
Education Department Policy

Title: Children Missing Education (CME)

Date: April 2016

1 Policy statement

The Education Department (ED) supports Article 24 of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, in that it is a child's right to receive education. The child's best interests shall be the guiding principle for all those responsible for a child's education with responsibility in the first instance situated with the child's parents.

ED is committed to promote an ethos of educational inclusion and access to education for all children, and when children go missing from education, for whatever reason, steps should be taken by schools and the ED to identify those children and work collaboratively with other authorities and jurisdictions to identify those CME.

2 Policy Aims

2.1 The purpose and aims of this policy are to:

- Make sure that children and young people missing from education are identified quickly and that effective monitoring systems are put in place to ensure that action is taken to provide them with 'suitable education' once found. *'Suitable education', in relation to a child, is defined as efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have.*
- To ensure schools and ED departments understand the process of following up children that move between schools on island and off island.
- Provide clear guidance to schools and ED departments to ensure they understand the processes required to identify any child that may be missing from education and what actions should be taken to report their concerns.
- Ensure head teachers follow a consistent approach in the management and sharing of information about children who leave their school on island, and that communication between parents, schools on island and receiving schools elsewhere, is effective and recorded appropriately.

3 DEFINITION

"Children missing from education" refers to any child of compulsory school age:

- Who are not on a school roll or being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision)

- Who have been out of any educational provision for 10 consecutive school days without notifying the school (unless a period of sickness has been validated by a school or a leave of absence has been agreed by the Chief Education Officer)
- Who fails to start in a new school or appropriate education provision or become lost from school rolls or fail to re-register at a new school having left a school in Jersey.
- If a child is reported as missing by another State department (such as the Police).
- If a child is reported as missing by a parent or any other third party (and the report is validated)

4 RISKS

4.1 Possible reasons that should be considered include:

- Failure to start appropriate provision and never enter the system;
- Stopped attending, due to illegal exclusion or withdrawal by parent/carers;
- Failure to complete a transition between all States' schools within 10 days
- Children from refugee and asylum seeking families;
- Children from families who are highly mobile;
- Children at risk of a forced marriage or female genital mutilation (FGM);
- Children experiencing abuse and neglect

4.2 Children who remain disengaged from education are potentially exposed to higher degrees of risk such as anti-social behaviour and/or sexual exploitation and trafficking.

4.3 Families moving between education authorities can sometimes result in children becoming 'lost' in the system and consequently missing education.

5. ACTIONS

5.1 Where a child has moved away from Jersey and not arrived at the receiving school, the Head teacher should ensure that contact is made with the receiving local authority to ascertain the whereabouts of the child.

5.2 Once the location of the child is established, the relevant local authority is responsible for ensuring that the child is receiving an education either by attending school or otherwise.

5.3 When every effort has been made to locate a CME without success, the local police department should be informed that the child is missing from education and their whereabouts is unknown.

5.4 The head teacher's designated member of staff teacher in Jersey *must* contact the receiving school as soon as possible, and not more than 10 school days after the child leaves their school.

5.5 It is important to establish the reasons for the child being missing at the earliest possible stage.

5.6 It is essential that all agencies work together to identify and re-engage children

back into an appropriate education provision as quickly as possible.

6 LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

6.1 Other policies and which may be helpful when considering this policy are:

- School Attendance Policy
- School Admissions and Transfer Policy

7 WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

7.1 This policy applies to all head teachers and staff who are responsible for the safety and well-being of pupils, the ED Education Welfare Service and the Planning and Projects Team.

