



Children Missing Education Service
Education Inclusion Service

School Handbook

**Guidance for working
with**

**Children Missing
Education
Service**

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REASONS FOR REFERRAL

There are many reasons why a school may wish to make a referral to the Children Missing Education Service (CMES) including the following circumstances:

- Unexplained absences of ten consecutive days
- Continued unauthorised absence
- Patterns of irregular attendance
- Prior to removing a child from the school roll if the destination school is not known or there are other safeguarding concerns
- The school has been unable to contact parents
- The school is concerned that absence may be condoned by parents/carers
- School refusal
- The school is concerned that a pupil's absences may be due to emotional or medical difficulties
- Illegal child employment
- The child/young person is a vulnerable learner, for example:
 - those with special education needs & disability;
 - children in the care of the local authority;
 - children from minority ethnic groups;
 - traveller children;
 - children with carers responsibilities;
 - pregnant schoolgirls and teenage parents.
 - sick children
 - children in alternative provision

This is not an exhaustive list.

SCHOOL LEVEL INTERVENTIONS

A school should follow their attendance procedures as published in their Attendance Policy.

Your allocated CMEO will be available to analyse attendance data, help you identify pupils where an intervention may be required, support your school level interventions and help signpost to appropriate agencies. This may include home visits, informal meetings and general information gathering to help understand the barriers preventing good attendance.

It is important that the school has taken appropriate and meaningful action to address a pupil's non-attendance and has made, or has attempted to make, contact

with the parents/carers before a referral for a LASI is made. Correspondence should be sent to all relevant parties as defined in education law e.g. stepparents, grandparents and absent parents.

A clear record should be kept to report all contact made with the parent and the nature of that contact and notes/minutes of any conversations held with parents. A chronology is a good way to ensure that all information is collected and recorded. Please note that the definition of “parent” in education is different and having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law. Please see covering front sheet and bottom of flow chart for full definition.

When making a referral to the CMES it must contain evidence that contact and correspondence has been to all relevant parties. Your CMEO will be able to advise you further if required.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MEETING, PLAN AND REVIEW

At the school level attendance meeting it will be necessary to draw up an agreed **Action Plan (see appendix 2)** to address the issues raised and your assessment of the case. Action plans should consist of the following:

- what is it that school is hoping to achieve; what is the expectation? This might include an attendance target for a set period of the action plan
- the actions required to achieve the expectation
- the person/s responsible for the action/s
- the review date (not usually more than 3 weeks). Please do not wait 3 weeks if it is evident from an early stage that no progress has been achieved or is unlikely to be achieved by waiting until the review period is at an end.

Actions and targets should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time bound (SMART). The form should be completed to reflect each individual circumstance and specific information relating to the pupil should be completed on the plan i.e. the pupil's name should be inserted to demonstrate that the document relates to them rather than leave the generic heading “pupil”. A copy of the action plan or agreed contract should be sent to the parent/s.

If an invitation has been made to a parent to attend a meeting, evidence of this may be required so even if the arrangements have been made over the telephone or in person it is good practice to follow this up in writing. If the parent fails to attend the meeting and has not sent apologies then the meeting should go ahead in their absence and the plan should still be made. A copy of the plan should be sent to **all** parents with a clear review date.

When reviewing an action plan it will be necessary to decide whether there has been sufficient improvement in the child's attendance to justify an extension of the review period. If the attendance target has not been met then the reasons for this will need to be considered at the review meeting. A letter should be sent to the parent to record the outcome.

Where no significant or sustained improvement in the pupil's attendance has been secured then a CMES referral form should be completed in full (The CMEO can help you complete the referral to ensure it contains all the required documents to allow the case to progress to the LA Legal Services). It is vital that as much information as possible is made available in order that an accurate assessment can be obtained.

The referral form will be part of the CMES case file. Should the LA decide that legal proceedings are necessary; the form may be used as evidence in court and school staff could be called as witnesses.

Following the acceptance of a referral from school the Children Missing Education Officer (CMEO) will send an invitation to the parent(s) and any other person with parental responsibility, inviting them to attend a Local Authority Statutory Interview (LASI).

