

PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL

Date:	Monday 14th April 2025
Time:	4.30 pm
Venue:	Mandela Room, Town Hall

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Fire Evacuation Procedure

In the event the fire alarm sounds, attendees will be advised to evacuate the building via the nearest fire exit and assemble at the Bottle of Notes opposite MIMA.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

4. Minutes - People Scrutiny Panel - 24 March 2025 3 - 6

5. Children Missing Education (CME) - Draft Final Report 7 - 36

Recommendation: That the Panel considers the content of the draft Final Report and agrees recommendations for inclusion in the report.

6. Overview and Scrutiny Board Update

The Chair will provide a verbal update on matters considered at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 9 April 2025.

7. Any other urgent items which in the opinion of the Chair, may be considered.

Charlotte Benjamin
Director of Legal and Governance Services

Town Hall
Middlesbrough
Friday 4 April 2025

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors: E Clynch (Chair), J Banks (Vice-Chair), L Hurst, D Jackson, M McClintock, T Mohan, M Nugent, S Platt, S Tranter, Z Uddin, G Wilson and L Young.

Assistance in accessing information

Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information please contact Claire Jones / Chris Lunn, 01642 729112 / 01642 729742, claire_jones@middlesbrough.gov.uk / chris_lunn@middlesbrough.gov.uk

PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the People Scrutiny Panel was held on Monday 24 March 2025.

PRESENT: Councillors E Clynych (Chair), D Jackson, T Mohan, S Platt, S Tranter, G Wilson and L Young

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: S McKenna and B Murphy (Tees, Esk and Wear Valley)

OFFICERS: J Dixon, L Grabham, R Jenkins and C Jones

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors J Banks, M McClintock and Z Uddin

24/64 **WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and explained the fire evacuation procedures.

24/65 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Name of Member	Type of Interest	Item / Nature of Business
Cllr E Clynych	Non-Pecuniary	Employed within education setting.
Cllr D Jackson	Non-Pecuniary	School Governor.
Cllr S Tranter	Non-Pecuniary	Employed within education setting.
Cllr L Young	Non-Pecuniary	Employed within education setting.

24/66 **MINUTES - PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL - 17 FEBRUARY 2025**

The minutes of the People Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 17 February 2025 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

SUSPENSION OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 4.13.2 – ORDER OF BUSINESS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 4.57, the Scrutiny Panel agreed to vary the order of business to deal with the Agenda Items in the following order: 6, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

24/67 **TEES, ESK AND WEAR VALLEYS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST (TEWV) - CQC INSPECTION - REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

The Chief Nurse and Urgent Care Manager, Tees, Esk and Wear Valley (TEWV), were in attendance to present the TEWV CQC Inspection Report of the Trust's AMH Crisis, Acute Liaison and Health Based Places of Safety Services.

A targeted inspection commenced on 11 June 2024 and included on-site inspections of clinical teams, discussions with people who use services and their families/ carers and online Focus Groups with Trust Partners (including Commissioners, Local Authorities, GPs and the British Transport Police).

The CQC Inspection Report was published 6 February 2025, achieving an overall rating of 'Good'. It was noted that 181 Improvement actions were complete, with 9 actions in progress (within target) and 1 recommendation in progress (behind target). The recommendation behind target related to the Trust's Harm Minimisation Policy and Members were assured that the Policy had been revised – now entitled 'Safety and Risk Management Policy' – and that a full training plan in respect of the Policy had been developed. The only part of the action that remained outstanding was to ensure that training was embedded throughout the Trust.

The presentation included details on:

- Key Findings of the Inspection
- Analysis of the Inspection Findings
- Improvement Actions
- Next Steps

An Improvement Plan was being collaboratively developed to address improvement actions resulting from the inspection.

A Member raised a query around oversight of the improvement plan and it was confirmed that monitoring would be undertaken by the Executive Directors Group and the Trust's Quality Assurance Committee.

The Chair thanked the TEWV representatives for their attendance and presentation.

AGREED that the information, as presented, be noted.

24/68

ADULT SOCIAL CARE - CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) INSPECTION

The Interim Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration was joined by the Mayor to present the outcome of the recent CQC inspection of the Council's Adult Social Care Service. It was clarified that the inspection related solely to Adult Social Care provision by Middlesbrough Council (not care homes).

Members were advised that this was the first inspection by the CQC of Adult Social Care at the Council, therefore there was no previous benchmark position. The following inspection timeline was presented:

- LAIR (Local Authority Inspection Return) submitted 11 June 2024
- Onsite inspection took place at the end of October 2024
- Draft report received 11 December 2024
- Final report received 21 February 2025

The overall CQC rating was 62% 'Requires Improvement' and was assessed across nine quality standards. Members noted that the score was 1% point from a 'Good' rating.

Evidence was gathered in the following four key areas:

- Peoples Experience
- Feedback from Staff & Leaders
- Feedback from Partners
- Processes

The following areas for improvement were noted:

- Significant waiting times impacting on peoples' outcomes, including for those waiting for a planned review.
- Unpaid carers; large waiting lists, lack of communication.
- Housing availability; particularly for those presenting as homeless / and people who required accessible adapted accommodation.
- Equality, diversity and inclusion not embedded at a strategic level.
- No defined plan around "co-production".
- Lack of assurance at CEO level with regard to obligation's relating to the Care Act and safeguarding
- Lack of ownership corporately with regard to ASC – though signs this was changing.
- Scrutiny & Data – data development in early stages, there was a need to create processes to share with frontline staff. Gaps in data were noted.

The following next steps were presented to the Panel:

- Expand workforce recruitment efforts, reducing reliance on agency staff and increasing staff retention.
- Launch a refreshed EDI strategy, incorporating structured self-assessment tools such as 'Diverse by Design'.
- Develop a clear coproduction strategy, ensuring people with lived experience had a

voice in service design.

- Enhance data-sharing practices, making performance insights accessible to frontline staff.
- Improve scrutiny and accountability mechanisms, ensuring that adult social care was prioritised at the highest levels of leadership.
- Focus on prevention and early intervention, reducing long-term demand for intensive social care services and consideration of neighbourhood working.

The Interim Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration suggested to the People Scrutiny Panel that a regular item be added to its agenda for the Committee to ensure ongoing discussion of the actions/key milestones within the improvement plan.

AGREED as follows:

1. **That the information, as presented, be noted.**
2. **That a regular item be added to the People Scrutiny Panel's agenda to monitor the improvement plan.**

24/69

HOMELESSNESS - FURTHER EVIDENCE

The Access and Change Together (ACT) Lead delivered a presentation in relation to the Panel's investigation into Homelessness.

The presentation included information around each Term of Reference previously identified by the Panel, as follows:

1. To identify the current levels of homelessness in Middlesbrough.

The number of homelessness assessments and duties, from 2020 to the present were delivered. This showed a year-on-year rise, with the most recent figure of 1185 assessments and duties recorded for Q1-Q3, 2024-2025.

Rough sleeper figures were also presented, with the most recent figure of 40 across the month of February 2025 being discussed.

2. To understand the relevant section(s) of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 in respect of Relief Duty and the Council's responsibilities.

Members were briefed on the Prevention and Relief Duties brought in by the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 which added to existing duties from Housing Act 1996.

Specific reference was made to Sections 195 and 189B the Housing Act 1996. Section 195 of the Act related to the 'prevention duty'. This placed a duty on Housing Authorities to work with people under threat of homelessness within 56 days to help prevent them from becoming homeless. Section 189B of the 1996 Act, the 'relief duty' required Housing Authorities to help people who were homeless to secure accommodation.

Detailed information in relation to the Council's responsibilities under these Sections of the Act, and other applicable legislation, was contained in the presentation and included information on timeframes in which the Council must discharge specific duties.

3. To consider the Council's use of temporary accommodation in the reduction of homelessness. Consideration to be given to the impact on families, their health and wellbeing.

A snapshot number of households in temporary accommodation was presented, with the most recent figure of 117 households shown as of February 2025

Members noted that interim accommodation was only offered if the Local Authority had a reason to believe an applicant was homeless, eligible for assistance and had a priority need for rehousing. The LA would carry out enquiries and look at what duty was owed. If a main duty was owed, the applicant would be then offered temporary accommodation, which would be their accommodation until the homelessness duty was discharged.

Middlesbrough Council had a temporary accommodation policy which took into account the

needs of the family, including children's education, wellbeing and involvement with services.

Members were briefed on Middlesbrough's Temporary Accommodation Commissioning Framework which came into place in early 2024, as follows:

- Set nightly rates were paid.
 - Framework was opened periodically to attract new providers to the market.
 - Requested range of property types and locations (ideally Middlesbrough) to suit different household types and needs including accessibility.
 - The framework had helped significantly reduce hotel use.
4. To consider Local Authority and multi-agency approaches to tackling the issue of homelessness and the resource implications around this.

