

Looked After Children Who Are CME



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The Role of the Virtual School

The role of the local authority Virtual School Head is to promote the educational achievement of children in care and previously in care. This includes children with a social worker and from September 2024, children in kinship care.



Strategic Leadership: Virtual School Heads (VSHs) are strategic leaders who work to improve educational outcomes for these children.



Support and Advocacy: They provide support and advocacy to ensure that the educational needs of these children are met



Collaboration: They work 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

The local authority Virtual School plays a crucial role in tracking and monitoring the educational progress of children in care. Here are some key aspects of this role

Tracking Attainment and Progress: Virtual Schools ensure there is a system in place to track and monitor the attainment and progress of children in care. This helps in identifying any gaps in learning and implementing timely interventions.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs): They oversee the creation and maintenance of high-quality Personal Education Plans for each child. These plans are regularly reviewed to ensure they are effective and that the child is making progress.

Attendance Monitoring: Virtual Schools monitor the attendance of children in care to ensure they are attending school regularly. Real-time data collection helps in quickly identifying and addressing any attendance issues.

Definition

Children missing education (CME) is a term used by DfE to identify a particular subset of children who are at increased risk and are not attending school.

To be CME, 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

According to a report by the Children's Commissioner, as of March 2022, there were approximately **1,363 looked after children (2.7%)** who were not in school. This includes children who are not registered at any school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise. By local authority, this varied from 0% to 13.4%.



National Challenges found by the Children's Commissioner were ;

EHCP Delays: Delays in transferring EHCPs when children are placed out of area.

School Capacity: Schools often lack capacity or expertise to support children with SEN.

Unregistered Education: Some children receive education from unregistered settings, posing risks to their education and safety

Structural Factors: Placement type, stability, and location of care placement affect school attendance



Groups of looked after children at Higher Risk:

- Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum (UCSA),
- Older children,
- Boys,
- Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

Local context

Demographics	
Number of school aged CLA	399
Male students	56%
Educated in a Middlesbrough School	60%
Secondary School students	55%
Have an EHCP	27%
SEND plan	34%
Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum (UCSA)	0.75%

Current CLA CME	
Number (%) of CME CLA	14 (3.5%)
Number (%) with an EHCP	10 (71%)
Number with SEND support	4 (29%)
Number (%) male	9 (64%)
KS3 students	4 (29%)
KS4 Students	10 (71%)
Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum (UCSA)	3 (21%)

Trend	
September 2023	4 (1%)
October 2023	4 (1%)
November 2023	5 (1.2%)
December 2023	6 (1.5%)
January 2024	8 (2%)
February 2024	11 (2.7%)
March 2024	7 (1.7%)
April 2024	7 (1.7%)
May 2024	7 (1.7%)
June 2024	7 (1.7%)
July 2024	8 (8%)
September 2024	15 (3.8%)
October 2024	13 (3.2%)
November 2024	14 (3.5%)
December 2024	14 (3.5%)

Line of sight