A LASI is a formal meeting arranged and chaired by a CMEO to discuss a child's attendance and should be held when previous school action plans have not led to an improvement in attendance.

A LASI may be held at the child's school or a suitable alternative, such as a room in the LA ONE stop shop. In addition to the parent(s) the CMEO may invite a member of school staff with responsibility for the child's attendance. It is not necessary to have the child in attendance at this meeting.

When opening the meeting the CMEO will explain the law on school attendance and the possible legal consequences for parents of their children failing to attend regularly.

Local authorities must conduct all investigations in accordance with the Police & Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act 1984. Therefore, before inviting the parent(s) to contribute to the meeting he/she/they will be cautioned under PACE guidance.

At the end of the meeting the CMEO will advise the parent that they will now consider the information presented and the local authority will formally write to all parties advising them of the findings following the interview.

There are statutory defences for parents to use under the 1996 Education Act. The LASI is an opportunity for the CMES to establish in each individual case any of these that may apply. If it is established that parents do not have a statutory defence and if prosecution is the appropriate course of action the matter will be managed via the Single Justice Process (SJP) or placed before the Bath Magistrates Court.

Single Justice Procedure

The Single Justice Procedure (SJP) is part of the Government's strategy to transform summary justice to make it simpler, faster and more proportionate.

It will enable cases to be dealt with by a single magistrate, outside of the traditional courtroom setting, without the attendance of either prosecutor or defendant.

In order to have their case dealt with by this means a parent will have to plead guilty using the notice that is sent to them. This will usually get a 33% reduction on any

fine. The parent still has the option to attend court even if they make a guilty plea. A not guilty plea will result in the need to attend court.

The SJP will not be appropriate for all cases. Where it is not appropriate the case will be placed before the Magistrate.

POST COURT CASE

It is important that, whatever the outcome from court, the child's attendance continues to be monitored.

The CMES will contact you with the result from court. As soon after the court case as possible the CMEO, together with the school, should arrange a post prosecution meeting with the parent and draw up a new action plan which should be reviewed. The action plan and review date should be sent to the parent following the meeting whether the parents were in attendance or not.

Should the pupil have accrued further unauthorised absences and where your own school level intervention and plans have been followed then your CMEO can assist with taking this forward again.

MEDICAL ABSENCE

Where there is frequent or persistent absence attributed to illness the member of staff with lead responsibility for attendance should arrange a medical absence action plan meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to understand the reasons for absence and to examine any medical evidence provided by the parent/s and allow adjustments to be made in school if appropriate or necessary. It may be appropriate to invite your school nurse. If there are genuine health reasons why a pupil cannot regularly attend school, consideration should be given to the best way to support the sick child's education. If the child is not attending school at all you will need to consider a referral to the Single Point of Access (SPA) Panel to request Hospital Education & Reintegration Service (HERS). Please see the criteria guidance for schools when referring to HERS.

