



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Children's Services

Early Help and Intervention Service

Children Missing Education Policy & Procedures

“Our aim is to ensure that every child and young person has the opportunity to fulfil their potential and no child slips through the net.”

Reviewed and Updated by the Senior Leadership Team

Agreed: July 2017

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children's and Adults' services

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INTRODUCTION

The Government has placed a duty on the local authorities Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (Section 4 - Education and Inspections Act 2006) to make arrangements to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of Children Missing Education (CME).

The duty applies to: children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, and who are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at school, for example, at home, privately, or in alternative provision.

This duty is supported from the revised Statutory Guidance which was issued for Local Authorities in England to identify Children Not Receiving a Suitable Education – September 2016.

Bedford Borough Council will:

- Produce a written policy
- Ensure that there are embedded arrangements to identify and provide services for children missing education;
- Ensure appropriate monitoring of processes;
- Identify and provide clear notification routes and processes for key stakeholders;
- A named Children Missing Education Officer;
- Maintain a database of CME;
- Monitor the numbers of CME;
- Provide and monitor appropriate brokering services;
- Ensure effective process are in place;
- Ensure that up to date information regarding school places and access to alternative provision is readily available;
- Develop and monitor effective tracking systems
- Support schools to make an effective contribution to the referral and tracking processes;
- Support and encourage schools to transfer files via S2S;
- Use the Lost Pupil database area of the S2S Site
- Produce a reports to Elected Members and Senior Management and LSCB

These procedures are an extension of current good practice with Bedford Borough Schools and the Local Authority.

The Childrens Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people and to share information. There is an expectation that all agencies will work together to ensure that children and young people do not “slip through the net” and become missing as well as ensuring that all children within Bedford Borough achieve their full potential through education.

To reduce the risk of children missing their education, Bedford Borough has a systematic process and procedure as outlined in this document. These include the provision of a Children Missing Education Officer and a common referral process for all agencies. The Children Missing Education Officer will continue to develop existing systems to identify those children at risk of missing education and will work with schools and other professionals to ensure that they do not fall through the net.

DEFINITIONS FOR CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

The **national definition** of a children missing education is:

- 'Children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more).

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE GO MISSING FROM SCHOOL FOR MANY REASONS THESE CAN INCLUDE:

- Failing to start appropriate provision and never enter the education system e.g. new to area and no application is made to school, unable to find a suitable school place.
- Ceasing to attend, due to illegal unofficial exclusion or withdrawal; removal from roll with no named destination.
- Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) awaiting an appropriate placement.
- Those pupils offered alternative provision but do not access this provision.

SYSTEMS USED TO REDUCE THE RISK OF CHILDREN BECOMING CME

These include:

- Behaviour and Attendance team will support schools to undertake regular audit of their registers
- Regular Truancy Sweeps by the Education Welfare Service (EWS) and Police
- Sharing and receiving information from other agencies e.g. The Education Welfare Service, all Bedford Borough Schools including Academies, Free Schools Independent Schools and Pupil Referral Units, Travellers Education Service, Youth Offending Service, Primary Care Trust Staff, Social Care colleagues to identify those at risk becoming CME
- Ensuring all partner agencies have access to updated leaflets circulated on CME
- Continuing to develop procedures that identify children missing education through liaison with other LA's and access to national databases School to School (S2S)
- Raising awareness, through publicity, to the General Public regarding CME and every child's right to education. (e.g. leaflets, posters, articles in local press)
- Putting measures in place to re-engage CME, e.g. referrals to the EWS and to relevant education panels for further professional support.

ROLE OF THE CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION OFFICER

The role of the Children Missing Education Officer (CMEO) is to ensure that all children identified within Bedford find an education and ensure correct procedures are followed as listed below.

