



Attendance Policy

Updated May 2023

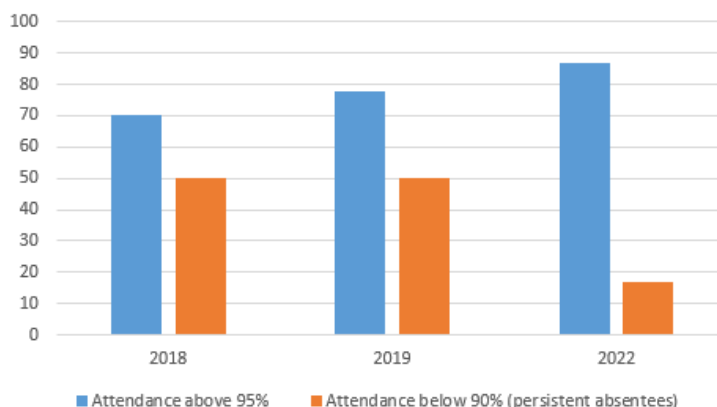
Aims

Walnut Tree Walk Primary School is committed to providing a full and beneficial educational experience to all its pupils. If this commitment is to succeed, good pupil attendance is imperative. The School will do all it can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils and reduce absence, including persistent absence. Any problems that impede full attendance will be identified and addressed speedily. Parents have a vital role to play in ensuring that pupils attend school regularly and on time. Individual parents will be contacted immediately if concerns arise over their child's attendance or punctuality with a view to resolving any problems that may have arisen. The School will seek advice from the Education Welfare Service should queries arise around pupil attendance.

Why this policy is so important

Good attendance very closely correlates with good outcomes. Children who do not attend school regularly fall behind their peers and do not achieve as well as they should, impacting negatively on their life chances. This is evidenced by national, local and our school data. In the last three years of SATs at Walnut Tree Walk, the graph below shows the performance of children whose attendance was good (above 95%) compared with those who are persistent absentees (below 90%). As you can see, the gap between what children who attend school fully achieve compared to those who are frequently absent is stark. Last year only 17% of children at WTW whose attendance was below 90% achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths, making the transition to secondary school more challenging for them (compared to 87% for good attenders).

Percentage of children reaching the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths at the end of Year 6



The figures for Lambeth as a whole show a similar pattern.

In addition, children who regularly miss school can experience more difficulties with their confidence and wellbeing, including developing and maintaining friendships.

Registration:

At Walnut Tree Walk Primary School an electronic registration system is used. The school will complete accurate registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session within 10 minutes of the start of the school day. Children in KS1 and KS2 are expected to be lined up when the whistle blows at 8:55am and registration will close at 9:05am. For the Early Years the school day starts at 8:45am and registration will close at 8:55am. Registration for the afternoon session will take place at 12:45pm for Reception, 1pm for KS1 and 1:30pm for KS2.

If a pupil arrives after the commencement of the registration period, they will report to reception and the parent must sign them in using the electronic sign in system.

Pupils arriving after the register has closed, without an acceptable reason, will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for that session.

School Attendance and the Law

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority. At Walnut Tree Walk Primary School, 95% and above is considered good attendance, and attendance below 90% is unsatisfactory and classed as persistent absence.

The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 take a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. Since September 2006, schools have been required to use statutory registration codes (see Appendix A, Attendance Codes).

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carers, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording pupils attendance or absence and in the latter case if authorised or unauthorised. A certified extract of the register can be used as evidence in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance or in seeking an Education Supervision Order in respect of a pupil. Registers must be kept for a minimum of 3 years following completion at the end of the academic school year.

Reporting to parents/carers

Every child's attendance is reported to parents and carers as part of their end of year report in July. Additionally, parents and carers of children with attendance levels that are unsatisfactory will be reported to more frequently through letters and meetings.

Procedures for following up absence/lateness

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to contact the school in the morning of every day of the child's absence. If this contact is not made, then the school will contact the parent/carer by telephone or via the school's internal parental mail system, which parents can access both online and on their mobile phones. The school requires that two additional emergency contact details (so three in total) are provided for every pupil, and if we do not get a response from the parent, the other contacts will be contacted. If this does not elicit an explanation of the absence and the absence continues, further correspondence will be made, which could include a home visit or a referral to Social Care.