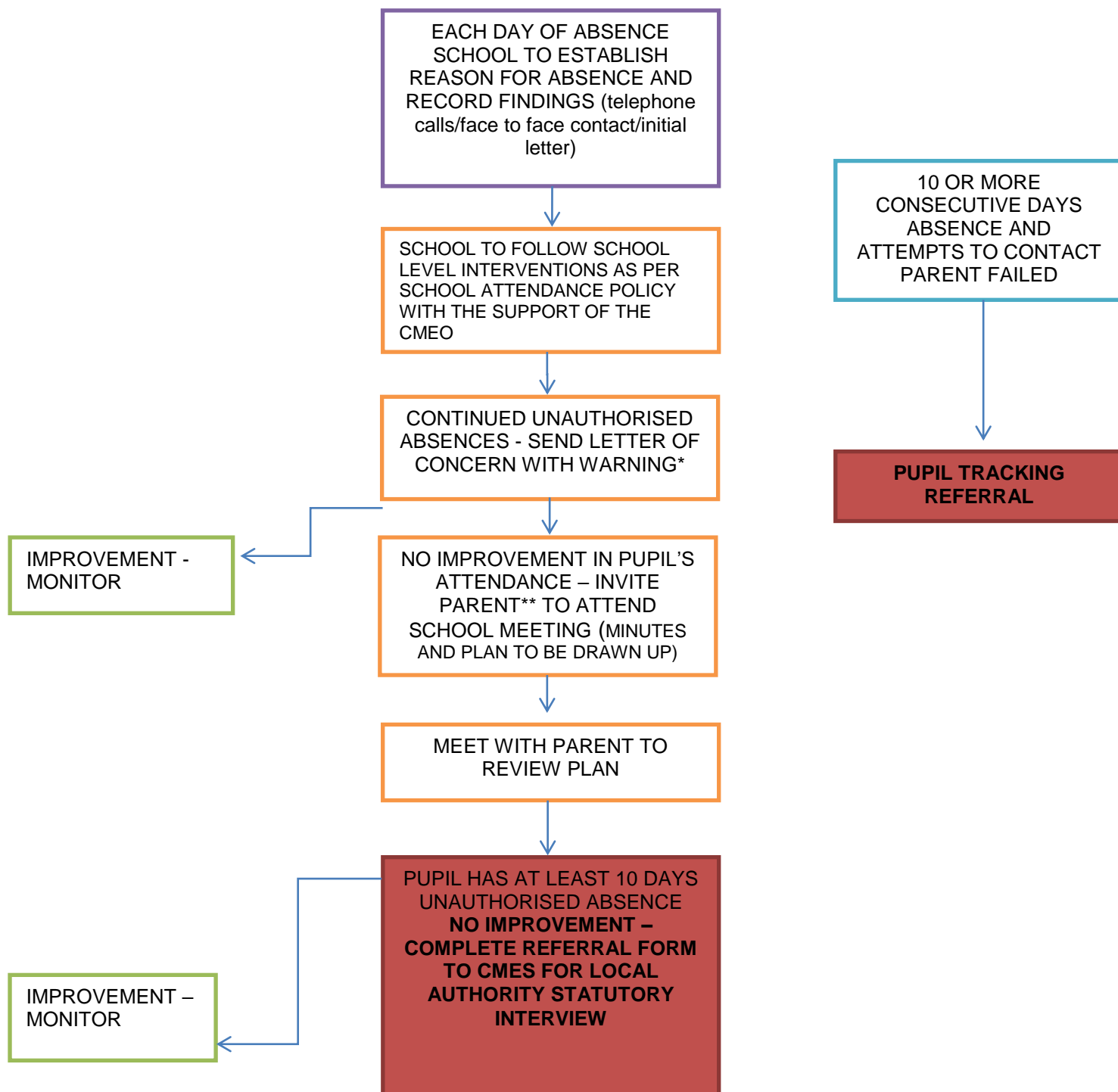
Where there is no evidence to support absence attributed to illness then the school should follow their normal attendance procedure and if appropriate complete a referral to the CMES.

PENALTY NOTICES

The LASI does not replace the Penalty Notice process. Schools can still make a request to the local authority for the consideration to issue a Penalty Notice under the current code of conduct. Schools must complete the Penalty Notice Request Form and attach supporting documents as evidence. If the request has not been completed correctly then it may be returned to you for amendments, causing a delay in issue. In order to help avoid this, the PN request form has a checklist for your convenience.

SCHOOL LEVEL INTERVENTIONS

FLOWCHART



* Under the Education Act 1996, it is your duty as pupil name's parent/carer to ensure his/her regular attendance at school. **This means that PUPIL NAME must be in attendance every time the school is open, unless he/she is prevented from doing so by reason of illness or any unavoidable cause.** Failure to comply may lead to prosecution in the Magistrates Court where on conviction you would be liable to a fine of up to £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

** Definition of parent: Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' as

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law).

Appendix 1

Advice for completing a School Attendance Meeting and Action Plan

When arranging a meeting it is always best to set the time and date, in writing, advising the parent that if the time and date doesn't suit that they should let you know in advance. Where possible rearrange the meeting to a time/date convenient to all. If you have not received any apologies then the meeting should continue in absence and a plan should be created based on the information available. A copy of any plan needs to be sent to all relevant parties regardless as to whether they were in attendance or not.

I would not expect an action plan to be the same for each case as the reasons for absence will vary. The agreed actions need to be based on the individual circumstances. Having a list of generic statements does **NOT** form a plan and are not always helpful.

How will the child achieve these actions?