Current multi-agency approaches were discussed, which included:

- Rough Sleeping: Partnership working with housing organisations and charities was discussed. The Rough Sleeper Action Group was held monthly with a range of organisations including Cleveland Police, Probation, Adult Social Care, Accommodation providers, Substance Use and other Local Authorities.
- Young People and Care Leavers: Protocols for Homeless 16/17-year-olds and Care Leavers were underway. Members were provided with the protocols, for information.
- Children: Weekly practice clinic with Early Help & Stronger Families colleagues and attendance at MACH meetings.
- Domestic Abuse: Partnership working with Domestic Abuse services around homelessness prevention where appropriate - Looking into legal orders, Sanctuary Scheme etc.
- Adults – Attendance at safeguarding meetings for clients and attendance at High-Risk Adults Panel (HRAP) and MAPPA
- Escalation Panel - Introduced in February 2025 and aimed to address cases which required support from senior managers to resolve.

Members raised queries around the following:

- Domestic abuse support and options for victims to remain in their homes. Members were advised that support was always victim-led and that only those wishing to seek legal orders to remain in properties would be supported to do so.
- Adapted properties for young people and waiting lists. Members were advised that liaison with housing providers on this issue was ongoing and that adapted properties remain more difficult to source.

AGREED that the information, as presented, be noted.

24/70

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD UPDATE

The Chair provided an update on items discussed at the recent Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 19 March 2025, as follows:

- Scrutiny Structures 2024/2025.
- LGA Peer Review and CQC Inspection Update.
- Executive Forward Plan.

24/71

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING - 14 APRIL 2025 AT 4.30 P.M.

The next meeting of the People Scrutiny Panel had been scheduled for Monday, 14 April 2025 at 4.30 p.m. in the Mandela Room, Town Hall.

24/72

ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.

The Chair advised that the Panel's draft final report, 'Children Missing Education (CME)' would be circulated to members, week commencing 31 March 2025. Members were asked to consider potential recommendations for the report, which would be discussed and agreed at the next meeting on 14 April 2025.

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Final Report of the People Scrutiny Panel CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION (CME)

CONTENTS

THE AIM OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW	Page 2
TERMS OF REFERENCE	Page 2
BACKGROUND INFORMATION	Page 2
SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE: Term of Reference A - To understand the current position in terms of Middlesbrough Council's Children Missing Education to examine key data and demographics/characteristics in respect of CME in Middlesbrough and compare with regional and national statistics.	Page 3
Term of Reference B – To examine how the Local Authority (LA) works with children, young people and their families, and education providers to identify and support CME (e.g. referrals and proactive identification).	Page 7
Term of Reference C – To investigate what additional resources, if any, could be accessed to assist with CME.	Page 11
Term of Reference D – To consider any potential implications/impact/challenges of CME on providers and services.	Page 12
Term of Reference E – To consider the challenges of transient communities and how the Ethnic Minority Achievement Team (EMAT) track and work with newly arrived families.	Page 13
Term of Reference F – To consider the increasing number of permanently excluded children in respect of CME.	Page 16
CONCLUSIONS	TBC
RECOMMENDATIONS	TBC
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	TBC
ACRONYMS	TBC
BACKGROUND PAPERS	TBC
APPENDIX A	TBC
APPENDIX B	TBC

THE AIMS OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW

1. The aims of the review are to:
 - Examine and understand the current issues relating to CME in Middlesbrough.
 - Identify suggestions for developing support for applicable children and their families.
2. The review also aims to assist the LA in achieving the following priorities from the Council Plan 2024-2027:
 - **A successful and ambitious town** - Improve attainment in education and skills; and
 - **A healthy place** - Promote inclusivity for all.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

3. The Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Panel's review, are as follows:
 - A. To understand the current position in terms of Middlesbrough Council's CME; to examine key data and demographics/characteristics in respect of CME in Middlesbrough; and compare with regional and national statistics.
 - B. To examine how the LA works with children, young people and their families, and education providers to identify and support CME (e.g. referrals and proactive identification).
 - C. To investigate what additional resources, if any, could be accessed to assist with CME.
 - D. To consider any potential implications/impact/challenges of CME providers and services.
 - E. To consider the challenges of transient communities and how EMAT track and work with newly arrived families.
 - F. To consider the increasing number of permanently excluded children in respect of CME.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. The Department for Education (DfE) (GOV.UK, 2024a) defines CME as a particular subset of children who are at increased risk and are not attending school. To be classified as a child missing education, children must satisfy all three of the following criteria:
 - Be of compulsory school age.
 - Not be registered at a school.
 - Not be receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.
5. The various categories of CME are as follows:
 - a) Children who are referred by schools to the Authority as missing.
 - b) Children who are EHE, but the Authority has deemed are not receiving an adequate education.
 - c) Children who have recently arrived in the town and are awaiting a school place.
 - d) Children who have been permanently excluded from school and are not in a full time alternative setting.
 - e) Children in the Authority's care for whom full time education has not yet been secured.

6. According to the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE, 2025), CME may be at significant risk of:
 - Not meeting their academic potential and underachieving.
 - Becoming NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) in later life.
 - Being victims of harm, abuse or exploitation.
 - Involvement in criminal or gang-related activity.
7. There is also a higher proportion of children recorded as missing education when there is a link to poverty, deprivation or involvement with social services.
8. Guidance for LAs, issued by the DfE (GOV.UK, 2024a) indicates that there should be robust policies and procedures in place to enable them to meet their duties and responsibilities in relation to these children. These include ensuring that there are effective tracking and enquiry systems in place; and appointing a named person to whom schools and other agencies can refer. In Middlesbrough, CME Officers are in post to fulfil this role.
9. Under Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (GOV.UK, 2025) there is a duty for LAs to make arrangements to establish the identities of CME who reside in the respective area; are not registered pupils at a school; and are not receiving a suitable education. Those applicable children should be returned to full time education either at a school or alternative provision.
10. In addition, LAs also have a range of other duties, powers and expectations, which include:
 - Arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils from the sixth school day of exclusion.
 - Serving notice on parents requiring them to satisfy the LA that the child is receiving suitable education.
 - Issuing School Attendance Orders (SAOs) to parents who fail to satisfy the LA that their child is receiving suitable education, if the LA deems it appropriate that the child should attend school.
 - Prosecute or issue penalty notices to parents who fail to ensure their school-registered child/ren attend school regularly.
11. Where there is concern for a child's welfare, this should be referred to the LA's Children's Social Care department. If there is reason to suspect a crime has been committed, the police should also be involved. In Middlesbrough, the CME Officer will initiate and pursue appropriate enquiries to trace the pupil and regularly review the case until the pupil is re-engaged in education, or was found to be resident in and known to another LA.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE:

Term of Reference A - To understand the current position in terms of Middlesbrough Council's CME; to examine key data and demographics/characteristics in respect of CME in Middlesbrough; and compare with regional and national statistics.

12. CME are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education other than at a school. This includes children who are awaiting a school place and children in receipt of unsuitable education, including those children that LAs are supporting to place into suitable education.

National Picture

13. As per the table below, the DfE's most recent data (census date in Autumn 2024, Thursday 3 October 2024) shows that LAs reported 39,200 children missing education, which was an increase of 6,200 from an estimated 33,000 in the previous Autumn term.
14. The rate of CME was 0.5% of the population of comparable ages for children aged 5 to 16 years. At the same time, Middlesbrough's rate of CME was higher than the national rate at 0.6%.
15. The information in this release is based on the EHE and CME data collection. The collection from LAs started in Autumn 2022 and became mandatory in Autumn 2024. The proportion of LAs providing data reached 100% for the first time in Autumn 2024.

Children missing education at census date, autumn 2022/23 to autumn 2024/25							
	2022/23 Autumn term	2022/23 Spring term	2022/23 Summer term	2023/24 Autumn term	2023/24 Spring term	2023/24 Summer term	2024/25 Autumn term
Number of CME on census date	24,700	24,700	28,100	33,000	36,700	36,600	39,200
Rate of CME on census day by population	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%

(SOURCE: GOV.UK, 2024a)

Local Picture

16. When comparing LAs, the following statistics indicate that Middlesbrough has the highest rate of CME in the Tees Valley area:

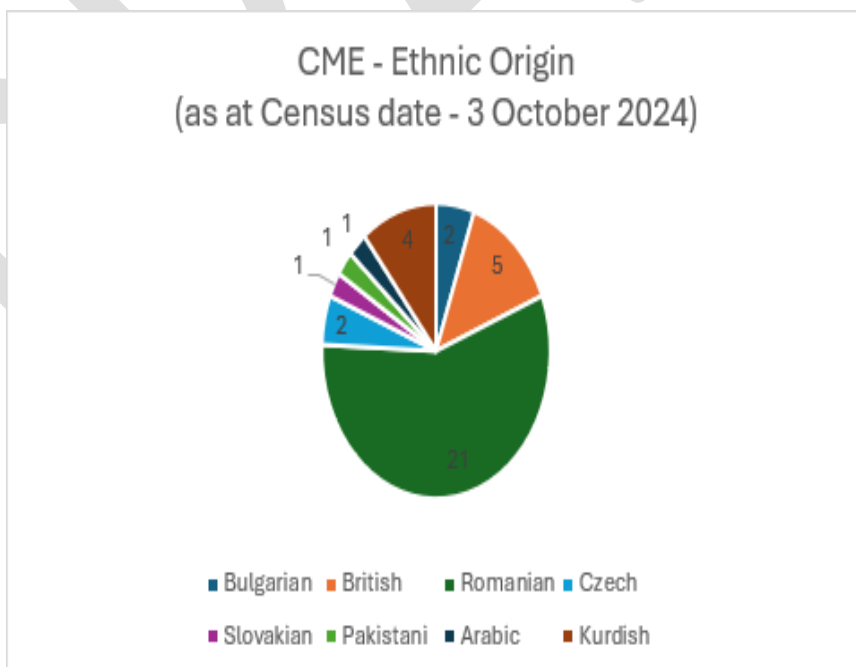
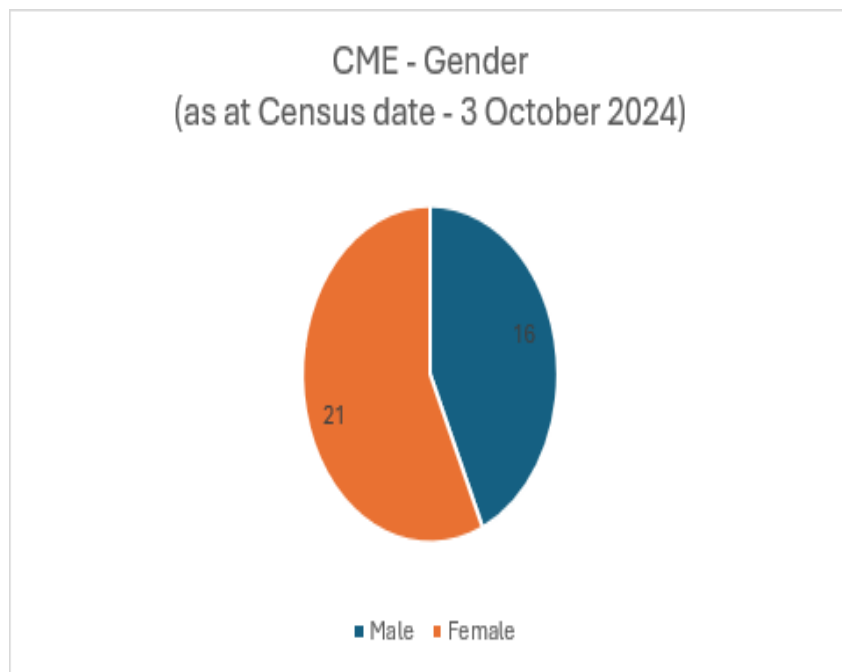
Rate of CME on census day by population (2024/25 Autumn term)

Local Authority	Rate of CME by population
Darlington	0.1%
Hartlepool	0.2%
Middlesbrough	0.6%
Redcar and Cleveland	0.4%
Stockton	0.1%

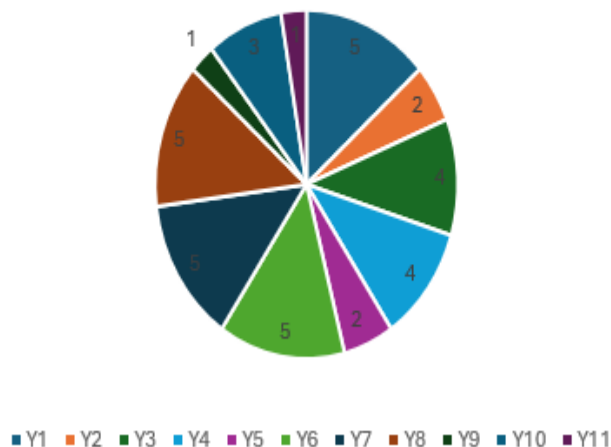
(SOURCE: GOV.UK, 2024a)

Middlesbrough

17. As at 3rd October 2024 (census date), Middlesbrough had 37 children missing from education
The demographics were as follows:



CME - Year Group
(as at Census date - 3 October 2024)



Supplementary Evidence

18. Following presentation of the CME statistics to the Panel during the formal meetings, Members were keen to understand whether the statistics had changed or remained static. To this end, officers sought to obtain more recent data. The following table shows the demographics (i.e. gender, age/year group and ethnicity) of CME in Middlesbrough the course of the scrutiny review:

	Total CME	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25
		37	26	29	38	29
GENDER	Male	16	11	12	18	12
	Female	21	15	17	20	17
	Total	37	26	29	38	29

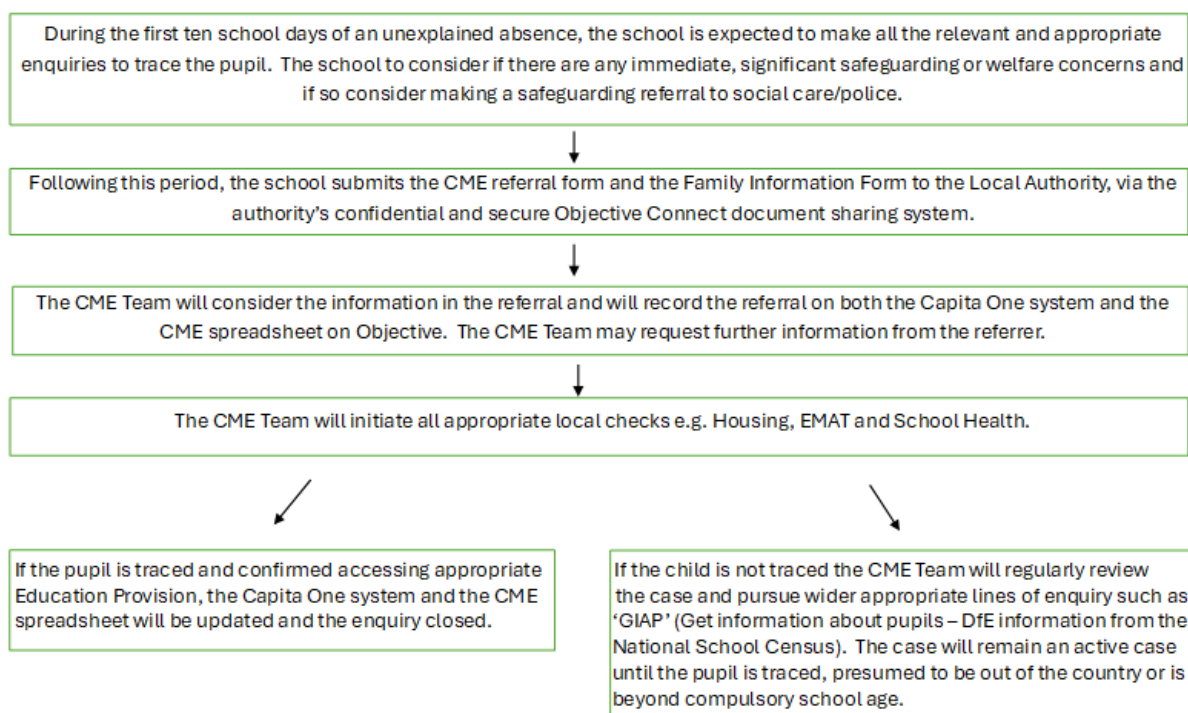
YEAR GROUP	Reception & Nursery	0	0	0	1	1
	Year 1	5	6	5	5	5
	Year 2	2	3	3	5	4
	Year 3	4	3	4	4	4
	Year 4	4	1	1	1	0
	Year 5	2	1	2	3	2
	Year 6	5	2	3	3	1
	Year 7	5	4	4	6	5
	Year 8	5	0	2	2	1
	Year 9	1	1	1	4	3
	Year 10	3	3	4	3	2
	Year 11	1	2	0	1	1
	Total	37	26	29	38	29

ETHNICITY	Bulgarian	2	0	0	0	0
	British	5	3	4	4	3
	Romanian	21	22	21	25	21
	Czech	2	1	3	4	2
	Slovakian	1	0	0	0	0
	Pakistani	1	0	0	0	0
	Arabic	1	0	0	0	0
	Kurdish	4	0	0	0	0
	Nigerian	0	0	0	1	1
	Afghan	0	0	1	1	0
	Iranian	0	0	0	1	0
	Kuwaiti	0	0	0	2	02
	Total	37	26	29	38	29

Term of Reference B – To examine how the LA works with children, young people and their families, and education providers to identify and support CME (e.g. referrals and proactive identification).