If there is a continual issue with absence, a letter will be sent to the parent/carer. This letter will include the statistical information pertaining to how much learning time the child has missed in the classroom. Parent/carers will be invited to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the pupil from regularly attending school. A monthly review process will then begin with an aim towards noticeably improving the child's attendance.

If there is no sign of improvement upon this review, the School's Education Welfare Officer will be informed and the parent/carer will be invited in to the school for a meeting by the Headteacher. The parent/carer will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance.

Should there be no improvement in attendance following a panel meeting or should there be non-attendance of a panel meeting, the next step could be to initiate court proceedings or implement a fixed penalty notice.

Where a pupil is persistently late the parent/carer will be invited to a school based meeting.

At Walnut Tree Walk, we want to work with families to improve all pupil's attendance. Catherine Thompson, in her role as Wellbeing Lead, and Alicia Marku, in her role as Wellbeing Mentor, are both available to support families who are struggling with attendance or punctuality. This might be through informal phone calls and meetings, the purpose of which being to act in a supportive way to help improve attendance and remove any barriers to poor attendance.

Attendance data for every child is looked at monthly when a detailed audit carried out. However if there is no improvement in the attendance of children with persistent absence, then please see the table below explaining the actions the school will take:

% Attendance	School Action
Less than 90% attendance	A letter is sent home with your child's % attendance, offering a meeting and support/dialogue around improving attendance. From this point on attendance is closely monitored.
85%-90% attendance	A second letter is sent home requiring a meeting to discuss your child's attendance. A Fixed Penalty Notice may be applied for at this stage.
Less than 85% attendance	Referral to Lambeth Educational Welfare Service and preparations for Court action will be made unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Children Missing in Education (CME) – responsibilities of staff at Walnut Tree Walk

All staff in school have a responsibility for Children Missing in Education. Please see Appendix B for details of Lambeth's CME Policy which Walnut Tree Walk follows.

At Walnut Tree Walk, we will follow this procedure.

- Day 1: 9:30am: If no contact has been made by a parent, text to be sent by office staff. Any missing vulnerable children who office staff have been asked to monitor attendance for will be shared with Catherine and Andrew.
- 10am: If no response by 10am, a phone call must be made. Catherine and Andrew to be emailed names of any child absent with no explanation from parent. A second call will be made later in the day and attempts made to call all of the emergency contacts.
- Day 2-10: As above.
- Day 5: Member of SLT to visit home. This may happen earlier, including on Day 1, for any child the school considers as vulnerable.
- Day 10: See below for details of Lambeth's CME policy/ timeframes. Referral must be made to Education Welfare Officer.

Before you refer any students on your roll as CME to the Lambeth Local Authority

Have you done the following things?

- Has the family been contacted within 10 days of non-attendance? Have you written to the family?
- Have you called the family on their contact numbers?
- Has a home visit been made to the last known address?
- If the child has extended family have you contacted any possible aunts, uncles, grandparents to establish if they know where the child is.
- If the child has moved away, have you tried to establish where they have moved to?
- Have you requested forwarding addresses/ contact numbers/ email addresses for the family
- If the child has moved overseas have you requested the new address overseas and details of a new school

If you have carried out all the above, after 10 days of absence you must refer to the Education Welfare Officer for further investigation. Once the Education Welfare Officer has attempted to visit the family, write to the family and phone.

At 20 days of absence, in order to off roll the child, you must be able to provide evidence of having followed DFE off rolling regulations.

Please email CME referrals to the Inclusion Team's CME officer at Inclusion@lambeth.gov.uk

Term time holidays

Holidays taken during term time are strongly discouraged due to the impact on a child's education and will not be authorised under normal circumstances. You should not take a family holiday while the school is open. However, we do understand that some very rare circumstances may require families to leave the country or miss some school. All requests for time out of school must be made to the Headteacher. When deciding whether or not to authorise an absence, the Headteacher will take into account a child's percentage of attendance. Should attendance be below good (95%), then the Headteacher has the right not to authorise the absence with the possibility of a fixed penalty notice being implemented. The School may request to see flight tickets as evidence. A child may be taken off the school roll if they are absent for longer than 20 days.

Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Impact of poor attendance on attainment

Every absence or late arrival at school means crucial learning time is lost. Even short breaks from school can reduce a pupil's chances of succeeding at school by as much as a quarter, research by the Department for Education reveals (22nd February 2015). The research, based on extensive pupil absence figures and both GCSE and primary school test results, highlights the importance of ensuring more pupils regularly attend school, and ultimately leave with the qualifications needed to succeed in modern Britain.

The research highlights the striking differences in achievement between pupils with the best and worst attendance records. It shows:

- primary school pupils with no absence were around 1.5 times more likely to achieve the expected level, and 4.5 times more likely to achieve above the expected level, than pupils that missed 15 to 20% of key stage 2
- pupils with the lowest 5% of absence rates were more than 4 times more likely to achieve 5 good GCSEs, including English and Maths, and 22 times more likely to achieve the English Baccalaureate, than pupils with the highest 5% of absence rates

At Walnut Tree Walk in the 2016 and 2017 Key Stage 2 SATs, of the children whose attendance was below 90%, none of them achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths combined, demonstrating the negative impact poor attendance has. The data for 2018 and 2019 are illustrated on page one of this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and

for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors. The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

Policy agreed by Governors: 18th May 2023

Signed (Headteacher):

Signed (Chair of Governors):

Appendix A: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made

H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix B: Lambeth CME Policy and Procedure

Children Missing Education (CME) Policy

August 2022

Overview

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. This policy details how Lambeth identifies children who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise.

CME work is undertaken by the Inclusion Team via a named CME Officer as per the DfE guidance.

This policy is in line with the CME DfE statutory guidance (September 2016):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

and relates to children of compulsory school age (5-16 years).

Children Missing Education (CME) Definition

CME are children of compulsory school age who are not:

- registered pupils at a school
- receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school

Children Missing Education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm and exploitation and becoming Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) once leaving secondary education.

Local Authority (LA) Duties

LAs have a duty under section [436A of the Education Act 1996](#) to establish the identities of children in their boroughs of those who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise.

Those children identified as not receiving suitable education should be returned to full time education either at a school or in an alternative provision. Prompt action and early intervention are crucial to ensure that children are safe and receiving a suitable education.

LAs must undertake joint working and information sharing with other LAs and agencies. Lambeth achieves this by having close links with neighbouring boroughs in addition to national CME contact lists for all boroughs. All internal agencies must notify the Inclusion team of any pupil not in receipt of education so their status can be addressed.

Where there is concern for a child's welfare, Safeguarding procedures should be followed. If there is reason to suspect a crime has been committed, the police should also be involved with an obligation to take immediate action where there is a concern that a child's safety or wellbeing is at risk.

Lambeth has a CME Officer within the Inclusion team whose responsibilities include:

- Receiving all CME notifications
- Maintaining a register of all children reported as missing from education
- Tracking children until they are placed into suitable education

Parental Duties

Parents have a duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are receiving suitable full-time education.

Any pupil confirmed as not being in education and who remains out due to lack of family resolution will have a placement named by the Education Welfare Service and potentially legally enforced via a School Attendance Order (SAO).

School Duties

The Statutory Guidance states that:

- ***“All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are **about** to remove a pupil’s name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulations. This duty does not apply when a pupil’s name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points”***
- ***“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”***
“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”

Lambeth’s Admissions and Inclusion teams require submission of this information by all schools via completion and submission of Off Rolling Notification forms as detailed in Appendix 1.

It is the responsibility of the school to confirm that the pupil has joined the roll of another school and only remove the child’s name from the admissions register once the child has been added onto the destination’s register.