What will be done by the school to support that action?

There are key pieces of information that need to be included on your documentation:

-

- a list of all invited to the meeting
- dob of the parents (required should this proceed to court)
- address of the parents/carers and the living arrangements if parents are separated
- a list of those attending and if there were apologies
- the date of the meeting
- the agreed actions
- a review date
- if you are unable to obtain signatures from those in attendance include a covering statement that signifies that all parties present were in agreement with the plan

The review should identify what worked well and what didn't work well. If some positive and successful progress made and significant improvement build on the positives at the review and adjust the plan accordingly.

There is no requirement to review the plan several times where no improvement has been made unless there is an indication that there is a justifiable cause for the absences. However, where there is improvement it might be worth agreeing to a second review.

Always try to identify positives in a review where possible.

Possible Actions for the Parent

Ensure that PUPIL has no unauthorised absences.

- Explain what an unauthorised absence is How will they ensure this?
- Is there a strategy in place that the parent should follow if the pupil is unable or unwilling to attend?
- What can the parent do to encourage good attendance?

What issues currently prevent the parent from getting the child to school each day?

- Possible a range of family/environmental factors
- How can these be overcome? Give techniques, planning suggestions to assist the parent achieve these
- identify others within the family or friends that might be able to assist
- consider an EHA in order to sign post to appropriate resources/agencies
- Share the 1 BIG database where families can Discover Organisations and Events in Bath and North East Somerset for a range of family issues, childcare, parenting support, benefits, school and much
<https://www.bathnes1bd.org.uk/>

Notify school each school day if PUPIL is absent to explain the reason.

- Check that the parent understands how to do this and give them options that suit their need.
- Remind the parent that this is part of the home school agreement

Provide supporting medical evidence if absence is due to reoccurring ill health.

- explain to the parent why you are asking eg you would not expect a child to be ill every week for several months without seeking medical advice
- if genuine illness that is likely to be ongoing you can seek additional support
- what form of evidence will the school accept? Eg photo of prescription, an apt card or print out from the GP

Possible Actions for Pupil

Attend School each day according to your time table

State the expectations regarding the time the pupil should be in school – eg every day the school open in line with timetable, an altered start due to X reason, Attending the Library instead of PE...be specific and clear if necessary produce a visual time table and give a copy to the parent to put in obvious place at home.

Sign in and provide school with a reason if late for school.

- Ensure that the reason is recorded and time
- good practice would be staff to follow up any late arrivals and speak with the pupil to discuss why they were late – offer advice to prevent a repeat

Expect to be taken to the doctor (or go alone if age appropriate) if persistent ill health is preventing full attendance.

- Explain why
- Offer an appointment with the school nurse

Talk to someone in school if something is worrying you

- Identify a member of staff that the pupil feels comfortable talking with and that will be regularly available
- Set check in times/agree times for regular catch ups with a member of staff to “check in”
- Identify a way that the pupil won’t feel singled out
- Have a plan for if things have not gone well before arriving at school erg come in and go to a specific place

Possible Actions for Schools

Consider the reason provided for absence (if any).

- Listen to the information that has been shared and give it serious consideration.

Only authorise leave of absence after consideration that the reason is valid.

- If the reason for absence is in doubt then ask for further evidence to verify the parents account – this could photographic, emails or tickets etc but remember it is only the school (headteacher) that can authorise and absence, not a parent.

If reason for absence is persistent ill health request information from parents but may require evidence from GP or Consultant to confirm.

- Explain to the parents that this is not doubting their information but it is helpful to have a full understanding as to the nature of the illness so that adjustment can be made if necessary and if it persists then the school can refer to others for assistance and support for the pupil.
- Obtain a consent to approach the medical practitioner that is leading on the condition eg, CAMHS, GP, Consultant. Explain what you will do and what you will ask for eg don’t always need to know personal details

Support the pupil in finding a solution to any particular problem that may prevent school attendance.