- Ensure accurate recording of data and actions that identifies CME
- Maintain and update the Children Missing Education Database
- Undertake the tracking process of CME
- Co-ordinate casework and contribute to assessment to determine appropriate provision for a child
- Provide relevant data as required and an annual report
- Raises awareness of procedures via presentations and training to teams on referral routes and circulating leaflets to professionals and public.
- Reminding schools of the Education (Pupils Registration England) Regs 2006 amended 2016 regarding the removal of children from school rolls and the need to create a Common Transfer File (CTF) (uploaded onto the DFE S2S secure website) when a child has left school to an unknown destination.

NOTIFICATION AND REFERRAL ROUTES

It is the responsibility of all agencies including schools to alert the CMEO when they believe

- Family has moved into Bedford Borough Council and the children are not or do not appear to be accessing education.
- It is known that a child is not on a school roll or accessing an alternative education provision.
- Where another Local Authority contacts Bedford Borough seeking help regarding a child missing from their LA who they believe now lives in Bedford Borough or there are child protection concerns.

CMEO will check the LA held databases, including Pupil Support Services, Admissions, Appeals Tracker and Azeus (Social Care database) and other relevant council departments e.g. Council Tax. CMEO will ensure recording of Data and undertake the process of tracking CME. Details recorded will include: date of referral, any assessment, provision determined and when accessed and when a child has left the school roll.

The 2 referrals routes are outlined below;

Referral route 1

This e-form is to be used by all schools in Bedford Borough for compulsory school aged children who have possibly gone missing.

The 'Possible Missing Referral Form' has been placed on the internet www.bedford.gov.uk and the direct link is www.bedford.gov.uk/possiblemissingchild

'Please note: notifications off roll forms will be processed by the Corporate Policy & Performance Management within 5 working days'

Referral route 2

This e-form is to be used by all agencies, other Local Authorities and the general public when they believe a compulsory school age child is not receiving any form of education.

The 'Children Missing Education Referral Form' has been placed on the Internet www.bedford.gov.uk and the direct link is www.bedford.gov.uk/notforschoolscme

The Children Missing Education Officer can be contact on;

Tel: 01234 228178 (direct line)

E mail: childrenmissingeducation@bedford.gov.uk

CROSS BORDER ARRANGEMENTS

- Bedford Borough Council has protocols with other LAs regarding referrals where children attend schools in Bedford Borough but live in another LA. If such a child is missing from education a Bedford Borough school the EWS will refer to the CMEO of the LA in which the child resides.
- If a child is permanently excluded from a Bedford Borough school but lives in another LA, the home LA is alerted to provide interim support.
- If a child is absent from school due to long term medical needs or pregnancy, the EWS will inform the home LA EWS to access support for the child. Details will be logged on the CME database until education support is identified.
- Details of children stopped during a Truancy Sweep will be sent to the CMEO in the child's home authority and/or school.
- Information will be shared with the home LA on any legal action taken or any Parenting Order or Education Supervision Order made by Bedford Borough.

CME TRAINING FOR ALL PROFESSIONALS

- The Children Missing Education Officer does offer training to school staff and other professionals.
- The aim of the CME training is to make all professionals aware of how important it is for children and young people to be in education and ensure they know how to make timely referrals.
- To organise a training session please contact the **Children Missing Education Officer on - Tel: 01234 228178 (direct line)**

Or Email: childrenmissingeducation@bedford.gov.uk

ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION (EHE)

- Parents must ensure their children receive suitable full time education either by regular school attendance or otherwise (section 7 of the Education Act 1996). Some parents may choose to educate their child at home themselves. Process Chart 1 will be followed for any child referred to the CMEO who has moved into Bedford.
- When parents withdraw their child from school to EHE, the child's name can only be deleted from the admissions register when the parents inform the school in writing (section 8 (d) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 amended 2016) giving reasons for decisions. The Head Teacher/Governor must inform the LA of withdrawal together with reasons before the child's name is deleted.
- In Bedford Borough, the Early Help Service is responsible for monitoring the education of EHE children. The Senior Inclusion Support Officer will determine that the provision of home education is unsatisfactory and may consider issuing a School Attendance Order.
- If a pupil has an EHCP then the Senior Inclusion Support Officer must be informed via the off roll process schools must complete on all cases.