If a child is absent from school and their whereabouts is unknown, schools would need to follow 10-day absence procedures by informing Lambeth’s Education Welfare team so further enquiries may occur. Schools cannot remove a pupil from their roll until the 20-day period has elapsed and all parties have worked together to confirm status. Schools must notify the CME team of any such cases immediately, by completing and returning the CME/Off Rolling notification form via submission to the Inclusion inbox: inclusion@lambeth.gov.uk

Processes

Notification

Ways in which the LA are notified include:

- CME notification forms
- Direct notifications from parents/carers/family members/professionals
- Admissions

Tracking and Resolution

Tracking processes include:

- A CME log of core information of children who are not currently in suitable education
- Monthly Vulnerable Pupil Monitoring Group (VPMG) case analysis and review via Service Heads until resolved
- Returns from schools giving details of children who have been added and deleted from school registers
- Regular contact with families until resolution occurs
- Links with boroughs on a local and national basis to transfer cases in and out when children relocate

Internal systems will be interrogated to determine residency including:

- Housing
- Council Tax
- Benefits
- School Census returns

- Mosaic (Social Care)
- Admissions

Local Authorities (LAs) have access to the National CME contact list providing referral points to any borough of residence allowing swift notification and case transfer.

Where a family is identified, yet no school application is made, School Attendance Order (SAO) processes will be followed by the Education Welfare Service (EWS) providing a 15-day deadline within which to evidence the pupil is in receipt of suitable education or face the EWS naming a school at which the pupil must attend via legal escalation processes.

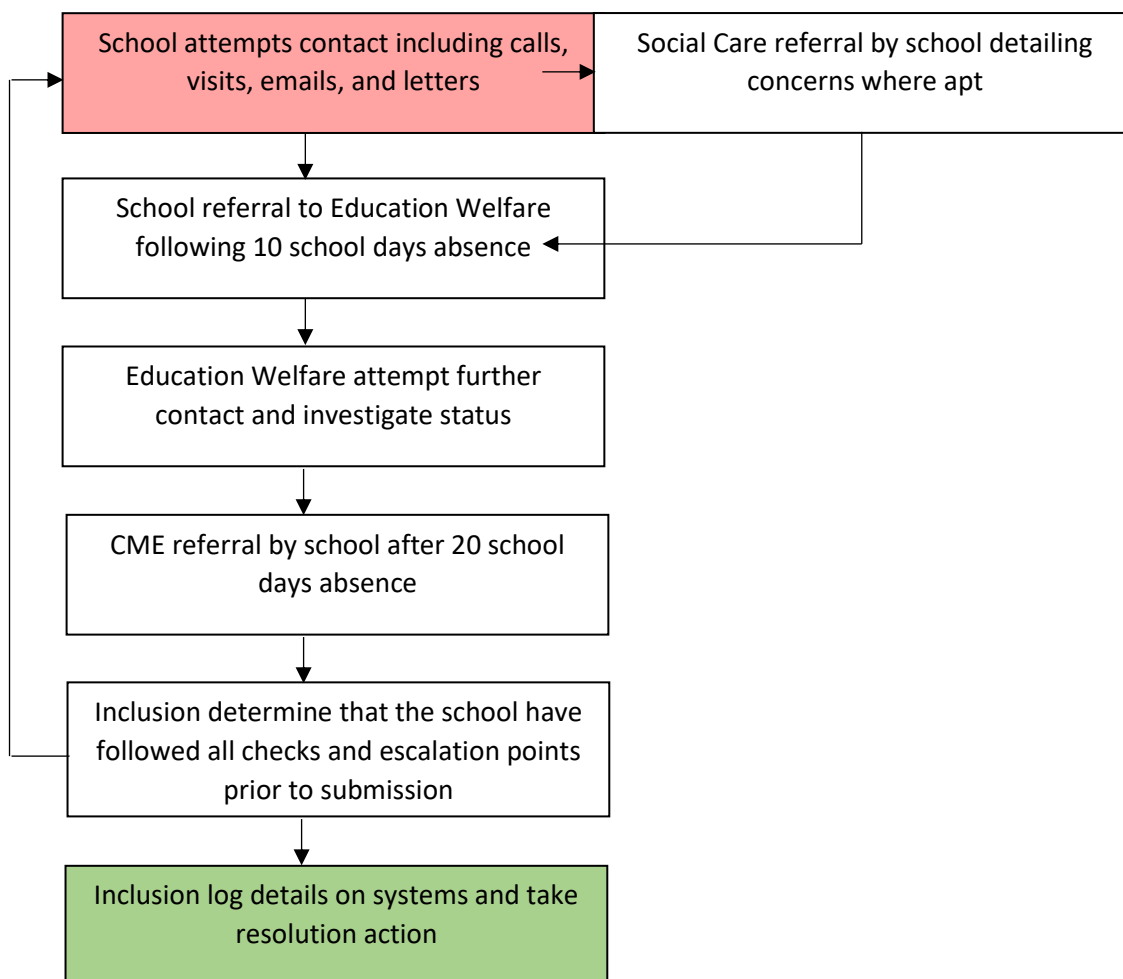
The VPMG panel reviews all CME cases identified and applies challenge to ensure there is resolution without delay with all cases remaining open until apt education is evidenced.

