- Consultation events with schools;
- Consultation events with partner agencies, including voluntary and community groups;
- Embedded in the designated persons safeguarding training;
- Publicity campaign across Sefton using fliers in public places, leaflets, and other publicity materials.

#### KEY CONTACT DETAILS

<p>Carole Blundell Children Missing Education Co-ordinator</p>	<p>Tel: 0151 934 3181 Email: <a href="mailto:CME@sefton.gov.uk">CME@sefton.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Tracy Mckeating Triage Manager</p>	<p>Tel: 0151 934 3359 Email: <a href="mailto:tracy.mckeating@sefton.gov.uk">tracy.mckeating@sefton.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Jane Perry Link Nurse Co-ordinator Children Out of School</p>	<p>Tel: 0151 247 6146 Email: <a href="mailto:Jane.Perry2LiverpoolCH.nhs.uk">Jane.Perry2LiverpoolCH.nhs.uk</a></p>

**Appendix 1:**

For use by all referrers of statutory aged children resident in Sefton but not on roll at a school. Please return this form to Carole Blundell by fax 0151 934 3365 or electronically at [CME@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:CME@sefton.gov.uk)

**Children Missing Education Referral Form**

**Date:**

**Name of Child:** ..... **Date of Birth:** .....

**Address:** ..... **Gender:** Male / Female

..... **Ethnicity:** .....

..... **Contact Numbers:** .....

**Forename and Surnames of Parents and Siblings**

Name	Relationship to Child	Gender	Address	School

**Reason for Referral and relevant background information including how it came to the referrer's attention:**

**Action taken (and by whom):**

**Details of Agencies Involved:**

Agency/Service	Contact Name	Contact Number

**Educational History (if known)**

**Referrer Details:**

**Name:** .....

**Contact Numbers:** .....

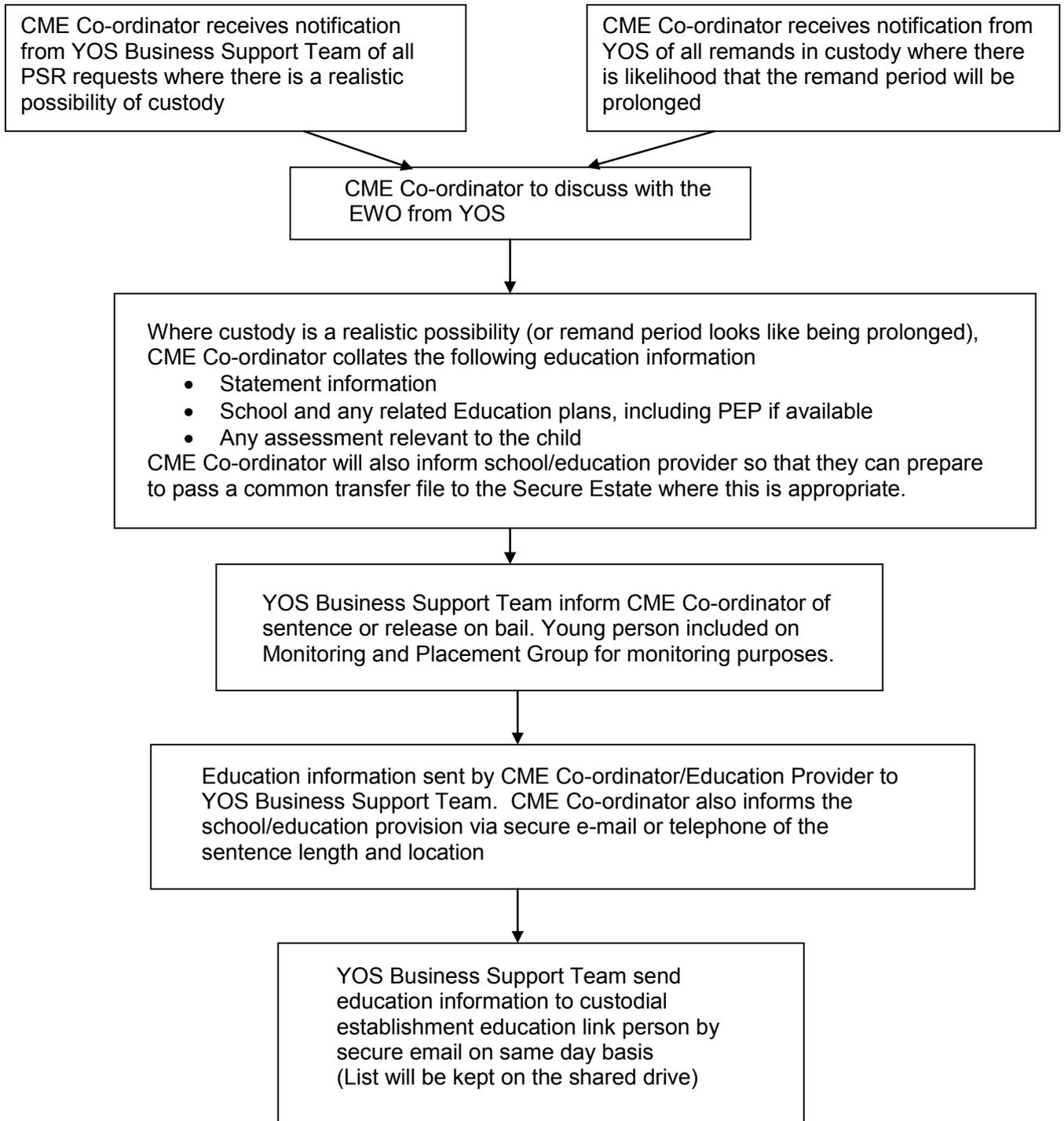
**Agency/Service:** .....