19. Guidance issued by the DfE advises that the Education and Inspections Act 2006, Part 1, Section 4 places a statutory duty on all LAs to arrange to identify all children of compulsory school age missing from education in their area (DfE August 2024b).
20. The Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2016 (GOV.UK, 2023) placed new statutory duties on all schools from the 1 September 2016 requiring them to inform the LA whenever they were about to remove a pupil from their registers.
21. Circumstances around individual cases can be complex and are not the same for every child. There are a variety of reasons why children miss education, which may include:
 - Children not entering the educational system at the appropriate time.
 - Children being removed from school by their parents due to poor attendance and/or issues at school, which may include bullying, illness and attendance issues/exclusion.
 - The availability of suitable school places when moving to a new area.
 - Children/families having difficult personal circumstances, for example, homelessness/living in temporary accommodation or refuge, or experiencing long-term medical/mental health problems.
 - Children with SEND who may not receive the necessary support in mainstream schooling.
22. In Middlesbrough, the Access to Education service is responsible for children who are missing from education. The team uses a proactive system for finding information about CME, to trace and ensure the return of children to education.
23. The CME Officer monitors information given to the Council by parents, schools, and other agencies (e.g. Child Health Information Service, Child Benefits Agency and Border Force) about children missing from education. For example, excluded pupils, children whose families are seeking a school place, and pupils not enrolled at a school for other reasons.
24. The following diagram illustrates the referrals process currently in place at Middlesbrough Council:

CME Referral Process



Children Looked After – CME

25. The reasons why LAC may not be in school varies, but they usually fit one of the following criteria:

- They have special needs and are awaiting a suitable specialist provision to become available.
- They have recently come into care and have had no school place prior to this. Therefore, a suitable school is in the process of being identified.
- They have moved to an out-of-town location for safeguarding reasons.

26. The most recent statistics released by the Children's Commissioner showed that, in March 2022, across the UK there were approximately 1,363 Looked After Children (LAC) (2.7%) who were not in school. This included children who were not registered at any school and were not receiving suitable education otherwise. By LA, this varied from 0% to 13.4% (Children's Commissioner, 2023a).

27. Data collected from 149 of the 152 local authorities in England showed that, of the 50,846 school-age children who had been in care for at least four weeks in March 2022, 1,363 (2.7%) were missing from school. Of these children:

- 541 were not enrolled with any school or education provider at all;
- 673 were in unregistered settings, such as private tuition, home education or a patchwork of other provision that is not inspected; and
- 149 were enrolled in a school but missing without authorisation 100% of the time.

28. At the 20 January 2025 meeting, Members heard that there were 14 LAC missing from education, which equated to 3.5% of the overall CME cohort. Further to this, 10 (71%) had an Education, Health and Care Plan and 4 (29%) received SEND support.
29. As per the table below, a trend analysis showed that LAC missing from education had risen from 4 (1.2% of the cohort) in September 2023 to 14 (4.2%) in December 2024. Further figures were received upon the drafting of the final report, to include January and February 2025.

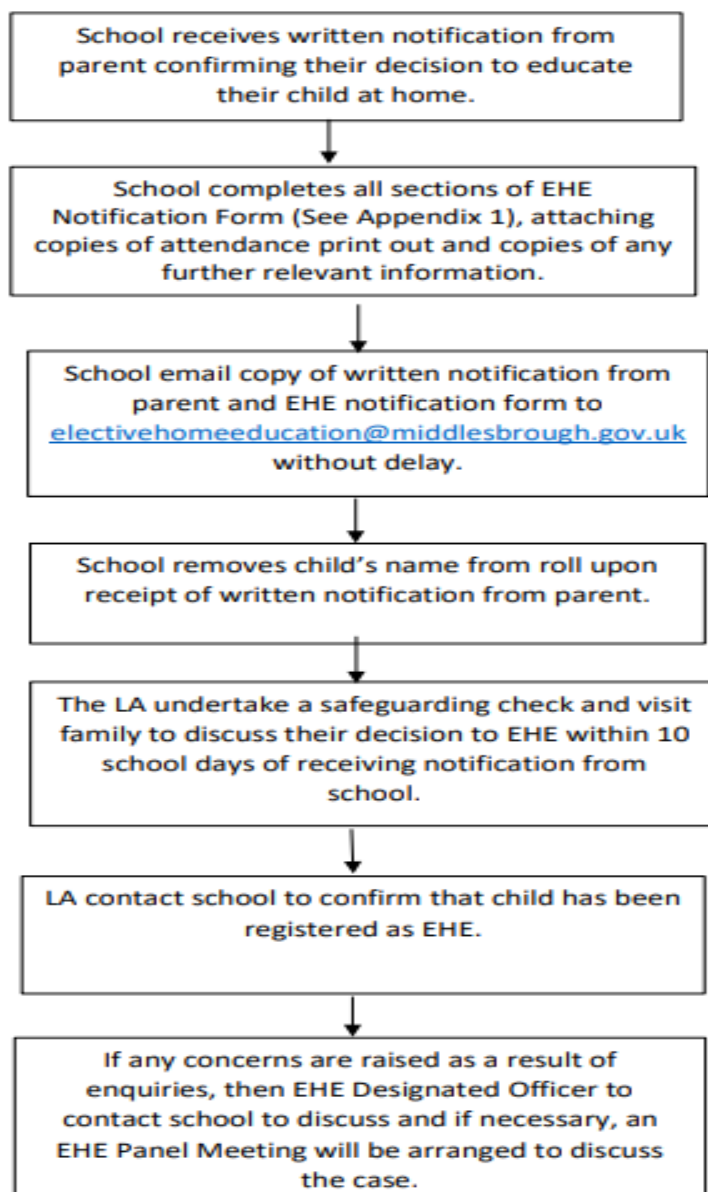
Trend	
September 2023	4 (1.2%)
October 2023	4 (1.2%)
November 2023	5 (1.5%)
December 2023	6 (1.7%)
January 2024	8 (2.3%)
February 2024	11 (3.1%)
March 2024	7 (1.9%)
April 2024	7 (1.9%)
May 2024	7 (1.9%)
June 2024	7 (2.0%)
July 2024	8 (2.3%)
September 2024	15 (4.4%)
October 2024	13 (3.8%)
November 2024	14 (4.1%)
December 2024	14 (4.2%)
January 2025	10 (2.9%)
February 2025	11 (3.2%)

30. Virtual Schools were established by the Children and Families Act 2014. The role of the Virtual School Middlesbrough (VSM) to promote the educational achievement of LAC and children previously in care. This includes children with a Social Worker and from September 2024, children in kinship care. The Head of Virtual School works closely with Schools, Social Workers and other professionals to share information and ensure that all parties are aware of the child's educational needs and progress.
31. The VSM plays a crucial role in tracking and monitoring the educational progress of children in care and assists with attendance monitoring, and Personal Education Plans (PEPs).

Elective Home Education (EHE)

32. The King's Speech in July 2024 set out plans to require LAs to maintain a register of CME children and EHE children.
33. Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that every child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full-time education. This must be suitable to the age, ability and aptitude of the child and to any SEN the child may have.

34. EHE is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home, or at home and in some other way which they choose - instead of sending them to school full time.
35. Once schools receive notification from parents on their intentions to 'home school' their child(ren), the school has a duty to notify the LA without delay that the child is to be removed from their school roll.
36. The school should then follow the procedure below:



37. The EHE team reviews the quality of education that parents are providing for their children. Where this is deemed to be inadequate, the team will make arrangements for the child to return to school. This may involve the use of statutory powers by way of a School Attendance Order (SAO)
38. At the 20 January 2025 meeting, the Panel was advised that there were around 272 EHE children in Middlesbrough. This represents a significant upward trend in comparison to the figure of 120, two years ago. The Panel recognises that schools are encouraged to take attendance issues seriously, however that there is a concern that the more pressure placed on

parents, the more likely they are to remove children from school to commence EHE. The Panel acknowledges that this is particularly apparent for children with significant attendance issues and where SAOs were in progress.

Term of Reference C – To investigate what additional resources, if any, could be accessed to assist with CME.

39. During the evidence-gathering process, a number of Middlesbrough's Primary and Secondary Schools were approached and invited to participate in the review. A copy of the correspondence sent to school Headteachers is shown at Appendix A. Representatives were asked for their views on how CME affected their schools and if there were any specific support/improvements that could be identified. The Panel was particularly interested in matters relating to suspensions/permanent exclusion and transient communities.
40. Overall, two Secondary Schools and one Primary School indicated that they wished to participate:
- A representative from Secondary School A attended the Panel meeting on 20 January 2025 to provide information and respond to Members' queries.
 - A representative from Secondary School B had agreed to attend the 17 February 2025 meeting of the Panel, but unfortunately needed to submit late apologies due to unforeseen circumstances.
 - A representative from Primary School A provided a written statement to the Panel, which facilitated discussion at the 17 February 2025 meeting.