Responsibilities of all Educational Provisions

Schools also have safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies, Free Schools and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils.

Schools have a key role in ensuring that children do not become Missing and must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. For most pupils the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school must establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

From 1st September 2016, under The Education (Pupil Registration (England) (Amendment)) Regulations 2016, all schools (including academies and independents schools) are required to:

- Inform their LA when they are about to delete a pupil's name from the admission register under **all fifteen grounds**, This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.
- When removing a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include: (a) the full name of the pupil, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and (e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register
- Schools must **make reasonable enquiries** to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii)

The following is an extract from The Education (Pupil Registration (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 which sets out the grounds for deletion from roll.

Deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register as set

out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) amendment Regulations 2016

1. 8(1) (a) - where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.
2. 8(1)(b) - except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school.
3. 8(1)(c) - where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.
4. 8(1)(d) - in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.
5. 8(1)(e) - except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.
6. 8(1)(f) - in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that —
 - (i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted;
 - (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
 - (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
7. 8(1)(g) - that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
8. 8(1)(h) - that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and —
 - (i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2);
 - (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
 - (iii) the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is;
9. 8(1) (i) - that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.
10. 8(1) (j) - that the pupil has died.

11. 8(1)(k) - that the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and—
 - (i) the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school; or
 - (ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.

12. 8(1)(l) - in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school.

13. 8(1) (m) - that he has been permanently excluded from the school. A school can only remove the pupil after the Senior Inclusion Support Officer or Independent review panel have informed them to do so.

14. 8(1) (n) - where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception or higher, class at the school.

15. 8(1)(o) where—
 - (i) the pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or an Academy;
 - (ii) charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the pupil; and
 - (iii) those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.

All schools must also notify the local authority **within five days** of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

- When adding a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil.

- For each new child please use your MIS to create a Common Transfer file (CTF) containing Your school name, Start date at your school, Forename, Surname, gender, data of birth as a minimum. Please also include the UPN number although this might not be available if you are an Independent school. Additionally, please include Address, ethnicity, National curriculum year and first language.

- As part of the process of creating the file your system will ask for the DfE number of the “destination school”. In this case please use 822LLLL as the destination school number. This will ensure that the S2S system will send the file to us at Bedford Borough.

- Your MIS will create a file automatically named LASSS1_CTF_822LLLL_NUM where LASS1 is your school number and NUM is an incremental system identifier.

- Before you upload the file to S2S please rename the file, replacing the letters CTF with **NEW**. This will ensure we can identify the file as containing a new starter record when it arrives with us.

- The file is still a CTF file so please select the option “Upload CTF file” when loading onto S2S.

MONITORING ATTENDANCE FOR ALL PROVISIONS

LA tracks children who may cease to attend the registered provider

- Schools and alternative providers are required to have systems in place for monitoring attendance and to track the whereabouts of children.
- Schools should make timely referrals to the EWS using the threshold criteria agreed in their Service Level Agreements. Schools must report any continuous pupil absences, greater than 10 school days, where no reason is given. (Regulation 12 Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006).
- Schools can only delete a child's name from the register as laid down in Regulation 8 Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006 amendment Regulations 2016. Schools must keep evidence that supports their reasons to delete a child from the roll, including, any documents supporting a move to another school and/or proving their whereabouts which justifies their removal from the school roll.
- When a school removes a pupil from its roll (other than normal transfer process), the school **must** complete the online Notification of Removal from School Roll. Should a school remove a pupil from roll in contravention of the Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006 amendment Regulations 2016, schools will be advised to re-instate the pupil onto the school roll.
- Where a child, due to start or transfer school across phase, does not arrive, the new school must try to make contact with the parent within 7 days (they should also contact School Admissions in case the child is registered elsewhere). Unless the parent has refused the school place offered, **the child should be placed on the school roll from the expected start date**. If after 10 days the child fails to arrive, the school should refer to the EWS as a **Possible Missing Child**. If the child is subject to a child protection plan the school must contact MASH immediately.
- Schools must inform the Early Help Service within 5 working days where they receive written notification from the parent to de-register their child to EHE. Children with a statement of special needs, on roll at a special school, can only be removed from a school roll with the permission of the LA or Secretary of State. Schools can remove the child from school roll once they have received a written notification from the parent stating their intention to home educate.