**Email:** .....

**Date:**.....

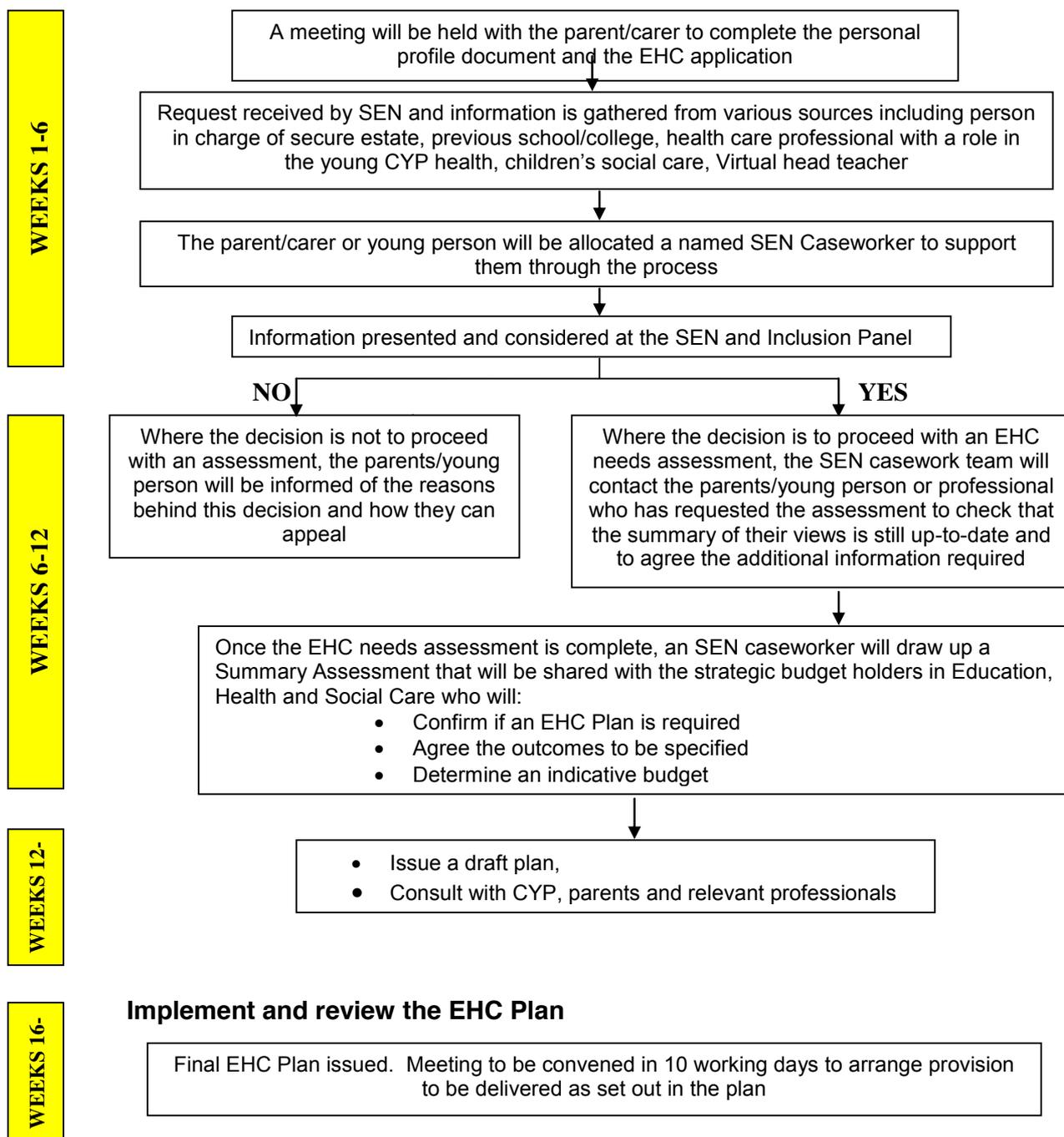
## Appendix 2

### Education Processes for young people at risk of custody



## Appendix 2a

### Requesting an Education, Health & Care [EHC] Needs assessment by a young person, parent, person in charge of a custodial establishment or YOS Case Manager while CYP are detained in custody