Secondary School A

41. At the 20 January 2025 meeting, the representative of Secondary School A, expressed their views that CME was a national problem but felt that Middlesbrough's deep-entrenched issue of poverty simply magnified the issues.
42. The representative advised that an increase in the number of family support workers would be beneficial and felt that the Early Help model in Middlesbrough could be improved. In addition, the representative was of the view that Middlesbrough does have issues with permanent exclusion, however the LA has limited resources to assist schools with this.
43. The representative also felt that the level of resource within the existing SEND provision was insufficient and may influence the number of CME. It was envisaged that although Middlesbrough has SEN facilities rated as outstanding, waiting lists could be significant. These views were echoed by the Head of Virtual School as a contributory factor of the increase in LAC missing from education. Members note that there is difficulty in finding school places for SEN; and therefore, an instability in places and insufficiency nationally has driven the increase in the number of CME.
44. Members are of the view that these issues could be examined further by the service area.

Primary School A

45. Primary School A, submitted the following information in writing, which was considered by the Panel at the 17 February 2025 meeting:

"At our school, we have a lot of families that move between authorities and as a school, we sometimes struggle to get an update on the child/ren and their wellbeing from parents."

We sometimes can't provide support to families that need to get their child in to school due to language barriers and when they have left the area abruptly, not giving school the opportunity to discuss their options with them.

We feel like 20 days is a long time and a lot can change in family circumstances during this time and when the child is in a different authority there is no way of ensuring that they are safe."

46. As the school's statement refers to issues of CME and transient communities, this is further discussed within Term of Reference E: 'To consider the challenges of transient communities and how the EMAT track and work with newly arrived families.'

Term of Reference D – To consider any potential implications/impact/challenges of CME on providers and services

47. Over the course of the investigation, it became apparent that service providers face a number of potential barriers. Equally, however, similar barriers can also be faced by service users (e.g. parents, carers, children and their wider families). The issues are particularly relevant to children with SEN.

48. In terms of national challenges, the Children's Commissioner found the following to be pertinent (Children's Commissioner, 2023b):

- Delays in transferring EHCPs when children are placed out of area.
- Schools often lack capacity or expertise to support children with SEN.
- Some children receive education from unregistered settings, posing risks to their education and safety.
- Placement type, stability, and location of care placement affects school attendance.

49. The Representative of Secondary School A suggested that there were challenges on schools and can be summarised as follows:

- Local demographics and the impact of poverty.
- Middlesbrough's Early Help model.
- Attendance issues / permanent exclusions and lack of resource to assist with this.
- Parents choosing EHE when challenged by service providers on attendance/behavioural issues. Schools chase non-attendance rigorously and are monitored by Ofsted on their attendance figures; schools tend to have their own Attendance Officers and Safeguarding Officers in place.
- Lack of SEN places / resource.

50. The Representative of Primary School A suggested that the following situations prove challenging to schools:

- Transience: Families moving in and out of the local area, sometimes abruptly with no communication from parents/carers.
- Language barriers affecting support given from schools.
- The 20-day period of children being absent from school, before referrals can be made to the LA/children can be removed from the school roll ('off-rolling').

51. Throughout the evidence-gathering process, challenges highlighted by the LA included:

- Local demographics.

- The high rate of permanent exclusion and suspension from Middlesbrough secondary schools and no nationally recognised definition of persistent disruptive behaviour.
- Ensuring that all relevant partners are aware of CME and are appropriately trained to identify potential cases effectively and efficiently.
- Difficulty in sourcing SEN/Alternative Provision (AP) places (a national issue).
- Reasons behind parental choice in EHE.
- Shortage of Primary School places in central Middlesbrough due to the transient nature of this area.

Term of Reference E - To consider the challenges of transient communities and how the Ethnic Minority Achievement Team (EMAT) track and work with newly arrived families

52. According to a report by the Children's Commissioner (2024), families moving into the local area may experience issues that would result in CME, for example:

- ***Families moving into the Local Authority area from another country.*** LAs reported that in some areas there was a growing immigrant community and they had been unable to plan for their arrival, which meant that they were suffering from a shortage of suitable school places. LAs also advised of refugees arriving and not being given the support needed to navigate the education system and enrol in school. LAs said that they did not get information on children who arrived in their area and therefore children arriving from abroad sometimes 'fell below the radar' and consequently did not receive a suitable education.
- ***Families moving from one Local Authority area to another.*** LAs said that this was becoming a bigger problem as some schools, such as secondaries, were increasingly at capacity. It was noted that this could be a problem in cases where children were moved into temporary accommodation. In this scenario, sometimes children were not enrolled in school because parents thought their move would be short term. When children move from one LA to another at non-standard transition points, their families sometimes have trouble applying to schools. LAs said that children who arrived new to an area would have limited choice about which school to go to. Sometimes a suitable school could not be found, which was especially likely in instances where a child had SEN and required extra support.

53. The town centre is the main area of residence for transient communities in Middlesbrough and, as such, there is a shortage of Primary School places in this location which could result in newly arrived children waiting for a suitable place to become available. However, the Panel notes that there are sufficient school places available for all of the children in Middlesbrough, but sometimes families find it difficult to travel longer distances to attend school in other parts of the town. Members were provided with the most recent Middlesbrough data in respect of this matter which showed that in the Summer of 2024, 11 primary-aged children had been waiting for a school place for over one month (but none had been waiting over three months). At the same time, there were around 45 secondary-aged children awaiting places, (the majority of these children had received offers of school places before the end of term).

Ethnic Minority Achievement Team (EMAT)

54. At the 11 November 2024 meeting, the Panel heard of the challenges of transient communities in Middlesbrough and how EMAT track and work with newly arrived families.

55. EMAT comprises of a variety of professionals including teachers, teaching assistants, and family support workers. EMAT works with schools to support pupils who speak English as an

additional language (EAL), and traveller, fair and circus pupils, to access education. The team also works with families who speak English as an additional language to help them to apply for school places for children.

56. EMAT provides the following support to schools and families:

- Supports and promotes the educational achievement of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students.
- Welcomes International New Arrivals (INA) and supports them in accessing school and educational opportunities.
- In partnership with schools, offers targeted in-school support to promote EAL across the curriculum and support EAL learners to achieve.
- Acts as an important link between school and home; attending admissions meetings and providing translation and interpreting services to help with communication between school and home.
- Provides and promotes cultural awareness.
- Delivers training, including bespoke training packages in schools.
- Assesses students' language upon first arrival to accurately identify need and provide a focus on pupil progression.
- Attends meetings and networks with other professionals working with EAL learners and their families to ensure a co-ordinated approach.
- Provides in-school support to traveller, fair and circus students and family liaison to improve attendance and educational opportunities.

57. EMAT is a buyback service and therefore in-school support is limited to partner schools and LAs that have signed a Service Level Agreement (SLA). In November 2024, the position of EMAT was:

- 22 schools had signed up to the EMAT SLA and been invited to attend support training.
- 1 Local Authority had signed up to the EMAT SLA for Traveller Education Services (TES).
- 5 Specialist/Bilingual Teaching Assistants had been deployed in schools.
- 4 Family Support Workers provided daily liaison between EMAT and schools to provide support in matters such as behavioural issues, attendance support and school transport applications, etc.
- 30 children from the traveller community supported in Middlesbrough Council.
- 40 children from the traveller community supported in Redcar and Cleveland.

58. Currently an overwhelming majority of CME referrals in Middlesbrough are children from the families of migrant workers from central Europe. The families will often return to their home countries either permanently or for extended periods or move to other areas of the UK but fail to declare accurately their intentions to schools at the time the pupils cease attending, which then causes issues for the education providers.

59. Should the family return to the UK they may well return to a different LA area dependant on work and housing availability. In the main, the families do not usually present with significant welfare or safeguarding concerns. The impact on Middlesbrough's central cluster Primary Schools is significant with schools carrying high levels of absence whilst enquiries are made to trace such pupils before the schools can remove them from roll. There is a similar burden placed on the LA in recording these cases and conducting enquiries to try to trace families who are no longer in the UK.

60. Primary School A, based in central Middlesbrough with a large transient population, responded to the Panel's request for their views on how CME impacts their school offer. The response included;

“We sometimes can’t provide support to families that need to get their child in to school due to language barriers and when they have left the area abruptly, not giving school the opportunity to discuss their options with them.

We feel like 20 days is a long time and a lot can change in family circumstances during this time and when the child is in a different authority there is no way of ensuring that they are safe.”