- How will school do this?
- Assess the problem and discuss the possible solution together
- Ask the pupil and the parent how they feel the school might support them best
- Be clear on expectations and what can and can’t be done

School Attendance Meeting - Action Plan

Date of Meeting

EXAMPLE THIS NEEDS TO BE PERSONALISED

Please see advice before completing the form

NAME OF PARENT(S)/CARER(S)

- Ensure that PUPIL attends school every day that it is open.
- Ensure that PUPIL has no unauthorised absences.
- Notify school each school day if PUPIL is absent to explain the reason.
- Provide medical advice regarding the impact of PUPIL's persistent ill health on his/her ability to attend school if absence is due to ill health.
- Work together as parents to ensure a consistency of approach *(Where parents have joint custody/or separated & is appropriate & safe)*

PUPIL NAME

Attend school every day.

- Sign in and provide school with a reason if late for school.
- Expect to be taken to the doctor (or go alone if age appropriate), if persistent ill health is preventing full attendance.
- Talk to someone in school if something is worrying.

SCHOOL (named member of staff)

- Consider the reason provided for absence (if any).
- Only authorise leave of absence after consideration that the reason is valid.
- If reason is persistent ill health request information from parents but may require liaison with GP or Consultant to confirm.
- Support PUPIL in finding a solution to any particular problem that may prevent school attendance.
- *To add here any adjustment made to enable access to teaching & learning e.g. adapted timetable/exit from lesson pass/peer support or buddy*

Signed: **if not present please indicate this**

Parent

Signed

Parent

Signed:

Pupil (if age appropriate)

Signed:

School

Review Date

Appendix 2

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION SERVICE REQUEST FOR A LOCAL AUTHORITY STATUTORY INTERVIEW.

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE COMPLETING THE REQUEST FORM

It is essential that you complete all sections of this referral form. Each question is asked for a reason, and if it is not included then it will create a delay whilst we get back to the referrer to establish this information.

Prior to making a referral

It is important that the school has taken appropriate and meaningful action to address a pupil's non-attendance and has made, or has attempted to make, contact with the parents/carers before making a referral. A clear record should be kept to report all contact made with the parent and the nature of that contact and notes/minutes of any conversations held with parents. It is expected that contact would take the form of telephone calls, letters and minutes from any meetings. If requests for meetings are made but the parent does not attend then a letter together with the minutes and/or plan from any meeting held in absence should be sent to all parent(s)/carer(s) explaining that the meeting went ahead and when it will be reviewed.

We would ask that copies of any document as mentioned above would be included in the referral.

For further information regarding school level interventions please refer to the School Handbook.

Parental Responsibility

Before filling in the Parent/Carer details it may help you decide who should be included if you read the below information.

'Parental Responsibility' as defined by the Children Act 1989

These are the people who have legal authority in relation to a child and it should always be their consent that is obtained for any important decisions. This is normally birth parents unless the child is adopted or some other legal relationship has been obtained through the Courts (section 8 Orders).

However, the definition of 'parent' in education is different. For educational purposes, general rights and responsibilities are acquired simply by having care of the child. Birth parents and others are included. This means that any adult who lives with the child and helps to bring them up can be held responsible for their school attendance and can be prosecuted for their unauthorised absence (step parents, partners, grandparents, family friends etc.). They do not have to have 'parental responsibility' as well. This also means that anyone who does have parental responsibility, but does not live with the child for example, following a divorce/separation, can also be held liable, though there would have to be

reasonable grounds that they were in a position to exercise some parental authority (does the absent parent have any influence or day to day care of the child?).

Please attach an attendance certificate

This should be an appropriate attendance certificate and not just a section from lesson monitor for example.

What do you believe is the reason why this pupil is not attending school regularly?

When completing this section please complete this from a schools point of view and not what the parent has advised you. This is for us to get your opinion on the reasons for absence before we meet with the parent.

Signatures and Declaration box

Pupil Registration Regulations 2006 (& subsequent amendments) governs the responsibilities placed on schools with regard to registering pupil's attendance. There is comprehensive guidance and a set of attendance/absence codes that all schools should use.

Only the school can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the school to accept it, if the school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered - or when no explanation is forthcoming at all - the absence should be treated as unauthorised. Therefore, it is important that the referral is signed by the Headteacher/principal, who holds the responsibility to authorise or unauthorise an absence, as the referral may form part of the evidence that is presented to court.