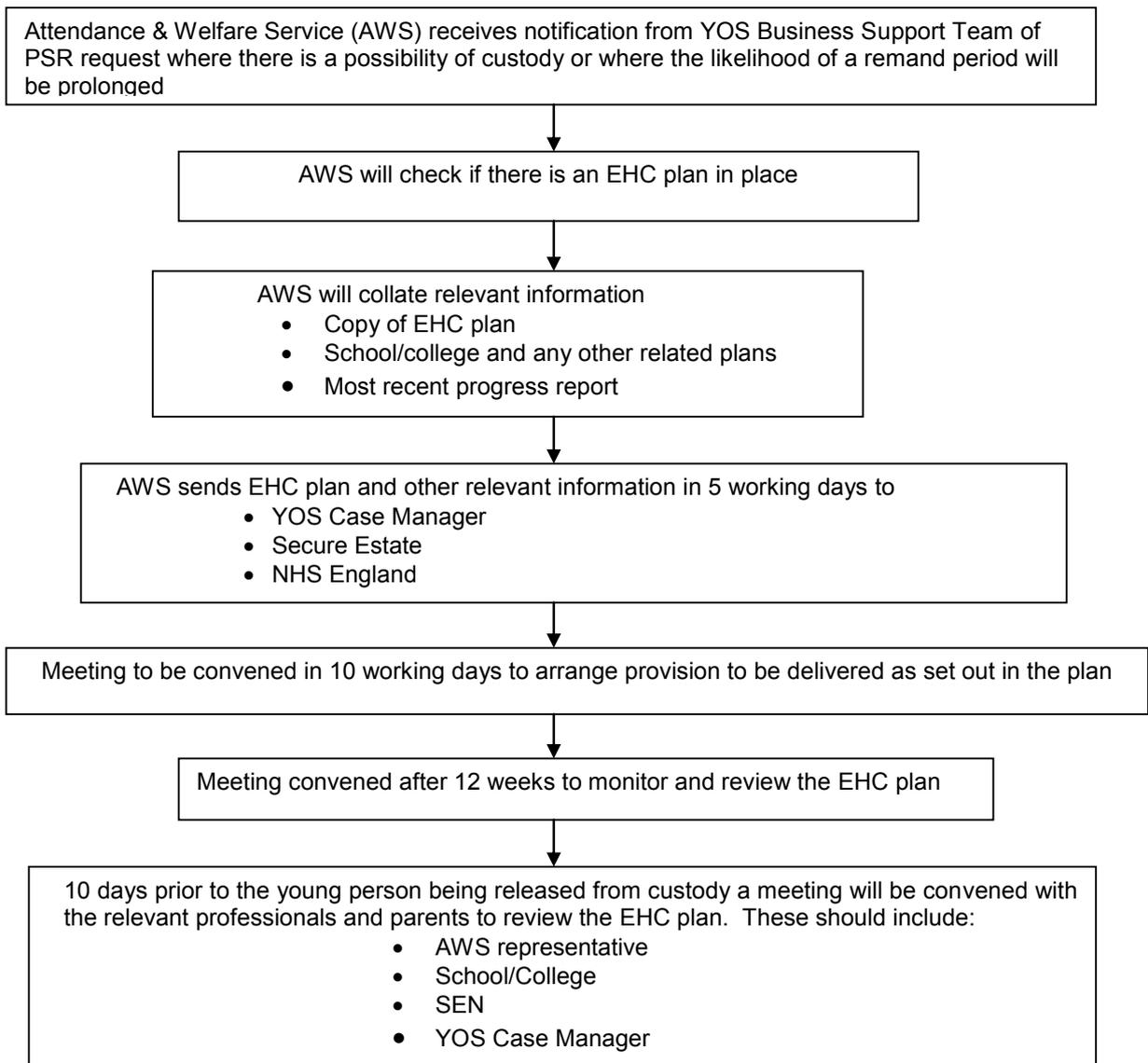
- CYP and their parents will be consulted throughout all of the stages
- If a young person transfers from one establishment to another assessment must continue

10 days prior to the young person being released from custody a meeting will be convened with the relevant professionals and parents to review the EHC plan