61. In response to this statement, the Head of Access to Education and Alternative Provision explained that the 20-day timescale referred to in the school’s statement is the timescale that children need to be continually absent from school before schools can refer the issue to the LA. In addition, schools must ensure that children remain on their school roll until the 20-days have expired.
62. After 20 days, LAs could use resources to trace CME including health agencies, housing benefit services and other LAs. LAs will continue to search for CME until they are found in another LA or if evidence suggests that they had left the country.
63. All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their LA when they are about to remove a pupil’s name from the school admission register under any of the 15 grounds listed in the regulations (Appendix B)
64. Where the pupil’s name is to be removed from the register under grounds 8(1)(f) - failure to return to school following a granted period of leave – or 8(1)(h) following a period of 20 days unauthorised absence, the school and the LA must show they have jointly made reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the pupil. In order to manage the volume of removals from roll and not impede or delay the freeing up of school places, the pragmatic decision has been made within Middlesbrough to allow schools to remove pupils from roll and inform the LA weekly of the necessary details and grounds for removal via the secure Objective Connect Shared Workspaces.
65. The regulations Reg 8(1)(f) relating to families taking extended unauthorised holidays and Regulation 8(1)(h) relating to ‘lost pupils’ are often not a good fit and require the school to keep the pupils on roll for up to 20 days absence before they can be removed from the roll. Provided the school is satisfied that the family has returned to a known address in their home country, either permanently or indefinitely, the pupil can be removed from roll in compliance with regulation 8(1)(e) and without the need to make a CME referral. To facilitate this process, a Family Information Form has been produced to:
 - Support schools to remove pupils from roll in compliance with the regulations.
 - Minimise the negative impact on school attendance.
 - Support and direct the reasonable enquiries that must be jointly undertaken with the LA for confirmed CME cases
66. The concerns raised by Primary School A are noted by the Panel, who also appreciate that this particular school has a large transient community, with an above average movement of children on and off the school roll. It was suggested that the school may appreciate discussions with the LA ahead of the 20-day period of absence to ensure school places were utilised effectively. Members are of the view that this could be explored further with the service area.

Term of Reference F - To consider the increasing number of permanently excluded children in respect of Children Missing Education

67. A permanent exclusion is when a pupil is no longer allowed to attend a school, unless the pupil is reinstated. The decision to exclude a pupil permanently should only be taken:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and
- where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others such as staff or pupils in the school.

68. Only the Headteacher of a school can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil on disciplinary grounds. A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year), or permanently excluded.

69. The Government trusts Headteachers to use their professional judgement based on the individual circumstances of the case when considering whether to exclude a pupil. The following reasons are examples of the types of circumstances that may warrant a suspension or permanent exclusion:

- Physical assault against a pupil.
- Physical assault against an adult.
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against a pupil.
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against an adult.
- Use, or threat of use, of an offensive weapon or prohibited item that has been prohibited by a school's behaviour policy.
- Bullying.
- Racist abuse.
- Abuse against sexual orientation or gender reassignment.
- Abuse relating to disability.

(Source: DfE, 2024c)

70. This list is not exhaustive and is intended to offer examples rather than be complete or definitive.

71. Nationally, the rate of permanently excluded children is increasing. Data published by the DfE showed the permanent exclusion rate across England had increased from 0.04 in autumn 2022/23 to 0.05 autumn 2023/24 - an increase of 25%. The number of permanent exclusions had increased from 3,104 to 4,168. (DfE, 2024d).

72. In a local context, data for the 2023/24 academic year identified that 111 pupils were permanently excluded from Middlesbrough schools. The reasons for the permanent exclusions were as follows:

Reason for school exclusion:	Number of children excluded:
Persistent Disruptive Behaviour	66
Physical Assault on an Adult	14
Physical Assault on a Pupil	10
Damage to Property	9
Verbal Abuse / Threatening Behaviour towards an Adult	5

Verbal Abuse / Threatening Behaviour towards a Pupil	3
Other	3
Use / Threat of an Offensive Weapon	1

Alternative Provision

73. The LA has a duty to arrange suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils from the sixth school day of exclusion. School exclusions and CME are dealt with by the Access to Education team. In Middlesbrough, sixth day education provision is delivered by several registered APs.
74. AP offers an adapted or alternative curriculum for children unsuccessful in accessing or engaging with a mainstream education. AP also encompasses provision available for children who are unable to attend school because of their physical and/ or mental health needs. A proportion of children in AP have additional vulnerabilities or characteristics, often because of trauma and adverse childhood experiences. For the children in AP, it offers an opportunity to gain qualifications (both vocational and academic) alongside participating in personal development activities whilst developing transferable skills and knowledge, which support onward progression into post-16 pathways after Year 11.
75. In education, Middlesbrough has witnessed significant increases in children and young people requiring AP; being referred for Education, Health and Care needs assessments; being persistently absent; and being subject to permanent exclusions from educational settings. This data, coupled with increases in children and young people requiring social care intervention; support from mental health services; and the lasting impact of the global pandemic, highlights an ever-growing need to provide environments that are rich in positive and nurturing relationships, and one where children and young people can achieve their potential ('grow and prosper' (Middlesbrough SEND strategy 2020-2024)). Specifically in relation to LAC, Middlesbrough has recently developed the PROCLAIM Project to support children and address their needs.
76. The majority of children accessing AP in Middlesbrough do so as a consequence of Permanent Exclusion. However, access to AP may also be due to other reasons such as children having multiple complexities and vulnerabilities. These children receive support from numerous external agencies and education providers.
77. As at December 2024, 279 children (264 secondary, 15 primary) were accessing education in AP, as follows:
- 188 accessed as result of being permanently excluded from their mainstream school.
 - 108 had identified SEN.
 - 42 had an EHCP for their SEN.
 - 38 were open to Social Care on a Child in Need plan (CIN).
 - 13 were open to Social Care on a Child Protection Plan (CPP).
 - 8 were LAC.
 - 7 were open to the Youth Justice Service.
78. Most pupils in AP receive a full-time education, however, 39% of children access the provision on a reduced timetable basis. These reduced timetables are used to accommodate an

assessment/ transition plan or because it is in the child's best interests to reflect their individual needs.

79. At times when exclusion rates are high or there is a high volume of permanent exclusions over a short period of time, some pupils wait for a place to become available at one of the registered providers. During this period, these children are offered an interim education package which is coordinated by the LA, and they receive regular visits from LA staff. At the 16 December 2024 meeting, Members noted that there were 22 children receiving an interim education package.
80. Due to the high number of permanently excluded children, the cohort of children in AP has grown significantly from 147 in 2021 to 279 in 2024. To ensure there is sufficient capacity in the system to meet sixth-day responsibilities and to allow children to experience their mainstream education entitlement wherever possible, the LA is working with Secondary School partners to prioritise reintegration back into mainstream education. This will allow children who are in AP to move back into mainstream education when they are ready. It also means that an increased number of newly excluded children can be reviewed and reintegrated into another mainstream school quickly to avoid them entering AP.
81. Middlesbrough Council has commissioned a range of good quality AP and specialist assessment provision. A 0-25 Inclusion and Outreach service has been developed in partnership with and is available to all schools.
82. The Panel notes that the 0-25 Inclusion and Outreach model has recently been restructured based on feedback from schools to ensure it meets local needs. Preventative AP pathways are in place, commissioned using high needs funding, to offer opportunity for off-site assessment of children's needs. New preventative AP has been commissioned, e.g. Latitude at Acklam Grange School, to avoid exclusions. A new primary age support base is being built for children with trauma and adverse childhood experiences to support early identification of needs ahead of a transition to secondary school. The LA is delivering project work in other key areas, such as: workforce development; transitions; and support for parent/carers as part of the Delivering Better Value programme with the DfE.

CONCLUSIONS

83. Based on the evidence provided throughout the investigation, the People Scrutiny Panel concluded that:

TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL ON 14TH APRIL 2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS

84. The People Scrutiny Panel recommends to the Executive:

TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL ON 14TH APRIL 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

85. The People Scrutiny Panel would like to thank the following for their assistance with its work:

Dawn Alaszewski, Director of Children's Care, Middlesbrough Council
Victoria Banks, Head of Virtual School, Middlesbrough Council
Caroline Cannon, Head of SEN and Vulnerable Learners, Middlesbrough Council
Emma Cowley, Head of Inclusion, Assessment and Review, Middlesbrough Council

ACRONYMS

86. A-Z listing of common acronyms used in the report:

AP	Alternative Provision
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
CIN	Children in Need
CLA	Children Looked After
CME	Children Missing Education
CPP	Child Protection Plan
DfE	Department for Education
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EHCP	Education, Health & Care Plan
EHE	Electively Home Education /Educated
EMAT	Ethnic Minority Achievement Team
INA	International New Arrival
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Looked After Children
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
PEP	Personal Education Plan
SAO	School Attendance Order
SCIE	Social Care Institute for Excellence
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SLA	Service Level Agreement
VSM	Virtual School Middlesbrough

BACKGROUND PAPERS

87. The following sources were consulted or referred to in preparing this report:

- Children's Commissioner (2023a), '*Invisible*' Children in Care are Missing School Every Day, Unique New Data Shows'
<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/media-centre/invisible-children-in-care-are-missing-school-every-day-unique-new-data-shows/>
Accessed 13 February 2025.
- Children's Commissioner (2023b), '*Looked After Children who are not in school*'
<https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2023/05/cc-lac-not-in-school.pdf>
Accessed 6 March 2025.
- Children's Commissioner (2024), '*Children Missing Education: The Unrolled Story*'
<https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2024/09/Children-Missing-Education-The-Unrolled-Story.pdf>
Accessed 20 November 2024.
- Department for Education (DfE) (2023), '*Education, England: School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2023*'
https://consult.education.gov.uk/school-attendance-policy-and-strategy-team/school-registers-and-national-thresholds-for-legal/supporting_documents/220617_Draft_School%20Attendance%20Pupil%20Registration%20England%20Regulations%202023.pdf

Accessed 13 February 2025.