PLEASE UPLOAD YOUR COMPLETED REFERRAL TO GLOBALSCAPE AND NOTIFY YOUR CMEO/CME INBOX THAT YOU HAVE DONE THIS
ChildrenMissing_EducationService@BATHNES.GOV.UK

Outcome from LASI

Please note that the request for LASI will not automatically result in legal action via the Magistrate's Court. A judgement will be made once the interview has been held and all the information and evidence provided by the parent has been assessed. However, if a prosecution is the appropriate course of action then it may result in a parent having a criminal conviction so it is important that the information is correct.

In some cases despite no statutory defence it may not be in the public interest to continue with the matter and the case will be closed. A school has no right of appeal to the local authority if this decision is made.

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION SERVICE REQUEST FOR A LOCAL AUTHORITY STATUTORY INTERVIEW.

PLEASE ENSURE YOU COMPLETE EVERY SECTION AND ATTACH ANY
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

| | |
|--|--|
| Name of School | |
| Contact Person and Phone Number | |
| Position Held | |
| Date of referral | |

| Child/Young Person | | Date of Birth | Year Group |
|--|--|--|----------------------|
| Forename(s) | Last Name | | |
| | | | |
| Gender: | | Ethnicity: | |
| Home address of pupil: | | | |
| DOES THIS PUPIL HAVE ANY SEND (DELETE AS APPLICABLE) | NONE SCH LEVEL NEEDS ASSESSMENT EHCP | UPN: | |
| | | Looked After Child (LAC): | YES/NO |
| Is there an open referral to Social Care? PLEASE DELETE AS APPLICABLE | | CP | YES NO |
| | | CIN | YES NO |
| | | Referral | YES NO |
| Name of Allocated Social Worker: | | | |
| Name of 1st Parents/Carers (and address if different from above): | Date of Birth Parent 1 | Relationship (indicating parental responsibility; if absent parent please indicate level of contact SEE FRONT SHEET): | |
| | | | |
| Contact details of 1st parent: | | | |
| Name of 2nd Parents/Carers (and address if different from above – if only have details of 1 parent please provide information as why 2nd parent details are not provided) | Date of Birth Parent 2 | Relationship (indicating parental responsibility; if absent parent please indicate level of contact SEE FRONT SHEET): | |

| | |
|---|--|
| | |
| Contact details of 2 nd Parent/Carer | |
| If there are any additional parent/carers please add the details here (please see information on acquired PR) | |

Please provide attendance details including – *please attach attendance certificate*

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|--|-----------------------|---|
| Current attendance as of date of referral | | | | = % | |
| Unauthorised Absence | NUMBER OF SESSIONS | % | Authorised Absence | NUMBER OF SESSIONS | % |
| | | | | | |
| Late arrival before register is closed | NUMBER OF SESSIONS | % | Late arrival after register is closed | NUMBER OF SESSIONS | % |
| | | | | | |

Please give dates of any contact with parent/carer including telephone calls, letters and meetings and indicate the strategies implemented to date:

Please give a chronology of actions including telephone contacts, letters, meetings and attach any relevant documents:

What do you believe is the reason why this pupil is not attending school regularly?
SEE INFORMATION SHEET

Any other information you wish to share with CMES?

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

| | | | | |
|--|-------------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| Have you completed a CAF/Early Help Assessment? | YES (Date) | | NO (if not why not) | |
| Are you aware of a CAF/EHA completed by another professional? | YES/NO | If yes please give name of lead professional and date of completion | | |
| Have you referred to your Behaviour & Attendance Panel? | YES (Date) | | OUTCOME | |

Other Agencies involved (and name of practitioner, if known):

FOR EXAMPLE: Social Care, Student & Family Support Service (SAFS), Parent Support Advisor, Mentoring Plus, Alternative Provision, Play Project, CAMHS, School Nurse, GP, Brighter Futures, Education Psychologist, Connecting Families, Youth Offending Service, Southside or any Other:

Please give as much information as possible

| | |
|--|--|
| How does the child get to school? | |
| Does the child/family belong to a particular faith or religion? | |
| Does the child suffer from a particular known medical condition? | |
| Are you aware of any friendship issues with this child? | |
| Does this child have any SEN or disability? | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Is the parent/carer aware of the referral to the local authority CMES? | YES/NO (IF NO THEN GIVE REASON WHY NOT) |
|---|--|