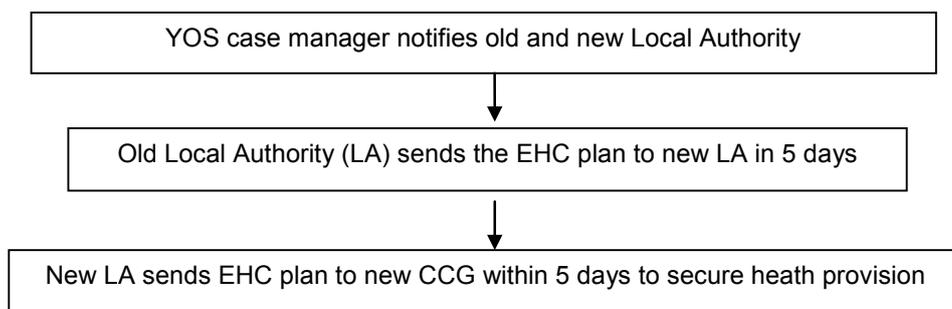
- Attendance and Welfare Representative
- School/College
- SEN
- YOS Case Manager

## Appendix 2b

### CYP with Education, Health & Care Plan [EHCP] entering and being released from custody



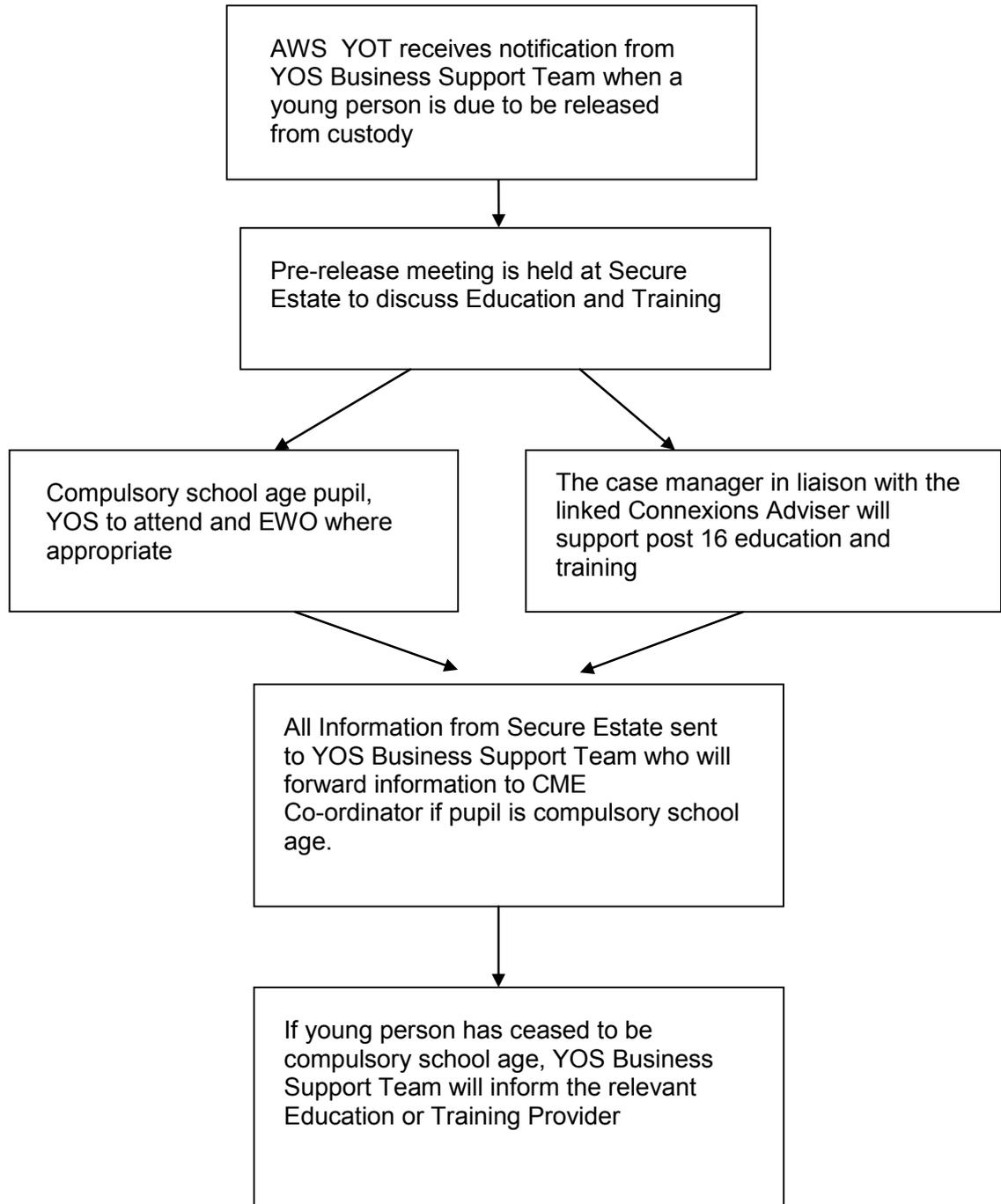
### Moving to a new Local Authority on release



