

# **Tenbury C.E. Primary Academy**

## **Children Missing Education (CME) Policy**



'Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.  
**1 Thessalonians 5:11**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 All children are entitled to a full-time education, regardless of their circumstances. Tenbury Primary Academy is concerned about any child missing education, not only in the way that it impacts on the individual's potential achievement, but also in relation to their safety and welfare.

1.2 A child missing education from school due to repeated or unexplained absence, or by leaving the school unexpectedly is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, or where a family may be in need of additional support.

1.3 The Local Authority has a legal duty to identify when there are any children missing from education. The purpose of this CME Policy is to highlight what we will do to help the LA with its duty and ensure that any CME are re-engaged in appropriate educational provision in the shortest possible time, and that 'no child slips through the net'.

### **2. Context**

2.1 The Children Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children and share information.

2.2 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 placed a new duty on all local authorities in England and Wales to make arrangements to identify CME in their area. The duty applies to all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll and are not receiving a suitable education.

2.3 Our policy also complies with the following statutory guidance:

DfE (2018) 'Working together to safeguard children'

DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education'

DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'

DfE (2018) 'School attendance'

2.4 This policy should be read alongside our Attendance Policy and the Academy's Safeguarding Policy, of which this is an integral part.

### **3. Definition of CME**

3.1 For the purpose of this document a child missing education is defined as:

'Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is not on a school roll being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, privately, or in alternative provision) and who has been out of any education provision for a substantial period of time (practice nationally is four weeks or more).' *Department for Education*

### **4. Why children go missing from education**

4.1 Children and young people can go missing from school or agreed education provision, for a wide variety of reasons. Their personal circumstances or those of their families may contribute to the withdrawal process. Children can go missing when there is no systematic process in place to identify them and ensure they re-engage with appropriate provision.

The most common reasons why children miss education include:

- Failing to register at school at age 5;
- Failing to make successful transition from infant to junior and primary to secondary;
- Ease to attend due to exclusion (formal/illegal withdrawal);
- Mid-year transfer of school;
- Unable to find a school place after moving into local authority;
- Victims of bullying;
- Frequent moves of house including periods of homelessness or periods in a refuge;
- Transience/family mobility;
- Family breakdown;
- Frequent absence leading to low attendance (especially Yr10 and Yr11);
- Disaffection resulting in parents withdrawing the pupil or 'being asked to leave';
- Involvement in youth offending.

4.2 Certain vulnerable groups are more likely to be affected such as;

- Young people who have committed offences;
- Children living in women's refuges;
- Children of troubled families i.e. suffering bereavement, trauma, domestic violence, homelessness etc;
- Young runaways;
- Children with special educational needs;
- Refugee and asylum seeking children;
- Travelling families;

- Looked after children;
- Teenage parenthood;
- Children with mental health issues;
- Young carers;
- Children who are permanently excluded from school;
- Young people being forced into marriage;
- Children involved in substance misuse.

## **5. Practice and Procedures at Tenbury Primary**

### **5.1 Admissions register**

Tenbury Primary ensures that the admissions register is kept up-to-date at all times and encourages parents / carers to notify us immediately of any changes as they occur.

Pupils are recorded on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day or the date that has been agreed for the pupil to start at our school.

Once a pupil has been recorded on the register, the school administrator notifies the LA within five days, supplying them with all the details on the register for the new pupil.

When a parent / carer notifies us that a pupil will live at another address, the following information is recorded on the register:

- Full name of the parent / carer with whom the pupil will live
- The new address
- The date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address

Where a parent / carer notifies us that the pupil will be attending a different school in future, the following information will be recorded on the register:

- The name of the new school
- The date when the pupil first attended or is due to attend that school

At any time parents / carers can elect to educate their children at home and can subsequently withdraw them from school. If we are notified of this in writing, the pupil will be taken off roll and the LA informed.