8 SPECIFIC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 School are responsible for:

- Maintaining twice daily registers, which is one mechanism for noticing when a child has gone missing
- The head teacher or designated person should inform their named Education Welfare Officers at both their school and the department when a child is missing from school.
- A child's welfare is of paramount importance and where there are concerns about a child's welfare, the head teacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead teacher should contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- Contacting receiving schools outside of Jersey to ensure children have started

8.2 Other Agencies are responsible for:

- Ensuring that when a child is identified as not being on a school roll or receiving education otherwise, that this information is passed to the Education Welfare Service (EWS).
- If after following all enquires the EWS, are unable to locate a CME then the EWS must inform the MASH police that the child is to be formally recorded by them as a Child Missing Education (CME).

8.3 Education Welfare Officers are responsible for:

- Taking appropriate action e.g. home visits, contact parents, liaise with MASH, School Health Department and ED to gather information and try to locate the child.
- Notifying the police that a child is missing from education (when all avenues of enquiry have been made to locate the child, either in Jersey or abroad).
- Notifying the Designated Safeguarding Officer for the ED and the Director of Inclusion and Family Support when a child is reported to be missing from education (CME).

9 SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

Actions to be taken:

- 9.1 Where a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan and identified as missing, contact should be made immediately with the MASH and the Designated Safeguarding Officer for the ED.
- 9.2 Where a child on a school roll is reported to be missing, the child's name may not be removed until he/she has been continuously absent for at least 6 weeks, and both the school and the education service have failed, after reasonable enquiries, to locate the pupil and his/her family
- 9.3 Where a child is CME their name and details should be sent to the Education Welfare Service who will maintain a centrally-held register, clearly identifying the child as CME.

10 PUPIL RECORDS

10.1 The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that:

- Where the child's name has been removed from the school roll, but he/she has not been located, that arrangements are made for the pupil's records to be retained in the school archive provision until they are informed that the child has been located.
- When a head teacher is notified by a parent that they intend to register their child as receiving education other than at school (EOTAS), then the head teacher should inform them that they need to apply to the Director of Inclusion and Family Support and must also inform the EWS ;
- When a child is recorded as EOTAS then the EWS will inform the school. The pupils' records must be stored in the school archives.
- If a school receives a new pupil without getting information from his or her previous school, the receiving school should contact the head teacher from the school which the child has transferred as a matter of urgency
- If the school Education Welfare Officers have been involved with a child and become aware that they have moved to another school they should ensure that all relevant agencies are informed and arrangements are made to forward a copy of relevant records about their involvement.

11 POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

11.1 A child missing from education is not in itself a child protection matter, and there may be an innocent explanation for this. However, regular school attendance is an important safeguard and unexplained non-attendance can be an early indicator of problems, risk and vulnerability.