**Young people and their parents will be consulted throughout all stages**

**Appendix 2c**

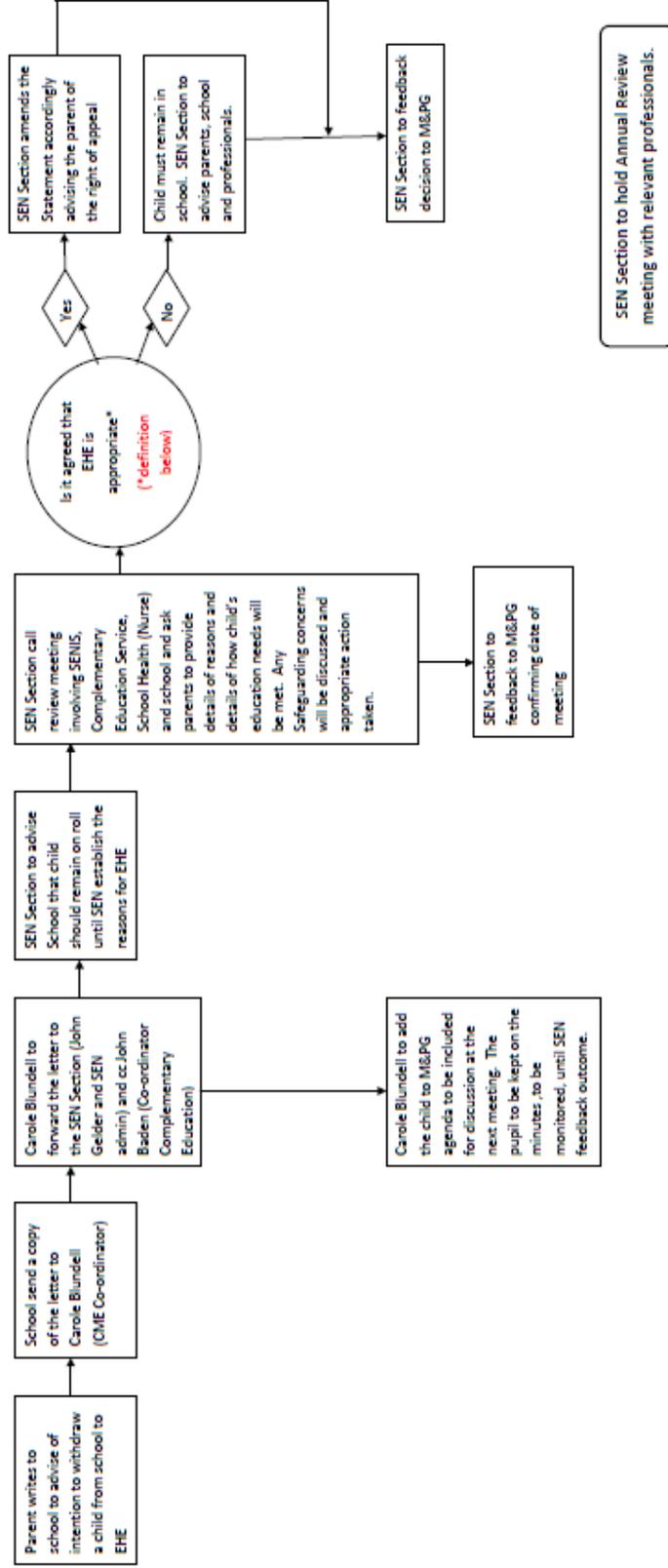
**Education processes for young people about to be released from custody**



The Monitoring and Placement Group will monitor all cases of compulsory school age pupils and post 16 participation.

# Appendix 3

## Sefton Council's Local Arrangement Elective Home Education Statemented/EHC Children Flow Chart



- EHE - Elective Home Education
- SENIS - Special Educational Needs Inclusion Service
- SEN - Special Educational Needs
- CME - Children Missing Education

**\*[0.95 Code of Practice: "The LA must be satisfied that the parents can make suitable provision including provision for the child's special educational needs, before agreeing to the request for the child to be EHE"**

