Children Missing in Education [CME] Policy 2022 – 2023

Governor Committee Responsible:	GSG	**Staff Lead**	Mr. G. Mills
Status	Advisory	**Review Cycle**	Annual
Last Review	June 2022	**Next Review Date**	June 2023

Designation	Name	Date	Signature
Chair of Governors	Mr. R Ellis	28.06.22	
Head Teacher	Mr. G. Mills	28.06.22	

Swindon Village, we believe that all children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

It is expected that all staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.

1. What is CME?

- CME refers to 'any child of compulsory school age who is not registered at any formally approved education activity e.g. school, alternative provision, elective home education, and has been out of education provision for at least 4 weeks'.

- CME also includes those children who are missing (family whereabouts unknown), and are usually children who are registered on a school roll / alternative provision. This might be a child who is not at their last known address and either

  - has not taken up an allocated school place as expected, or
  - has 10 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or
  - left school suddenly and the destination is unknown

2. Vulnerable Groups specific to our school (it is recognised that this may change as the context of the school changes)

Children from families:
- fleeing domestic violence
- who can be highly mobile, eg in the armed forces, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families

Children who are:
- children looked after/children in care
- young carers
- permanently excluded from school

Children who have:
- long term medical or emotional problems
- parents with mental health problems
- parents with learning difficulties

The school recognises that:

- A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation.
- All staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage
- The local authority has a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.
- Effective information sharing between parents, schools, colleges and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children are safe and receiving suitable education.
- Staff at Swindon Village should follow the procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future.

CME Response

1. Registration

- The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register.
- All pupils are placed on both registers.
- If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity to prevent the child from going missing from education. The school recognises that it is important that the admission register is accurate and kept up to date.
- The school will regularly encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur.
- The school will monitor attendance and address it when it is poor or irregular.
- The school must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

2. Staff to complete registration within the set timescale (before register closes)

3. Pass on concerns to the office

4. Office to make first-day contact call by 10:00am to any parent who has not notified the school of their child's absence

5. School to investigate whereabouts of the family or pupil – attempt made to get in touch with all known emergency contacts (at various times of morning)

6. Office staff to pass on concerns to DSL or in their absence, the deputy DSLs

7. DSL checks whether the child's situation match any of the CME criteria. Gather further information including details of siblings from other agencies, wider school community (e.g. staff, other pupils, friends)

8. Social Media searches – e.g. contact details of a parent or school noted on Facebook

9. School to investigate circumstances and ensure that family and child are supported to improve their child's attendance

10. If circumstances have been investigated, and concerns exist, submit CME referral to LA no later than the 10th day of absence

==IMPORTANT - If a child is subject to a child protection plan, is a child in care or there are reasons to be concerned for the child's safety, inform Social Care immediately and follow GSCB procedures.==

How to make a referral?

Any professional should alert the LA when they suspect that a child might be missing from education. To make this process as easy as possible, a referral should be sent to:

Access to Education Team,
Shire Hall,
Westgate Street,
Gloucester GL1 2TP
Tel 01452 328774 / 426015
Email: missingpupils@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Useful Resources: CME Guide (LA)
                      CME Referral Form (LA)