DFE SCHOOL TO SCHOOL WEBSITE

- All Bedford Borough Schools must use the DFE School to School website to enable pupils (CTF) to accompany every child joining or leaving Bedford Borough schools.
- If a child joins a BBC school without a CTF being received from a previous school, the school should request details of the previous school from parents and if not available, ask the Corporate Policy & Performance Management to search the Lost Pupil Database for the relevant CTF.
- If a Bedford Borough school, previously having sent a lost child CTF to the Lost Pupils' Database, becomes aware that the child is attending another school, they should create a new CTF and send this to the new school, and advise the Corporate Policy &

Performance Management to remove the file from the Lost Pupil's Database.

- If a child leaves a Bedford Borough school to be EHE, the school, on receiving written confirmation of the parents' intentions, should remove the child's name from the school roll providing they have informed the EWS. School should then send the CTF to the DFE S2S Database using MMMMMMMM as a destination. (The CTF goes to a database of pupils having moved outside the maintained system.)

MONITORING OF THE S2S LOST PUPIL DATABASE

- The CMEO will download, half termly, the names of pupils whose CTF has been placed on the S2S Lost Pupil Database during that half term. Names will be checked with EWOs to establish that CTF's have been placed correctly and that the school has referred the children to their EWO as 'Possible Missing Pupils' following the LA CME Policy and procedures
- Where an EWO finds that the names have been placed incorrectly they should immediately let the CMEO know via email. The CMEO will remove the CTF from Lost Pupil Database and the school should then create a new CTF and send it to the appropriate destination.
- Where the names have been placed correctly but not referred to the EWO, the EWO will request a referral, reminding the school of the LA CME Policy and Procedures.

APPENDICIES

LIST OF ACRONYMS:

MASH	Multi Agency Support Hub
CME	Children Missing Education
CMEO	Children Missing Education Officer
CTF	Common Transfer File
DFE	Department for Education
EHE	Elective Home Education
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
PSS	Pupil Support Services
EIS	Early Intervention Safeguarding
LA	Local Authority
S2S	School to School
CP&PM	Corporate Policy & Performance Management

What LEGISLATION does this guidance refer to;

Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (added by section 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

Education Act 1996 (section 7, 8, 14, 19)

Education and Inspections Act 2006 (section 4 and 38)

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Education (Pupil Registration) Amendment (England) Regulations 2016