**Appendix 4: Border Agency Referral Form**



**Children Missing Education Departments**

**Request for Information**

<b>Name of child:</b>	
<b>DOB:</b>	
<b>Nationality:</b>	
<b>Last known address (incl. post code if possible):</b>	
<b>Father details:</b>	
<b>Mother details:</b>	
<b>Reason for request:</b>	<b>My request is made with reference to Schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act 1998, specifically: - Para 3 "disclosure is necessary to protect the vital interests of the child", and - Para 5d "disclosure is necessary for the exercise of any functions of a public nature, exercised in the public interest"</b>
<b>Date child last attended school:</b>	

<b>Details of any contact with parents since child failed to attend school:</b>	
<b>Parent's explanation of why child has failed to attend school:</b>	
<b>Officer requesting:</b>	
<b>Contact Details:</b>	<b>Telephone:</b> <b>Fax:</b> <b>E-mail:</b>
<b>UKBA Check Results:</b>	
<b>Completed By:</b>	
<b>Contact Details:</b>	<b>Telephone:</b> <b>Fax:</b> <b>E-mail:</b>
<b>Date:</b>	

## Appendix 5



### Schools and Families

Schools Regulatory Services,  
Bootle Town Hall,  
Oriell Road,  
Bootle. L20 7AE

Date:  
Our Ref:     CB/  
Your Ref:

Please Contact:     Mrs C Blundell  
Contact Number:     0151 934 3181  
E-mail:     carole.blundell@sefton.gov.uk

Dear Colleague

### Children Missing Education

The child listed below has previously lived in Sefton and we have reason to believe that they may now be attending a school or living in your area.

Please contact Carole Blundell, Children Missing Education Co-ordinator using the enclosed reply slip, if your enquiries are successful in finding their new address or school.

Forename	Surname	Date of Birth	School last attended	Destination address or school

Yours faithfully

Carole Blundell  
Children Missing Education Co-ordinator

[www.sefton.gov.uk](http://www.sefton.gov.uk)



**REPLY SLIP**

To: Carole Blundell CME Co-ordinator  
**Schools Regulatory Services**  
Bootle Town Hall  
Trinity Road  
L20 7AE

From:

Date:

The following child has been located in our area and is attending school as follows:

<b>Forename</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Name, address &amp; telephone number of school attended</b>

**Appendix 6:**

# Sefton Child Missing Education Proforma

This form should be used when a child is thought to have left Sefton without a forwarding school

If there is a known risk or suspicion of child protection/sexual exploitation, please inform Children's Services immediately and highlight actions taken on the referral form.

School Name:

Pupil's Name:

Date of Birth:  NCY:  UPN:

Ethnicity:  Statement of SEN/EHC Plan  LAC  Subject to a CP Plan/CIN/EHP

Full Forename and Surname of Parents/Carers:

Last Known Address:

All Emergency Contacts and Numbers:

Full Names of Siblings	DOB:	School Attended:

Forwarding Address if known:

Date Pupil Last Attended School:



**Please provide the following information: -**  
**Detailing actions taken to clarify whereabouts of child**

**The Outcome of Reasonable Enquiries:**

Has the child been located at the registered address:

YES

NO

**Safety Information:**

**As a lone visit may be made to the child's home it is important to share any known issues which may affect the safety of the visiting officer**

Is there any information which may affect the health and safety of the worker?

YES

NO

**If yes, please give full details**

**Safety Information:** (Must be completed as appropriate)

**Are there any welfare or child protection concerns (including Missing, CSE, domestic abuse or Forced Marriage, Radicalization, if relevant) regarding this child?**

YES

NO

**If yes, please detail actions that have been taken**



	Actions Taken	Date	Outcome
1	Checked internal school records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this pupil on a Child Protection Plan?</li> <li>• Has the child been referred to Children's Social Care (MASH)/Police?</li> <li>• If Children's Social Care are involved, who has been notified/does this pupil have a Social Worker?</li> <li>• Has an EHA (Early Help Assessment) been completed? (This must be done where vulnerability factors exist).</li> </ul>		
2	Checked with friends, siblings and relatives		
3	Telephone calls/letters sent		
4	Details of enquiries completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contacting extended family and neighbours;</li> <li>• Checked with members of staff who the child may have had contact with e.g. SENCO, Nurse;</li> <li>• Checked with agencies with known involvement;</li> <li>• Made home visit(s) and enquired with neighbour(s) (min of 3 non contact visits to be made at different times of the day);</li> <li>• Made telephone calls to any numbers held/sent letters to the family.</li> </ul>		
5	Date form submitted to the Local Authority's Children Missing Education Co-ordinator		
6	Date removed from roll agreed with CME Co-ordinator		