- Department for Education (DfE) (2024a), '*Children Missing Education: Autumn Term 2024/25*'
<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-missing-education>
Accessed 17 December 2024.
- Department for Education (DfE) (2024b), '*Children Missing Education: Guidance for Local Authorities*'
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf57a4dcb0757928e5bd39/Children_missing_education_guidance_-_August_2024.pdf
Accessed 17 December 2024.
- Department for Education (DfE) (2024c), '*Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England, including Pupil Movement Guidance for Maintained Schools, Academies, and Pupil Referral Units in England*'
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66be0d92c32366481ca4918a/Suspensions_and_permanent_exclusions_guidance.pdf
Accessed 6 March 2025.
- Department for Education (DfE) (2024d), '*Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions in England: Autumn Term 2023/24*'
<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/suspensions-and-permanent-exclusions-in-england>
Accessed 13 January 2025.
- Legislation.GOV.UK (2024), '*Children and Families Act, 2014: Section 99: Promotion of Educational Achievement of Children Looked After by Local Authorities*'
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/notes/division/4/5/10>
Accessed 17 December 2024.
- Legislation.GOV.UK (2025), '*Children Act 1996*'
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/436A>
Accessed 4 March 2025.
- People Scrutiny Panel - reports/presentations to, and minutes of, meetings held on 16 September 2024, 14 October 2024, 11 November 2024, 16 December 2024, 20 January 2025 and 17 February 2025.
[Browse meetings - People Scrutiny Panel | Middlesbrough Council](#)
- SCIE (2025), '*Safeguarding Children in Education: Children Missing Education*'
<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/children/education/missing/>
Accessed 13 January 2025.

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Correspondence to Headteachers/Schools inviting them to participate in the Panel's review.
Appendix B	School Off-Rolling Criteria

**COUNCILLOR EDWARD CLYNCH
CHAIR OF THE PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL**

People Scrutiny Panel Membership: Councillors E Clynch (Chair), J Banks (Vice-Chair), L Hurst, D Jackson, M McClintock, T Mohan, M Nugent, S Platt, S Tranter, Z Uddin, G Wilson and L Young.

Contact Officers:

Claire Jones
Democratic Services
Telephone: 01642 729112
Email: claire_jones@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Chris Lunn
Democratic Services
Telephone: 01642 729742
Email: chris_lunn@middlesbrough.gov.uk

DRAFT

This page is intentionally left blank

Claire Jones

From: Claire Jones
Sent: Thursday, 19 December 2024 15:33
Subject: Middlesbrough Council People Scrutiny Panel - Children Missing Education (CME)

Dear Headteachers,

I am writing on behalf of the Chair of Middlesbrough Council's People Scrutiny Panel, Edward Clynch, to gather the views of schools in relation to the current Scrutiny Topic - 'Children Missing Education (CME)'.

The principal power of a Scrutiny Committee is to influence the policies and decisions made by the Council and other organisations in delivering public services. The Scrutiny Committee gathers evidence on issues affecting local people and makes recommendations based on its findings.

The Middlesbrough Council People Scrutiny Panel would like to ask Middlesbrough Schools for their views on how 'Children Missing from Education' affects your schools, and if there are any specific support or improvements that you can identify. The Panel is particularly interested in matters relating to suspensions /permanent exclusion and transient communities (i.e. children and families who move more frequently between local authorities including homeless families, asylum seekers and refugees, gypsy, traveller and Roma families and families experiencing domestic abuse).

If you would like to provide your thoughts, the Panel would be delighted to invite you or a representative to the next public meeting as follows;

Monday 20th January, 4.30pm at the Mandela Room, Town Hall, Middlesbrough, TS1 2RT

If you would like to attend this meeting, please advise of your availability and an invitation will be sent.

Should you prefer to provide written comments, please respond to this email with your written information which will be passed to the Panel to consider. The Chair, Edward, is a local schoolteacher and would be extremely grateful for any insight from schools that you are able to share. Please note that any information provided will be used to formulate the Panel's final report. Please can I ask that you respond to this email with any commentary by 12 noon on Wednesday 15th January.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your time.

Kind regards

Claire Jones

Democratic Services Officer

Democratic Services

Middlesbrough Council

PO Box 500, Middlesbrough, TS1 9FT

E: claire_jones@middlesbrough.gov.uk | T: 01642 729112 | W: middlesbrough.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix B

Deleting the name of a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register

Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration (England) Regulations 2024		
Code	Ground description	Further information
9(1)(a)	<p>Ground A - The pupil has been registered at another school</p> <p>Where a pupil has been registered at another school, unless –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a school attendance order naming the school is in force in relation to the pupil (see further information); the pupil is a mobile child and the school is their main school (see further information); the school has agreed with a person with control of the pupil's attendance at the other school that the pupil should be registered at more than one school (see further information on dual registration); or the school itself has control of the pupil's attendance at the other school and has decided that the pupil should be registered at more than one school (see further information on dual registration). 	<p>Transfer between schools:</p> <p>Where a pupil is transferring to another school, the original school must delete the pupil's name from the admission register as soon as they are entered on the admission register of the new school. The new school must enter the pupil's name on the admission register on the first day that it has agreed or been told the pupil will attend the school as explained under Expected First Day of Attendance.</p> <p>For example, if a pupil leaves School A on 28 March and their expected first day of attendance at School B is 29 March, they would be added to the admission register of School B and deleted from that of School A on 29 March.</p> <p>School A will: • record the pupil's attendance and absence up to and including 28 March, and • delete the pupil's name from the admission register on 29 March, and • transfer the appropriate pupil information via the S2S system.</p> <p>School B will: • enter the pupil's name on the admission register on 29 March, • record the pupil's attendance and absence from 29 March, • follow up any unexpected absence on or after the 29 March, and • request the transfer of the pupil information.</p> <p>There are a small number of exceptions, these are:</p> <p>School attendance order</p> <p>If a school attendance order is in place for the pupil, and the name of the school has been replaced by the relevant local authority with that of another school, their name must be deleted from the admission register under the reason for deletion at ground D (regulation 9(1)(d)).</p> <p>If the school attendance order has not been amended and still names the school, the pupil's name must not be deleted under ground A even if they have been registered at another school as well.</p> <p>Mobile child</p> <p>Where a child of compulsory school age has no fixed abode and their parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place, the child can temporarily attend another school without the need for their main school to remove their name.</p> <p>Main school in this context means the school that, during the last 18 months, the child has attended during periods when their parent was not travelling in the course of their trade or business, or, if there is more than one school that fits that description, the school that most recently fulfils those criteria.</p> <p>Dual registration</p> <p>In circumstances where it has been agreed between the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance that the pupil will be registered at more than one school, the pupil's name will remain on the admission register. This is also the case where it has been decided by the school if it has control of the pupil's attendance at the other school. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending another school on a temporary basis, such as a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school.</p>
9(1)(b)	<p>Ground B - The pupil has not continued at the school following completion of nursery education</p>	

	Where a pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education and on completing nursery does not continue into reception (or more senior class).	
9(1)(c)	<p>Ground C – The pupil is also registered at one or more other schools and the other schools have agreed the deletion</p> <p>Where a pupil is registered at one or more other schools, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again; each school where the pupil is registered has given consent to the deletion; there is no school attendance order naming the school in force in relation to the pupil (see further information); and the pupil is not a mobile child, or if they are, the school is not their main school (see further information). 	<p>School attendance order</p> <p>If a school attendance order is in place for the pupil, and the name of the school has been replaced by the relevant local authority with that of another school, their name must be deleted from the admission register under the reason for deletion at ground D (regulation 9(1)(d)).</p> <p>If the school attendance order has not been amended and still names the school, the pupil's name must not be deleted under ground C even if the other criteria are satisfied.</p> <p>Mobile child</p> <p>Where a child of compulsory school age has no fixed abode and their parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place, the child can temporarily attend another school without the need for their main school to remove their name.</p> <p>Main school in this context means the school that, during the last 18 months, the child has attended during periods when their parent was not travelling in the course of their trade or business, or, if there is more than one school that fits that description, the school that most recently fulfils those criteria.</p>
9(1)(d)	<p>Ground D - The pupil has a school attendance order which has been changed to name another school</p> <p>Where the pupil is the subject of a school attendance order that previously named the school, but another school has now been named on that order instead.</p>	
9(1)(e)	<p>Ground E - The pupil had a school attendance order which has been revoked</p> <p>Where the pupil was the subject of a school attendance order naming the school, but the order is revoked because the local authority that made the order is satisfied that arrangements have been made for the child to receive suitable full-time education for their age, ability and aptitude and special educational needs somewhere other than at a school.</p>	
9(1)(f)	<p>Ground F - The parent of a pupil has notified the school in writing that the pupil will be leaving the school to be educated otherwise than at a school</p> <p>Where the pupil's parent has informed the school in writing that the pupil will no longer attend the school after a certain day and will receive education otherwise than at a school and that day has passed, and there is no school attendance order naming the school in force in relation to the pupil.</p>	<p>School Attendance Order</p> <p>If a school attendance order has been revoked because the local authority that made the order is satisfied that arrangements have been made for the child to receive suitable full-time education for their age, ability and aptitude somewhere other than at a school, the pupil's name must be deleted from the admission register under the reason for deletion at regulation 9(1)(e).</p>
9(1)(g)	<p>Ground G - The pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school</p> <p>Where a pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school, the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again, and the pupil is not a boarder at the school.</p>	<p>In circumstances where parents are moving away and withdrawing their child but are unable to say how their child will continue with their education, for example, the family are relocating but have not been able to secure a place at a new school in advance, once the pupil has completed their final day at school and moved out of the area, the school must delete the pupil's name from the admission register and the pupil's</p>