### **5.2 Removing a pupil from the admissions register.**

Tenbury Primary must inform the LA of any pupil who is taken off roll when:

- The school has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school (EHE)
- The pupil has ceased to attend the school and no longer resides within a reasonable distance of the academy

- The pupil has been registered at another school;
- The pupil is certified by a Senior Medical Officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- The pupil has been permanently excluded and, following the governors' disciplinary hearing – a) The parent has stated in writing that he/she does not intend to appeal to an independent panel, or  
b) The time for lodging an appeal has expired and no appeal has been lodged, or  
c) An appeal has been heard and dismissed.
- The pupil has died
- The pupil has been granted authorised absence but has failed to attend school within 10 school days after the period of authorised absence ended and there is reason to believe that the pupil is not unable to attend school due to medical reasons
- The pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education and has not, on completing such education, transferred to a reception class at the school.
- The pupil is absent from school for not less than 4 weeks and is detained in secure accommodation following a final court order or order of recall
- The pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and does not intend to continue at school;
- The LA and the academy are unable to determine the pupil's whereabouts after making joint reasonable enquiries
- The pupil has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than 20 academy days and: the absence was not authorised; there is no reason to believe the pupil is not unable to attend school; after referral and investigation by the EIS have both failed and procedures for Children Missing Education are in place

**Removal from the roll for any reason other than those specified above is illegal.**

### **5.3 Actions taken when a pupil's name is taken off roll from Tenbury Primary**

- (i) When a pupil is taken off roll, our administrator must clearly indicate the date and the reason for the removal from roll. In the event of a pupil moving to another school the name of the school must be indicated and the pupil's records must be sent to the new school within 15 school days.
- (ii) If we know which school a child is moving to, the school must ensure that an electronic Common Transfer File (CTF) is sent to the receiving school via the secure School-to-School Data Transfer Website, S2S as quickly as possible.
- (iii) The school must also notify the LA within 10 school days.
- (iv) Should a child leave our School without notice being given, we will try to make contact with the parents. If after 5 days of non-school attendance we have been unable to contact the parents, we will refer to the Education

Investigation Service who will work with the school and make reasonable efforts to try and identify the child's current whereabouts/destination.

**Should the child be subject to a Child Protection Plan, or the school has particular child protection concerns about the child, we will immediately contact the local Children's Services team.**

#### **5.4 Actions taken when an expected pupil fails to start at Tenbury Primary Academy**

When a pupil is expected to join the school either at a normal time of starting and he/she does not arrive, the school firstly tries to make contact with the parents by phone or letter. If after one week no contact has been made the school will contact Worcestershire's Admissions Team to find out if the child had been registered elsewhere. After the second week if there has been no information, the school will complete a referral to the Education Investigation Service – CME, who will follow their procedures for missing pupils.

#### **5.5 Actions taken for prolonged and persistent absence from Tenbury Primary Academy**

Our Academy's Attendance Policy outlines all procedures for responding to children who are absent from the first day onwards and clearly states the attendance monitoring procedures.

If a pupil is absent for a prolonged period or fails to return from a holiday or fixed term exclusion, the school will follow the normal procedures for investigating pupil absence (i.e. telephone calls, letters, invitations to meetings at the school etc).

***If a pupil has 10 days of unexplained consecutive absence the LA will immediately be informed and they will initiate CME procedures.***

***The unexplained absence of any child who has a Child Protection Plan must be treated as the highest priority and Children's Services contacted and advised.***

The pupil will not be removed from roll until the EIS has completed all reasonable steps to ascertain the pupil's whereabouts and safety and has confirmed that the pupil is registered at another school or is being EHE (elective home education.) If the pupil is not located and all reasonable enquiries completed the school will follow the procedure as detailed in the Local Authority Guidance document.

## **5.6 Staff members**

All staff will be alert to the potential need to implement early help for a pupil who is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home.

All staff will be aware of the school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

Where staff have concerns about pupils relating to CME, staff will use their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated to the DSL or their deputy.

## **5.7 Parents**

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children, who are of compulsory school age, are receiving suitable full-time education.

Parents are responsible for notifying the school in writing where they will be home-schooling their child, in order for the child to be removed from the admissions register.

Parents will notify the school regarding any absences or changes to the pupils education arrangements.

Parents are responsible for providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.

## **6. Induction and training**

The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education will be explained to staff during their induction.

All staff will receive annual safeguarding and child protection training, including an update on the various safeguarding concern possibilities that CME could represent, any changes to the early help process and staff members' role in this process.

### **Policy Review**

This policy is to be reviewed every two years or sooner if there are statutory guidance updates.

Last review: January 2025

Next review: January 2027