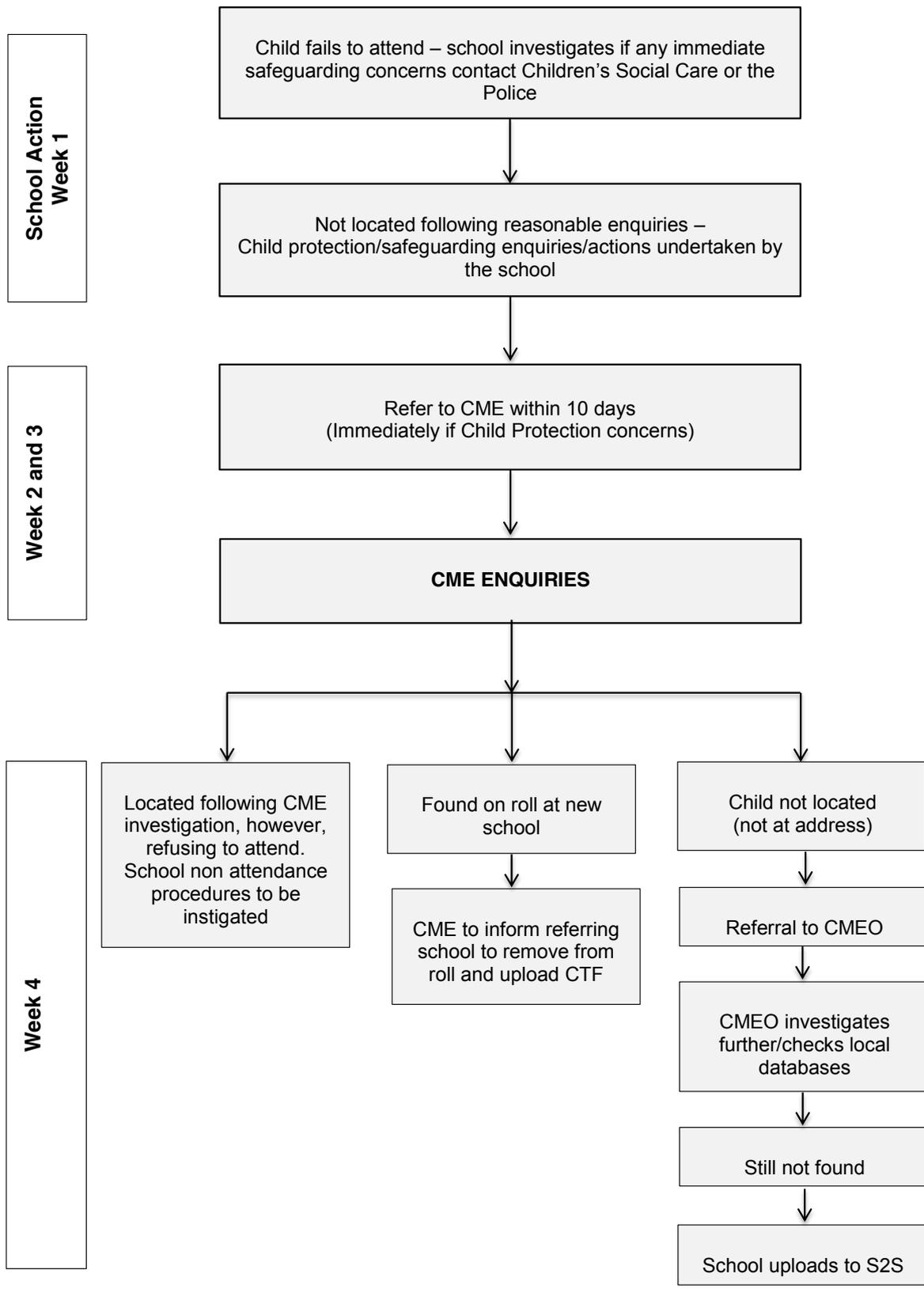
**Please note**

- Before this form is sent, the school should have made reasonable efforts to locate the pupil. This form should be sent by email only when the enquiries are concluded.
- If after all enquiries have been exhausted and the whereabouts of the pupil is still unknown, discuss the removal of the pupil from the school roll with the CME Co-ordinator (tel. 0151 934 3181).
- The school must create a Common Transfer File (CTF) and post electronically on the missing pupil database (S2S).
- The school must still maintain ownership of the pupil's record.

**Appendix 6a:**

**Children Missing Education Referral from Sefton Schools**

**CME Policy and Procedures**



## **Appendix 7**

### **Safeguarding process to monitor and track permanently excluded pupils**

Upon excluding a pupil permanently, the Head teacher will notify the Local Authority of the permanent exclusion within one school day.

The Children Missing Education Co-ordinator will add the child's name to Sefton's Monitoring and Placement Group Agenda and contact the relevant Head teacher of the Pupil Referral Unit to inform him/her of the permanent exclusion and to pass on pupil details. The CME co-ordinator also contacts the Headteacher and Chair of Governors of the excluding school to advise on the processes to be followed in line with the DfE guidance, *Improving Behaviour and Attendance: Guidance on Exclusion from Schools and Pupil Referral Units*.