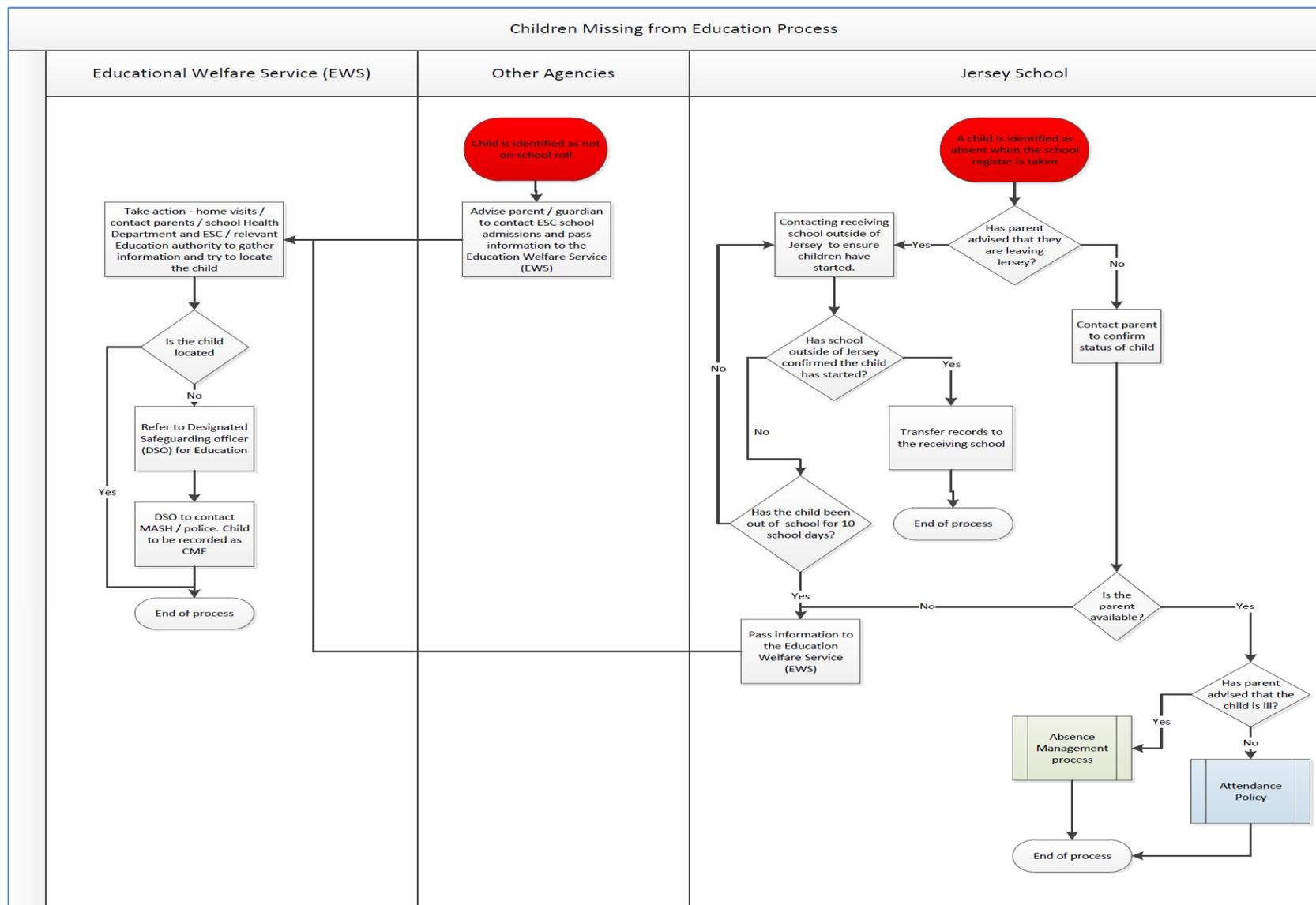
11.2 Schools should endeavour to deal with this problem in three ways:

- By preventing poor school attendance and truancy;
- Acting once absence has occurred to establish children's safety and try to get them back to school;
- Taking action to trace children whose whereabouts are not known.

Glossary of terms used in this policy

TERM	MEANING
CME	Children Missing Education
MASH	The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub provides information sharing across all agencies and organisations involved in safeguarding children and families. The MASH will share information across the services above where information that is already known, in order to better inform initial safeguarding decisions
EOTAS	Education other than at school
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
EWS	Education Welfare Service
EST	Education Support Team

11 PROCESS MAP



CHANGE HISTORY

Version	Date Issued	Issued by	Reason for Change
0.1	17 February 2015	Designated Safeguarding Officer for the Department of Education	First Draft for review
1.0	10 June 2015	Designated Safeguarding Officer for the Department of Education	SMT approved
1.1	13 November 2015	Project Manager	Formatted + Section 9.3 changed to EWS responsibility
1.2	April 2016	Project Manager	Updated to reflect new Department name, job titles and house style naming conventions.

APPROVAL

Presented To	Date
Secondary Head Teachers	11 November 2015
Primary Head Teachers	10 November 2015
Police / Honorary Police	
Senior Management Team	10 June 2015

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Planned review date:	Distribution:	
Associated policies	Name	Reference
	School Attendance Policy	
	School Admissions Policies	
	Child Protection Policy	