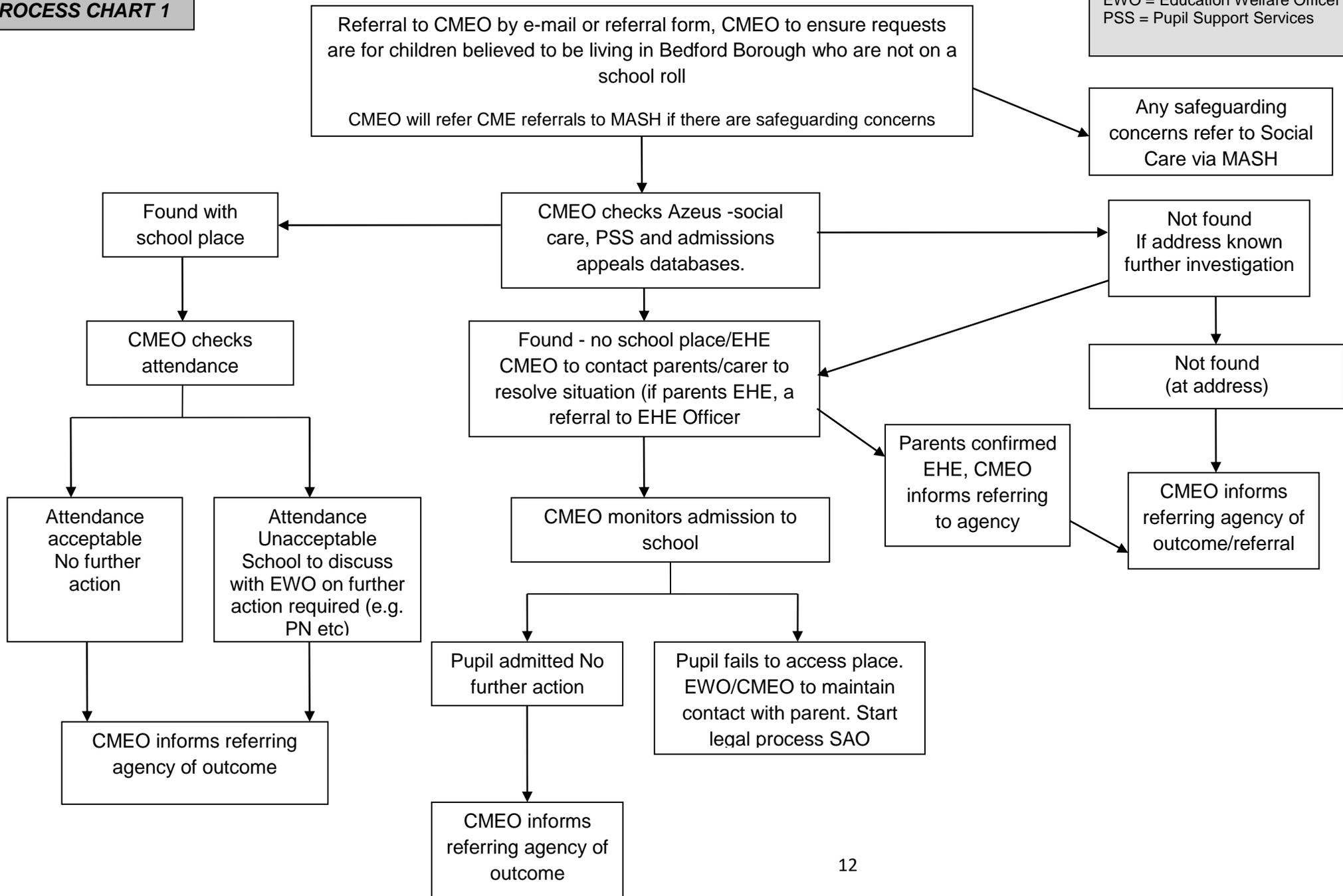
Other Legislation

Children Act 2004 (section 10, 11, 12, 17, 63)