If the pupil lives out of Borough, the CME Co-ordinator will inform the home Local Authority of the pupil to allow them to make arrangements for 6<sup>th</sup> day provision. Correspondence between the CME co-ordinator and the other LA continues, to keep them informed of dates of meetings.

The Attendance and Welfare Service will arrange for a visit to be undertaken to the parent/carer within 48 hours to discuss the exclusion and to offer any advice. A decision will be made as to whether the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process is appropriate or not.

The parents/carers will be informed that the Head teacher of the Pupil Referral Unit in Sefton will be in touch within the next few days to offer an interview and discuss future educational options for their child.

The Pupil Referral Unit will arrange an interview, which will take place on the third, fourth or fifth day of the exclusion. A place at the PRU will automatically be offered, even if it is only for a short time whilst an assessment takes place in order to decide the best future provision for the pupil.

When the family accepts the place, the pupil will start at the PRU on the sixth day of the permanent exclusion. When the child starts at the provision their name will be removed from the Monitoring and Placement Group, (but will remain on the roll of the school until the time limit for the parents to lodge an appeal has expired without an appeal being brought; or the parent has informed the LA in writing that no appeal is to be brought).

If the family refuse the place at the PRU, the family have the right to apply for another mainstream school. The case will then be referred to the In Year Fair Access Panel who will take up the case from this point.

If the parent refuses to allow the pupil to attend the offered provision the case will be referred to the Attendance and Welfare Service to address the absence from school.

## Appendix 8

### CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION (CME) STEERING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

Sefton Children Missing Education Steering Group (Monitoring and Placement Group) will take the strategic lead on the development and implementation of the Local Authority's policy to ensure that the Local Authority meets its statutory duties in relation to the Education and Inspection Act 2006 (Part 1, Section 4) which places a new duty on Local Authorities for them to make arrangements to identify children missing education in their area.

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE CME STEERING GROUP

- 1.1 To ensure that all agencies take appropriate responsibility for children believed to be missing from education.
- 1.2 To involve agencies in planning and delivery of processes to identify and reduce the numbers of children out of school.
- 1.3 To support the nominated officer for Children Missing Education (CME) and for all agencies/ services to provide a Named Officer for Children Missing Education.
- 1.4 To secure educational provision for all children of statutory school age who are not on a school roll and who are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than at school.
- 1.5 To ensure appropriate information is shared between all Stakeholders.

#### 2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE CME STEERING GROUP

- 2.1 The Children Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the safety and welfare of children and share information. All partners in Sefton have signed up to the CME agenda and have agreed to work in collaboration to ensure that robust systems and procedures are in place across agencies to identify, support, track, and monitor those children not receiving education, ensuring a speedy return to the education system.
- 2.2 All partners are committed to promoting the safety and welfare of children in the Borough with the aim of ensuring all children and young people are safely on roll of a school, placed in alternative education or educated at home at the request of parents.

#### 3. PARTNER ORGANISATIONS/SERVICES INVOLVED IN THIS AGREEMENT INCLUDE:

- Local Authority
- Sefton Schools
- Complementary Education Service
- Health/PCT
- Youth Offending Service
- Voluntary and Community organisations
- Connexions
- Registered Social Landlords

- Police
- Youth Service
- Community Safety
- Libraries
- CAMHS
- Job Centre Plus
- Homelessness Team
- Fire and Rescue Service
- UK Border Agency

#### **4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CME MONITORING & PLACEMENT PARTNERSHIP STEERING GROUP**

- 4.1 The CME Monitoring & Placement Partnership Group will be responsible for:
- Consulting with all relevant stakeholders on the development and design of the CME Policy.
  - Establishing relevant working groups to focus on specific areas of development.
  - Receiving reports/feedback from working groups where relevant.
  - Ensuring appropriate and effective management information systems are in place.
  - Ensuring that each partner organisation has a single named individual who has responsibility for the work in relation to Children Missing Education.
  - Ensuring appropriate publicity and awareness raising opportunities are available/developed to/with partner organisations/services.
  - Developing practice guidelines for staff and provide ongoing training and support.
  - Reporting progress in relation to the implementation of the CME Policy to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

#### **5. STRUCTURE/FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS**

**Chair:** CME Co-ordinator  
Local Authority

CME Monitoring and Placement Group will meet on a 2 weekly basis during the school academic year. The Monitoring and Placement Group will review the CME Policy on a yearly basis.

#### **6. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

The arrangements in relation to Children Missing Education, (CME) will be accountable to Sefton Safeguarding Children's Board.

#### **7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For additional information please refer to the CME Policy.