



Children Missing from Education Policy **Sunderland LA Guidance**

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a statutory duty on local authorities in England and Wales to make arrangements to identify children and young people of compulsory school age, who are missing from education within their area. A child or young person who is deemed missing education is of compulsory school age - between the ages of five and sixteen - is not on a school roll nor registered at any formally approved education activity and has been out of any education provision for a substantial period of time, usually more than four weeks. Approved education activity includes provisions such as a maintained school or independent (private) school, city academy, alternative curriculum provision, pupil referral unit and elective home education and registered with the local authority.

How can children and young people go 'missing from education'?

There are a number of recognised points where children or young people can go missing from education.

These include:

- Failure to start appropriate provision at 'reception' age and therefore never entering the educational system
- After any form of exclusion from education
- Failure to complete the transition from primary to secondary school
- Delays in applying for a new school when a family arrive in the city
- Delays in applying for a new school when a child leaves an independent (private) school
- Child removed from school by family who leave the area with no forwarding address. School staff should be aware of and consider absence from education may have a link to child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.
- Child removed and not registered as "home educated"

These 'missing' children are amongst the most vulnerable children in Sunderland. It is essential that practitioners in all services work together to identify and re-engage these children, back into appropriate educational provision as quickly as possible.

Statutory and voluntary agencies in Sunderland are asked to complete the  [referral form \[51kb\]](#) should they become aware of the arrival or existence of a child living in Sunderland but not in education. This will help to ensure that vulnerable children and young people in Sunderland do not 'slip through the net'. Members of the public can inform the Attendance Team of children and young people who they think may be 'missing from education' by telephoning 0191 561 5601 or by emailing cme@sunderland.gov.uk