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Does this pupil have a sibling at your school? | YES/NO |
|---|---------------|

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Name and DOB of sibling | Attendance of sibling (please attach an attendance certificate) |
|--------------------------------|--|

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

| NAME OF DOCUMENT – Please list all documents attached to this referral |
|--|
| |

| Declaration <i>(this section must be signed by the Headteacher/principal)</i> | | | |
|---|--|------|--|
| I confirm that the details contained on this form are true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I wilfully state in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true. | | | |
| HEADTEACHER SIGNATURE | | NAME | |
| I make this referral is in line with the school policy, which is attached to this referral. | | | |
| HEADTEACHER SIGNATURE | | NAME | |
| DATE | | | |

PLEASE UPLOAD THE COMPLETED REFERRAL TO GLOBALSCAPE

Appendix 3
PUPIL TRACKING REFERRAL FORM – child whose family whereabouts are unknown.

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--------------|-------------------------|--|
| Your Details | Name: | | Date: | |
| | School: | | Contact details: | |
| Child and family details | Forename(s) | | Surname | |
| | DOB: | Year: | Gender: | |
| | Date last in education | | Date last seen: | |
| | Parent(s) names and all contact details: | | | |
| UPN | | | | |
| Sibling details | | | | |
| CME criteria (Please indicate) | All attempts to contact the family have failed (see checklist below) | | | |
| | Family known to have moved away but destination school unknown | | | |
| | Child did not take up allocated school place and attempts to contact have failed | | | |

| Checklist | | |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| Action | Date completed | Outcome |
| Carry out first day calling (if this is an automated system the school should make telephone contact manually) | | |
| Attempt to get in touch with all known emergency contacts (at various times of day) via telephone, email or letter <i>Provide contact details of all other contacts</i> | | |
| Gather further information including from other agencies & wider school community (e.g. staff, other pupils, friends) | | |
| Home visit within 5 school days if appropriate | | |
| Social Media contact/searches where appropriate | | |

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 the Social Care Duty Team immediately on 01225 396313 and the Children Missing Education Service on 01225 394241

If child is not located following checks, please send this form and any additional relevant information to the Children Missing Education Service cmes@bathnes.gov.uk **no later than** the tenth day of absence and continue checks as appropriate. The CMES will make further enquiries and attempts to locate the family.

| Any additional relevant information |
|--|
| |

Appendix 4

PENALTY NOTICE REQUEST
(contains 2 pages which must be completed)

| Pupil Details | | | |
|---------------|--|---------------|--|
| Name | | Date of Birth | |
| Address | | | |
| | | Post Code | |
| School | | Year Group | |

Definition of parent: Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' as

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law).

| Parent/Guardian Details (1) | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|--|
| Name | | Date of Birth | |
| Address | | | |
| | | Phone | |
| | | Post Code | |
| Relationship to Pupil | | Has this parent been written to? | |
| Is there any reason why this parent should not receive a PN? | | | |

| Parent/Guardian Details (2) | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------|--|
| Name | | Date of Birth | |
| Address | | | |
| | | Phone | |
| | | Post Code | |
| Relationship to Pupil | | Has this parent been written to | |
| Is there any reason why this parent should not receive a PN? | | | |
| Does the school have any information that may lead to this PN being withdrawn for one or both of the parents? If yes, please explain | | | |

| Attendance Details |
|---|
| I confirm that the pupil named above was absent from school/college on sessions during the period (first date of absence) to (last date of absence)..... and that of these sessions have been recorded by the school as unauthorised. |

PLEASE ATTACH PUPIL'S ATTENDANCE CERTIFICATE

Declaration

I confirm that the details contained on this form are true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I wilfully state in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

I confirm that this referral is in line with the school policy.

| | |
|--|--|
| Signed | |
| Name | |
| Designation (headteacher or deputy) | |
| Date | |