CME REFERRALS FROM OTHER LA AND OTHER AGENCIES

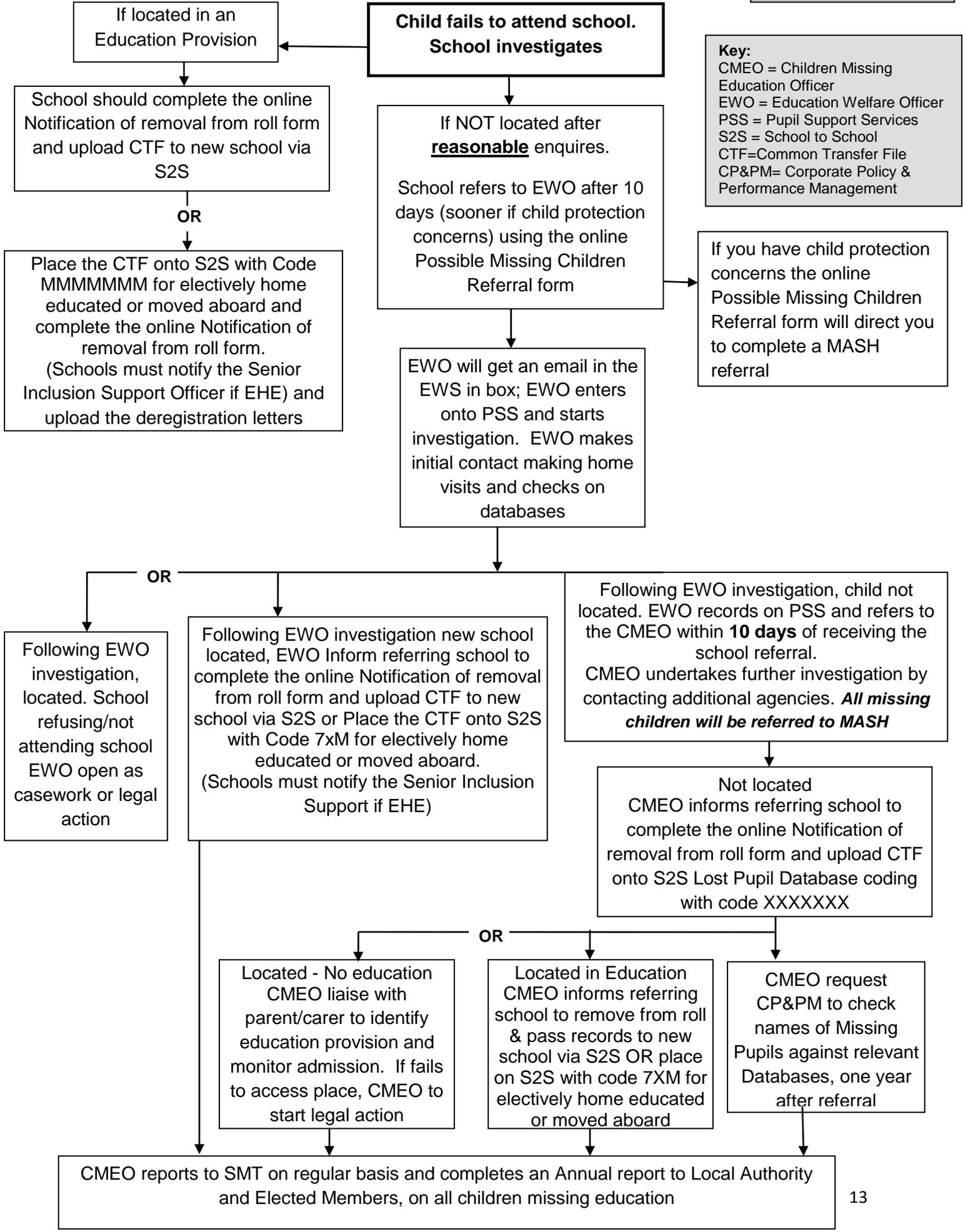
PROCESS CHART 1

Key:
 CMEO = Children Missing Education Officer
 EWO = Education Welfare Officer
 PSS = Pupil Support Services