Details are also provided to Social Care via Annexe A submission while any involved parties are advised of status to ensure there is parental engagement with resolution to avoid escalation processes.

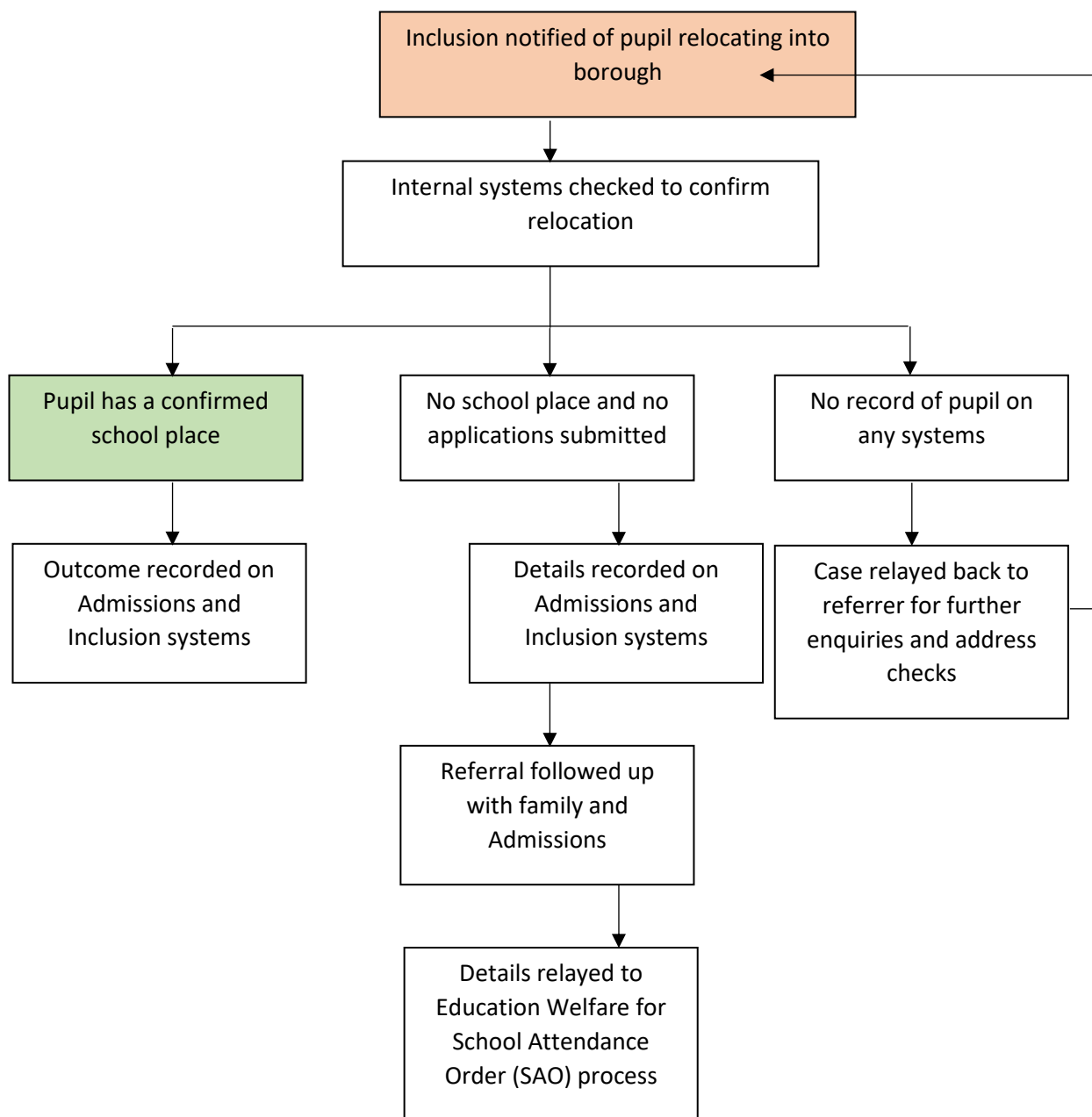
Most CME will reintegrate back into mainstream education. For those unable to be placed through the usual In Year Admissions process, the following routes are available:

- Fair Access Panel (FAP)
- Medical/Social Needs Panel (MEDSOC)
- Alternative Provision use

In Borough Children Missing Education (CME) Referral Process Flowchart



Out of Borough Children Missing Education (CME) Referral Process Flowchart



Appendix 1:

CME Referral Form

Before you refer any students on your roll as CME to the Lambeth Local Authority

Have you done the following things?

- Has the family been contacted within 10 days of non-attendance? Have you written to the family?
- Have you called the family on their contact numbers?
- Has a home visit been made to the last known address?
- If the child has extended family have you contacted any possible aunts, uncles, grandparents to establish if they know where the child is.
- If the child has moved away, have you tried to establish where they have moved to?

- Have you requested forwarding addresses/ contact numbers/ email addresses for the family?
- If the child has moved overseas, have you requested the new address overseas and details of a new school

If you have carried out all the above, after 10 days of absence you **must** refer to the Education Welfare Service for further investigation once the school have attempted to visit the family, in addition to written and telephone contact.

At 20 days of absence, to off roll the child, you must be able to provide evidence of having followed the DfE off rolling regulations: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/regulation/8/made>

Please email CME referrals to the Inclusion Team's CME officer at Inclusion@lambeth.gov.uk

Please fill out all the sections of this form as completely as possible

SCHOOL ROLL AMENDMENT NOTIFICATION			
Referring school			
Removal from roll	Y/N	Addition to roll	Y/N
Removal date		Addition date	
Grounds upon which the pupil is to be deleted (if applicable) If the pupil is a child missing education, please provide details/ evidence of home visits made/ phone calls and letters to the family to contact and locate the pupil.			
New school details- please provide new school in the UK or overseas. If the child is being Electively Home Educated please indicate		Start date	
Previous school (If applicable)		End date	

Pupil Details				
UPN:				
SEND	Does the child have an EHCP?			
Surname		Forename(s)		
Date of birth		Gender		Ethnicity
Home address	(Where has the pupil gone? Please provide details as accurately as possible.) New Address			
Phone Numbers				

Parent/Carer Details			
Parent/carer name		Parent/carer name	
Relationship to child		Relationship to child	

New Parent/Carer Details (if applicable)			
Parent/carer name		Parent/carer name	
Relationship to child		Relationship to child	

Where has the child gone? New destination details		
New Address:	Parent/ Carer contact details if they have changed	Email Address:
Please provide proof of oversea travel evidence -if the child has left the UK?	For students that have been withdrawn to be Electively Home Educated – please provide the parent’s withdrawal letter advising that they are taking parental responsibility for their child’s education at home.	

Completed forms should be relayed to:

CME Officer **and** the School Admissions Team

Inclusion Team: London Borough of Lambeth, PO Box 733, WINCHESTER SO23 5DH

Email: inclusion@lambeth.gov.uk and schooladmissions@lambeth.gov.uk

Phone: Lambeth Inclusion: 020 7926 6928

Lambeth School Admissions: 020 7926 9503

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and every child's right. For those pupils residing within Lambeth or who are leaving Lambeth, it is important that we do everything possible together to locate those children missing education, to ensure their safety and that they are accessing their education.

As Per the DFE Guidelines September 2016 it is the responsibility of all schools to:

Notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulations¹ (Annex A)ⁱ. 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 (see Annex A).

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) (see Annex A).

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"