		<p>information should then be transferred to the Lost Pupil Database via the S2S system.</p> <p>Reasonable distance</p> <p>DfE does not define reasonable distance because each case depends on the family situation and the geography of the area for example, the parent's ability to get the child to the school, a safe walking route or the accessibility of local transportation.</p> <p>Temporary or occasional absence</p> <p>Relevant regulation 9(5)(a) - Whether a pupil normally lives a reasonable distance from the school is not affected by a temporary or occasional absence. A judgement should be made in an individual case as to whether an absence is temporary or occasional, but a prolonged absence is not generally considered as temporary.</p>
9(1)(h)	<p>Ground H - The pupil has not returned following a leave of absence</p> <p>Where a pupil has been granted a leave of absence and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the pupil has not attended school within the ten school days immediately after the end of the period that the leave was granted for; the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause; and the school and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances; but: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> they have not succeeded; or they have succeeded but they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps that could be taken (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance. 	<p>DfE's guidance on Children missing education sets out the expectations for schools and local authorities in respect of making reasonable efforts to find out a pupil's location and circumstances.</p> <p>Pupils who have been located but have not returned to school</p> <p>Where a pupil has been located and their circumstances discovered but they have not returned to school, a joint decision is required between the school and the local authority before this ground is used. Both must agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe the child will return to the school, even with reasonable support and/or enforcement to try to cause their return to school. This means the final criterion will be met very rarely, usually when a pupil has been out of the country for a prolonged period and there are no signs of the pupil returning.</p> <p>This ground cannot be used in any case where the pupil could reasonably be supported to return to school regardless of whether that support has been provided. It cannot be used where a pupil is absent because of a health reason. It also cannot be used in cases where attendance legal action to cause the pupil to return to school could reasonably be taken instead. In such cases, the appropriate support or enforcement should be taken rather than the pupil's name being deleted from roll.</p> <p>Examples of appropriate use include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pupil is still away from home and the parent has refused to give a date for their return but there is no reason to think there is anything preventing them from returning. No date or evidence of the pupil returning has been provided by the deadline set out in the school's contact with the parent and there is no reason to think there is anything preventing them from returning. The parent has given a date, or several dates, for returning and the pupil has failed to return by or on the last given date. <p>Examples of where ground G may be appropriate instead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The date for return the parent has provided is too vague or too far in the future to reasonably believe the pupil still normally lives a reasonable distance from the school. The school does not believe, taking account of any information from the parent, that the pupil still resides within the area and the pupil's absence does not appear to be temporary.
9(1)(i)	<p>The pupil has been continually absent from school for 20 school days</p>	<p>DfE's guidance on Children missing education sets out the expectations for schools and local authorities in respect of making reasonable efforts to find out a pupil's location and circumstances.</p>

	<p>Where a pupil has been continuously absent from the school for a period of 20 school days or more and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at no point during that period did any of the circumstances in regulation 10(3) Table 2 or 10(4) Table 3 other than the ones for codes G, N, or O apply; the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause; and the school and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances, but: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> they have not succeeded; or they have succeeded but they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps they could take (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance. 	<p>Pupils who have been located but have not returned to school</p> <p>Where a pupil has been located and their circumstances discovered but they have not returned to school, a joint decision is required between the school and the local authority before this ground is used. Both must agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe the child will return to the school, even with reasonable support and/or enforcement to try to cause their return to school. This means the final criterion will be met very rarely, usually when a pupil has been out of the country for a prolonged period and there are no signs of the pupil returning.</p> <p>This ground cannot be used in any case where the pupil could reasonably be supported to return to school regardless of whether that support has been provided. It cannot be used where a pupil is absent because of a health reason. It also cannot be used in cases where attendance legal action to cause the pupil to return to school could reasonably be taken instead. In these cases, the appropriate support or enforcement should be taken rather than the pupil's name being deleted from roll.</p> <p>Examples of appropriate use include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pupil is away from home and the parent has refused to give a date for their return but there is no reason to think there is anything preventing them from returning. No date or evidence of the pupil returning has been provided by the deadline set out in the school's contact with the parent and there is no reason to think there is anything preventing them from returning. The parent has given a date, or several dates, for returning and the pupil has failed to return by or on the last given date. <p>Examples of where regulation 9(1)(g) may be appropriate instead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The date for return the parent has provided is too vague or too far in the future to reasonably believe the pupil normally lives a reasonable distance from the school. The school does not believe, taking account of any information from the parent, that the pupil still resides within the area and the pupil's absence does not appear to be temporary.
9(1)(j)	<p>Ground J - The pupil is detained under a sentence of detention</p> <p>Where a pupil is found guilty of a crime and detained under a sentence of detention (as defined in regulation 3) before the pupil's name can be deleted from the admission register the school must have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will not return to the school once they are released.</p>	<p>This must be decided on a case by case basis after considering whether the pupil will return at the end, or part way through their sentence (e.g. where part is served on licence in the community). In determining whether there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will return to the school following their detention, it is expected that schools will discuss this with the pupil's youth offending team worker.</p> <p>Pupils who are remanded to custody awaiting trial or sentencing cannot be removed under this ground.</p>
9(1)(k)	<p>Ground K - The pupil has died</p> <p>Where a pupil has died.</p>	<p>A pupil's name should only be deleted from the admission register when the school is informed of the death.</p> <p>This would normally come from the pupil's parent but it is possible that notification comes from another source, such as relatives or the police.</p> <p>Once the school receives the information, it is particularly important to delete the pupil's name as quickly as possible to prevent inadvertent and unnecessary contact with the family about the child.</p>
9(1)(l)	<p>Ground L - The pupil will be over compulsory school age and will not continue into the sixth form</p>	<p>Compulsory school age</p> <p>A pupil ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.</p>

	Where a pupil will be over compulsory school age by the time the school next meets, and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again; or the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements to be transferred to the school's sixth form. 	
9(1)(m)	Ground M - The pupil is a boarder at a school maintained by a local authority or academy and their boarding fees have not been paid	Where a pupil is a boarder at the school and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school is maintained by a local authority or is an academy; charges for the pupil's board and lodgings are payable by the pupil's parent; and those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.
9(1)(n)	Ground N - The pupil has ceased to be a pupil at an independent school or non-maintained special school	Where a pupil has ceased to be a pupil at the school and the school is not maintained by a local authority or an academy (including a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts).
9(1)(o)	Ground O - The pupil has been permanently excluded from the school Where a pupil has been permanently excluded from the school.	A pupil's name cannot be deleted from the admission register until the outcome of any consideration of reinstatement and independent review (in the case of a disciplinary exclusion from a maintained school, pupil referral unit, or academy) or appeal (in the case of a city technology college or city college for the technology of the arts) is known.

Deleting the name of a pupil not of compulsory school age

Grounds for deleting a pupil of non-compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration (England) Regulations 2024		
Code	Ground description	Further information
9(3)(a)	Ground A - The pupil is not a boarder and will not attend the school again Where a pupil is not a boarder, and the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again.	
9(3)(b)	Ground B - The pupil is a boarder and has ceased to be a pupil at the school Where a pupil is a boarder and has ceased to be a pupil at the school.	
9(3)(c)	Ground C - The pupil has been continually absent from school for 20 school days Where a pupil has been continuously absent from the school for a period of 20 school days or more and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the pupil was not absent with leave during the period; the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause; and the school has made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances but: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has not succeeded; or has succeeded and has no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again. 	When determining if there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again, the school may wish to consider the following factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the parent or pupil (if at sixth form) given a date for the pupil's return? Has a date or evidence of the pupil returning been provided by the deadline set out in the school's contact with the parent or pupil (if at sixth form)? Has the parent or pupil (if at sixth form) given a date, or several dates, for returning but the pupil has failed to return by or on the last given date?
9(3)(d)	Ground D - The pupil has died Where a pupil has died.	A pupil's name should only be deleted from the admission register when the school is informed of the death. This would normally come from the pupil's parent but it is possible that notification comes from another source, such as relatives or the police.

This page is intentionally left blank