POSSIBLE MISSING CHILDREN REFERRAL PROCESS FOR ALL BEDFORD BOROUGH SCHOOLS

PROCESS CHART 2

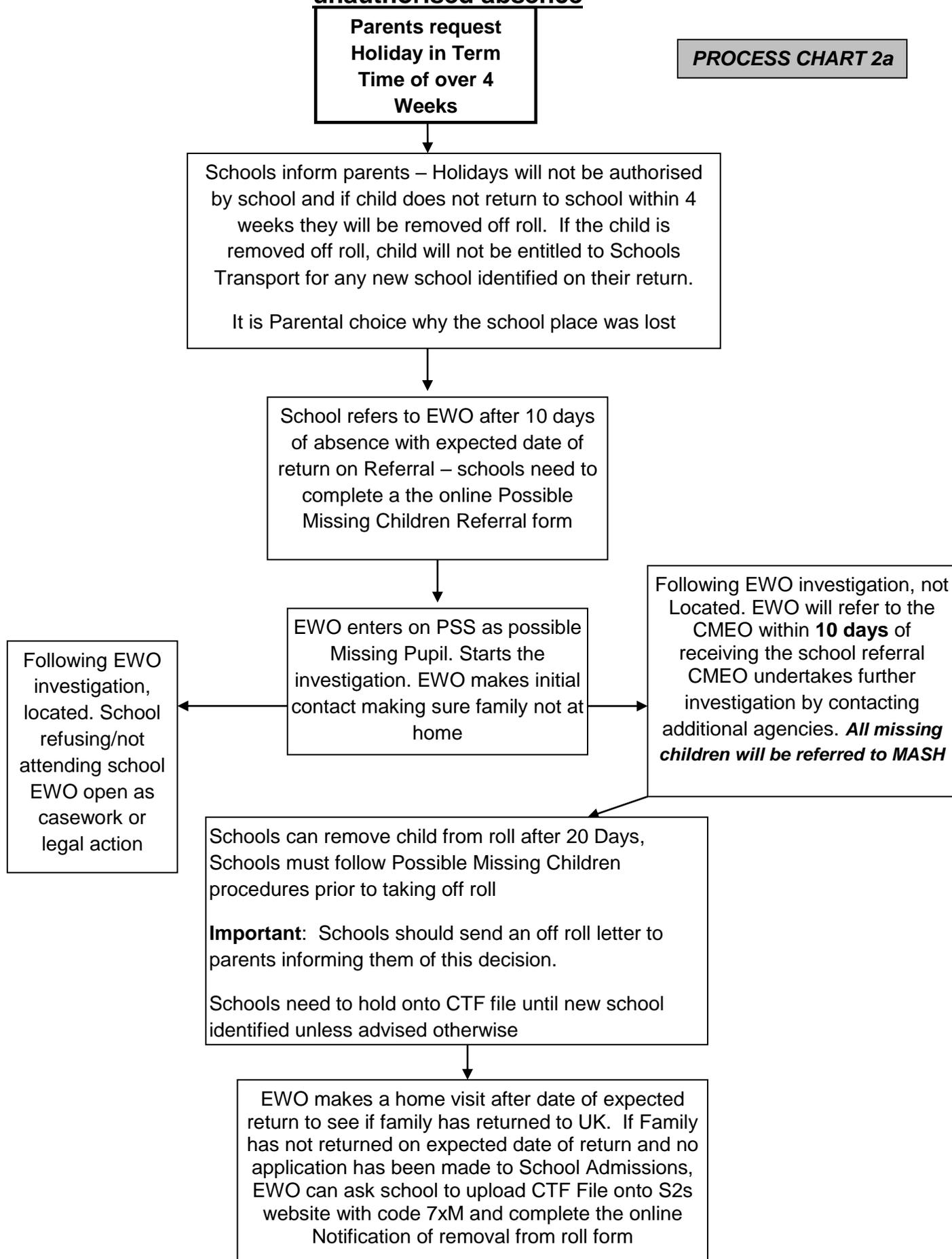


Key:
 CMEO = Children Missing Education Officer
 EWO = Education Welfare Officer
 PSS = Pupil Support Services
 S2S = School to School
 CTF=Common Transfer File
 CP&PM= Corporate Policy & Performance Management