CHECKLIST

Please tick each box as you have checked the information. Add additional information as required e.g. no correspondence as parent did not make request for absence in advance

| | |
|---|--|
| Are the pupil details correct? | |
| Have all people who can be defined as a parent been added? If not please state why not? (see definition on previous page) | |
| Please ensure contact details including address and telephone for all parents has been completed | |
| Does the information regarding attendance match with the attendance certificate? | |
| Does the pupil have 95% attendance or below this academic year? | |
| What is the % attendance from the first day back after the holiday for this academic year? | |
| What is the % attendance over the previous 12 months from the first day back after the holiday? | |
| Are there 10 unauthorised sessions? | |
| Have you attached a copy of any correspondence with the parent in relation to the unauthorised absence? If not please state why not? (please include parental request or a covering letter to say that no request was made) | |
| Have you attached the attendance certificate? | |
| Have you signed and dated the PN request? | |

SAMPLE LETTER 2

Dear

Re:

dob:

School:

NAME OF SCHOOL

Following the letter dated DATE I have continued to monitor NAME's attendance.

This academic year, NAME has attended on only NUMBER out of a possible NUMBER half-day sessions, giving an attendance rate of NUMBER % - the equivalent to missing NUMBER days school each week. The school register shows that NUMBER of NAME's absences have not been authorised and that his/her last week of full attendance was in the week starting Monday DATE.

Under the Education Act 1996, it is your duty as NAME's parent/carer to ensure his/her regular attendance at school. **This means that NAME must be in attendance every time the school is open, unless he/she is prevented from doing so by reason of illness or any unavoidable cause.**

I would like to offer an opportunity for you to discuss your child's school attendance with me and therefore invite you to a XXX School Attendance Meeting on:

Date:

Time:

Place:

This meeting will discuss the reasons why NAME is not attending school regularly and how this is impacting on his/her educational attainment. We will plan together how this matter will be resolved, what the next steps are and agree a date to review progress.

If you are unable to attend the meeting on the above date please let me know as soon as possible to enable another date to be arranged.

Yours sincerely

SAMPLE LETTER 3

Dear Parents Name,

Re:

DOB:

Year Group:

We had arranged an attendance meeting at XXX School on DATE. At this meeting I had hoped to address the fact that CHILD'S NAME attendance is of real concern. I was therefore very disappointed that you didn't attend or inform us that you were not able to attend.

CHILD'S NAME overall attendance for this academic year is XX.XX% which falls below of what we would expect.

I will take this opportunity to remind you that Under the Education Act 1996, it is your duty as CHILD'S NAME parent to ensure his/her regular attendance at school. This means that CHILD'S NAME must be in attendance every time the school is open, unless she is prevented from doing so by reason of illness or any unavoidable cause.

I shall continue to monitor CHILD'S NAME attendance until DATE at which point, I will review. If CHILD'S NAME accrues any further unauthorised absences during this period we may refer your child to the Local Authority.

Yours sincerely,

LATE ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL/PUNCTUALITY

A child of compulsory school age

Parent needs to understand that attendance on time is a legal requirement.

School should look at individual cases as there could be many different reasons for lateness.

1. Is the arrival still within the registration period?

You define how long this is; normally no more than 30 minutes but it can be much less, especially in the afternoon. If you record an L for arrival within this time it counts as present. Legally, the parent has done nothing wrong. Therefore there is not a lot you can do to challenge it except to encourage punctuality or shorten the registration period for everyone.

2. Is the arrival after the registration period?

DfE advice is to mark the session as U which is an unauthorised absence for the whole session. This becomes evidence of an offence. There is no such thing as authorised absence for lateness.

3. Why is the child late?

Some late arrivals should not be viewed as an offence. Travel problems and a genuine early medical appointment are two common examples. Is it correct to record unauthorised absence in these circumstances? That is for school to decide. Consider - has the parent acted responsibly?

4. Is it a regular occurrence or just a one off?

An unauthorised absence is only really needed if it is likely that some action might be taken by the local authority as a result (part of a bigger picture of non-attendance). However, recording it as unauthorised makes the point that the session will not count as an attendance.

5. Whose behaviour are you trying to change?

If the parent is at fault and there are no legitimate extenuating circumstances requiring a more pastoral response, perhaps a parenting agreement/contract may help. If it is the child at fault, incentives or a disciplinary procedure may be reasonable with either a code L or a code U. However, it is only the parent that can commit an offence.