

Multi-Agency Interventions for Lancashire Children who are CME, PME/Low Attenders or Excluded from Education

1. Children Missing Education (CME)

1.1 Definition

Children Missing Education are those children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

1.2 Checks and Notifications

- When an agency is aware that a child is missing education (in line with the definition above), a [CME notification](#) must be made without delay so that the child can be included on the CME database;
- Where parents state that their children are electively home educated (EHE), checks must be made to ensure they are on the EHE database via Enquiries.EHE@Lancashire.gov.uk. Concerns about the education being delivered can also be raised via this email.

1.3 Request for Support

If parents are actively engaging with the admissions process, no intervention from Children's Services for educational needs will be required.

Where the CME officer identifies that there are barriers to education due to family and contextual factors, they will seek to refer to partner agencies as appropriate and support the family to engage.

1.4 CME Panel

Children who are being supported by CME officer intervention will automatically trigger for potential nomination at the half-termly multi-agency CME panels if they are off roll for the equivalent of 60 school days, as they will be considered 'Persistent CMEs' (PCMEs). However, children can be nominated for CME panel at any time where significant barriers are identified.

During the panel multi-agency information will be shared and it will be ascertained whether the child is currently open to the Children and Family Wellbeing Service or Children's Social Care.

- Where the child is already open to CFW or CSC then the information shared at the panel should be discussed with their allocated worker within 3 working days to ensure that the child's need to access education forms part of their plan;
- Where the child isn't already open to CFW or CSC and there are no safeguarding concerns identified a plan should be agreed at the panel to actively engage the family with a plan for the child to attend education.

1.5 Panel follow up

Within 6 weeks of this panel, should no progress have been made, a request for support should be made to the Children and Family Wellbeing Service in the first instance, who will make active attempts to obtain consent and complete an Early Help Assessment. A visit will be undertaken to seek consent where there are barriers to this.

1.6 Consent issues and actions

Should consent be refused then a discussion should be held between the CME officer and the Children's Services Support hub for further advice and guidance. During this discussion consideration will be given to escalating to CSC without consent depending on the needs of the child and whether safeguarding concerns or indicators of safeguarding concerns are identified. If consent continues to be withheld, then consideration

should be given to the length of time that the CME officer has been trying to engage the parent or carer and should this exceed a 12-week period then a strategy discussion will be considered.

Where parents refuse to engage with services and the admissions process, the CME officer will initiate a School Attendance Order which requires the parent to register the child at a school named by admissions (Pupil Access) or risk prosecution. In cases where an SAO is required a referral should be made to Children's Social Care for a C and F assessment. If consent is not received consideration should be given to holding a strategy discussion.

Where a child is open to CFW and there continues to be no progress made with the child accessing education related to parenting capacity or contextual safeguarding then a discussion should be held at case clinic and consideration given to stepping up to CSC.

2. Pupils Missing Education (PME)

2.1 Attendance concerns

First steps for schools where there are concerns for a child around low levels of attendance will always be for internal attendance policies to be followed. This would include where appropriate, discussion with their School Attendance Consultant, referral to the Pupil Attendance Support Team (PAST) for primary schools, involvement of the school nurse. Consideration of strategies such as the [Emotionally Based School Avoidance pathway](#) (EBSA), Alternative Provision, Education, Health and Care needs assessment, Early Help Assessment and attendance legal interventions.

When **attendance falls below 90%**, the child is defined by the DfE as Persistently Absent (PA) regardless of the reason for the absence.

Where attendance continues to be a concern and no improvement has been made after following school attendance procedures, advice should be sought through the school advice line/MASH Education Officers.

An Early Help Assessment should be completed by school/reviewed by school with support from the schools linked CFW Community Senior Family Support Worker, where helpful. The Community Senior FSW can offer advice to support the attendance plan for the child. This will consider wider issues that may be impacting on the child and family as part of a 'Team around the Family' (TAF) process.

Should attendance not improve within a reasonable timescale, and/or the child's **attendance falls below 75%** in a term, with no contextual information that supports the absence and/or there are wider unmet needs, then as agreed within the TAF process, a request for intensive support should be made. This should be done with the consent of the family, through the CSSH/MASH to the Children and Family Wellbeing Service. This threshold should be 80% if a child has an EHCP.

2.2 Consent issues and actions

If consent continues to be withheld by the family, and the child remains PME, then consideration should be given to holding a strategy discussion.

In circumstances where the school intends to seek attendance legal advice and the parents are at risk of prosecution due to their child's absence, then a request for a multi-agency strategy discussion should be made to Children's Social Care.

3. Children subject to suspension (formerly fixed term exclusion) or permanent exclusion from education

3.1 Exclusion concerns

When a child experiences repeat fixed term exclusions from education settings (repeat being after the second exclusion has occurred), an Early Help assessment should be considered by the school with consent from the family. Advice and guidance can be sought from a CFW Community Senior Family Support Worker with this. The early help assessment will consider the holistic needs of the child and whether there are any unmet needs. Support to the child and family should be provided under the TAF process, to consider any factors impacting or influencing the child's presentation and behaviour within the school environment.

Should improvements not be seen within an 8-week period, and there are still unmet needs, then a consent-based referral to the Children and Family Wellbeing Service for intensive support should be considered. This does not negate the need for schools to continue to follow their own exclusion policies.

When a child is excluded on a permanent basis, a request for support should be made, through the CSSH/MASH, to the Children and Family Wellbeing Service for intensive support. If there are other unmet needs identified for the child, an Early Help Assessment must be completed prior to the request for support being made.