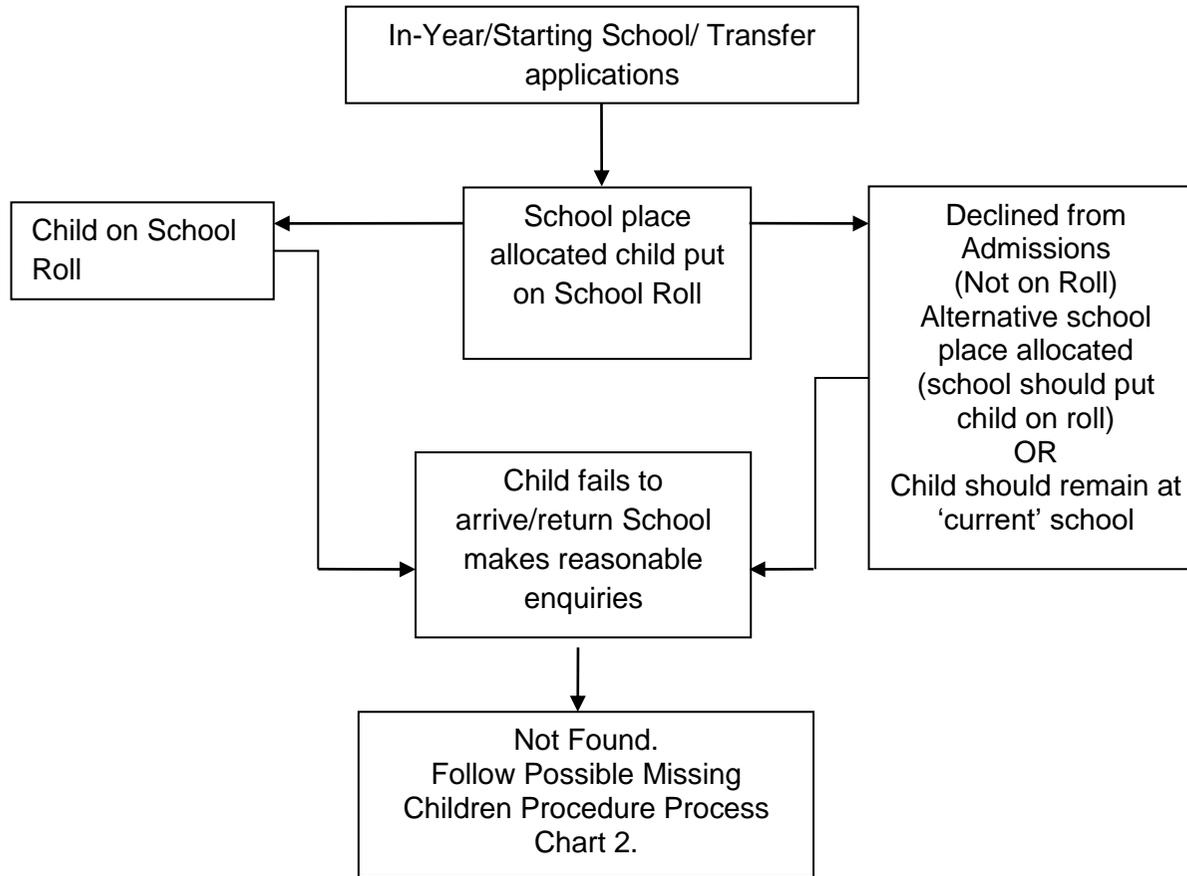
If you have child protection concerns the online Possible Missing Children Referral form will direct you to complete a MASH referral

Process of Removing a Child from Roll after 4 weeks of unauthorised absence

PROCESS CHART 2a



CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION AT START OF SCHOOL AND TRANSFER STAGE



Key:

CMEO = Children Missing Education Officer
EWO = Education Welfare Officer
PSS = Pupil Support Services

Letter Template for School USE ONLY

Name	Please	
Address 1	ask for:	
Address 2	Direct	
Address 3	line:	
Address 4	E-mail:	name.name@bedford.gov.uk
Address 5	Fax no:	
Postal Code	Your ref:	
	Our ref:	
	Date:	DD Month YYYY

To the Parent/Carer of <child's name>

Under The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, a pupil can be removed from a school's roll after 20 days of continuous unauthorised absence.

Due to your recent unauthorised leave of absence from <date left school> to <date due to return>, <child's name> has been absent from school for over 20 school days. Following a discussion with our Education Welfare Officer the school has decided to remove <child's name> from our school roll and report <child's name> as a Child Missing Education to the Local Authority.

Upon your return to the UK you will now need to make a formal application to Bedford Borough Council for another School place for <child's name>.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher