

YSGOL GOLWG Y CWM



Child Missing in Education Policy

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**POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL
EDUCATION SERVICE
CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION POLICY**

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1. Summary

- 1.1 Children missing education are at greater risk of a range of negative outcomes that could have long-term damaging consequences for their well-being and life chances¹.
- 1.2 The Welsh Government has published statutory guidance to help prevent children and young people from missing education. It provides a practical toolkit to identify children and young people missing education².
- 1.3 This policy supports the practical application of that toolkit and processes for Schools Service and schools in Powys County Council

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Welsh Government has placed a duty on local authorities (LAs) to make arrangements to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area who are of compulsory school age and not receiving a suitable education at school or otherwise³.
- 2.2 The purpose of this document is to establish a set of principles under which the local authority (LA):
 - can fulfil its statutory duty;
 - can track children and young people missing from education (CME);
 - maintains contact with those missing, and those at risk of missing education;
 - safeguards children.

This underpins the policy and there is an expectation that all agencies will work together to ensure that children and young people do not 'slip through the net' and become missing.

- 2.3 These 'missing' children and young people are likely to be some of the most vulnerable in the authority and it is vital therefore that agencies work together to identify and re-engage these children and young people with appropriate education provision as quickly as possible. Education is a child's right and if children are not receiving a suitable education, they are more likely to be vulnerable and at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), be more prone to offending behaviour and be more at risk to exploitation.
- 2.4 There is also a possibility that a child missing from education may be at risk of significant harm. Welsh Government guidance states:

¹ Keeping learners safe: the role of local authorities, governing bodies and proprietors of independent schools under the Education Act 2002, Welsh Government 283/2022. Point 5.33. <https://www.gov.wales/keeping-learners-safe> Accessed on 28 August 2025.

² *ibid.* Point 5.34. <https://www.gov.wales/keeping-learners-safe> Accessed on 28 August 2025.

³ Education and Inspections Act, 2006. Section 4. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/4> Accessed on 28 August 2025.

There have been a number of high-profile cases in recent times involving the tragic death of children and young people who were supposed to be attending school, but instead disappeared from the system. These very sad cases have highlighted serious gaps in systems meant to support vulnerable children and young people.⁴

- 2.5 Each LA and school has a responsibility to attempt to trace all pupils who cease to attend education. Where a parent informs a school that the family are moving, there should be no assumption made that a child will arrive at the new LA area provided to the school. In every case where a child moves to an out-of-county school, contact must be made with the receiving LA. Schools and the Education Welfare Service should ensure lateral checks are completed before a child is removed from a school register. Where it has been identified that a child is missing from education, the school should immediately alert their Education Welfare Service (EWS).

3. Legal Context – Child(ren) Missing Education Defined

- 3.1 Children (child) missing from education (CME) in this document, refers to all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, and who are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at school⁵.
- 3.2 Where parents have chosen to educate their child at home⁶ (Elective Home Education), that child is not missing education. Where a child is home educated, but the LA has reason to believe that they are not receiving a suitable education, they may then be considered to be a child missing education.
- 3.3 Other than those children of statutory school age who are electively home educated, children missing education applies only to those children who are not on a school roll and who have been out of educational provision for a substantial period of time, usually defined as four school weeks⁷.
- 3.4 Statutory school age is defined as being from child's fifth (5th) birthday to the last Friday in June in the academic year in which they have their sixteenth (16th) birthday.

⁴ Statutory guidance to help prevent children and young people from missing education. Welsh Government 009/2017. Point 1.23. <https://www.gov.wales/statutory-guidance-help-prevent-children-and-young-people-missing-education> Accessed on 28 August 2025.

⁵ Statutory guidance to help prevent children and young people from missing education. Welsh Government 009/2017. Point 1.20. <https://www.gov.wales/statutory-guidance-help-prevent-children-and-young-people-missing-education> Accessed on 28 August 2025.

⁶ Education Act 1996, Section 7. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/7> Accessed on 28 August 2025

⁷ Statutory guidance to help prevent children and young people from missing education. Welsh Government 009/2017. Point 1.20. <https://www.gov.wales/statutory-guidance-help-prevent-children-and-young-people-missing-education> Accessed on 28 August 2025

- 3.5 Parents are able to apply for a school place for their child in a Reception class, but can defer entry until the term beginning on or after their child's fifth birthday⁸. In such cases, the child would not be CME.
- 3.5 Children who are registered at a school but are not attending regularly are not children missing education. Such cases will be managed through attendance policies and processes⁹. Advice and guidance is available from the EWS.
- 3.6 Children who are registered at a school but cease to attend entirely may be CME. If no contact can be made with the family, the EWS will advise the school as to whether the child is CME.
- 3.7 Relevant legislation and guidance includes:
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002¹⁰ places a duty on LAs to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
 - Section 436A of the Education Act 1996¹¹, as amended by section 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006¹², places a duty on all LAs to make arrangements to establish the identities of children in their area who are not registered at a school and are not receiving a suitable education.
 - Welsh Government guidance 002/2017 *Statutory guidance to help prevent children and young people from missing education*¹³.
 - Welsh Government guidance *Educational Records, School reports and the Common Transfer System: guidance for schools and local authorities*¹⁴.
 - Sections 437-443 of the Education Act 1996¹⁵ apply where a parent of a compulsory school age pupil fails to prove that they are receiving a suitable education, and where the LA believes that the child should attend school. A School Attendance Order will be used to direct a parent to send their child to the nominated school and should be used when a child is not on role.

⁸ School admissions code, Welsh Government 005/2013. <https://www.gov.wales/school-admissions-code> Accessed on 28 August 2025.

⁹ Ibid, Point 1.21.

¹⁰ Education Act 2002, Section 175. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175> Accessed on 28 August 2025

¹¹ Education Act 1996, Section 436A. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/436A> Accessed on 28 August 2025

¹² Education and Inspections Act 2006, Section 4. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/4> Accessed on 28 August 2025

¹³ Statutory guidance to help prevent children and young people from missing education. Welsh Government 009/2017. <https://www.gov.wales/statutory-guidance-help-prevent-children-and-young-people-missing-education> Accessed on 28 August 2025

¹⁴ Educational records, school reports and the common transfer system: guidance for schools and local authorities, Welsh Government 2022. <https://www.gov.wales/educational-records-school-reports-and-common-transfer-system-guidance-schools-and-local> Accessed on 28 August 2025

¹⁵ Education Act 1996. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents> Accessed on 28 August 2025

- The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014¹⁶ places a duty on agencies to report a child or adult at risk.
- Section 47 of the Children Act 1989¹⁷ remains the key piece of legislation for investigating concerns that a child is at risk of significant harm. A child who goes missing from education may be considered, in some cases, to be at risk of significant harm. It is important that if a child who is already known to Social Services as a child in need of protection becomes a child missing education or fails to attend school, that this is reported to the child's social worker immediately. In addition, if a school has concerns that are heightened by a child going missing from education, even if there is no current Social Services involvement, this should be reported to the statutory authorities, such as EWS, Social Services and Police.
- The Children Act 2004¹⁸, Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and Welsh Government's Working Together to Safeguard People¹⁹ place a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children and to share information.
- Regulation 9 of The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995²⁰ and The Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2001²¹ establish clear guidelines on when a pupil's name can be deleted from the school roll. This includes where a pupil has ceased to attend a school because they no longer reside within a reasonable distance from the school. The school should refer each case to the EWS for investigation before removal from the school roll. This would include all cases where children and young people are at risk of becoming or become CME. It is important that all of the actions undertaken to locate the child or young person are clearly documented to ensure there is a clear audit trail. Only once the EWS have completed their enquiries and advised the school in writing should a young person be removed from school the roll.
- Welsh Government guidance 283/2022 *Keeping Learners Safe*²² gives additional guidance and information about safeguarding children in specific circumstances and any of these may increase the risk to a child missing from education.

¹⁶ Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/contents> Accessed on 28 August 2025

¹⁷ Children Act 1989, Section 47. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/47> Accessed on 28 August 2025

¹⁸ Children Act 2004. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents> Accessed on 28 August 2025

¹⁹ Working together to safeguarding people volume 1: introduction and overview, Welsh Government. <https://www.gov.wales/safeguarding-people-introduction> Accessed on 28 August 2025

²⁰ The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, Regulation 9. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1995/2089/regulation/9/made> Accessed on 28 August 2025

²¹ The Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2001. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/en/wsi/2001/1109/made> Accessed on 28 August 2025

²² Keeping learners safe, Welsh Government 2022. <https://www.gov.wales/keeping-learners-safe> Accessed on 28 August 2025

4. Children and Young people with Provision Who Are Missing, or At Risk of Missing Education

- 4.1 Schools and other education providers are responsible for monitoring and identifying pupils who are on their register and who are missing or at risk of missing education.
- 4.2 Children who are on a school roll may go 'missing' because they:
- fail to start at a school having accepted a place;
 - are at risk of exclusion or have been excluded;
 - fail to attend regularly;
 - stop attending altogether or leave the school without ongoing provision being identified.
- 4.3 Schools must advise the EWS of any pupil who has ten (10) days or more of continuous unauthorised absence in order that steps can be taken to ensure that the pupil does not go missing from education and that they are safe.
- 4.4 If the pupil is located, then it will be usual for a pupil to remain on the school's roll and for the case to be dealt with as one of persistent absence.
- 4.5 Appendix 5 contains a model form for parents, which schools can ask parents to complete in cases where the parent informs the school that they are moving away.

5. Vulnerable groups

- 5.1 There are some specific groups of vulnerable children and young people who may be more at risk of missing education, as outlined in the following list, which is not exhaustive:
- young people who have committed offences and are within the criminal justice system;
 - children living in women's refuges;
 - families fleeing domestic violence;
 - children of homeless families, perhaps living in temporary accommodation, house of multiple occupancy or Bed and Breakfast;
 - young runaways;
 - children with long term medical or emotional problems;
 - children affected by substance misuse;
 - unaccompanied asylum seekers;
 - children of refugees and asylum-seeking families;
 - children in new immigrant families who are not yet established in the UK and may not have fixed addresses;
 - children who have been trafficked to, or within the UK;
 - children who are or have been looked after (CLA);
 - children who are privately fostered;
 - young carers;

- children previously educated in the private sector
- children whose parents have withdrawn them to electively home educate, but are not receiving suitable education
- children from transient families;
- children who are taken on extended holidays or heritage visits by their family;
- children of parents that are in the armed forces and move on a regular basis;
- teenage mothers;
- children who are permanently excluded from school, particularly those excluded illegally, e.g. for problematic behaviour or offending;
- children from Gypsy, Roma and traveller families (GRT).

6. Children and Young People without provision

- 6.1 These may be children new to the authority, Reception-aged children whose parents/carers have not applied for a school place, children who have ceased to attend independent schools and those who cease to be electively home educated.
- 6.2 Children and young people who are identified as being of compulsory school age, not on a school roll and with no other form of educational provision will, in the majority of cases, be expected to join a mainstream school via the normal admissions process.
- 6.3 In order to facilitate this, a member of the EWS will work with the child's parents or carers to establish the nature of any previous educational provision and offer advice and the necessary support to effect a timely admission to a school.
- 6.4 Where children and young people have an IDP, Statement of Special Educational Need, or Education Health and Care Plan, their case will be referred to the Powys County Council Additional Learning Needs (ALN) team who will work with the parents/carers to identify an appropriate educational placement.

7. Partner agencies and services involved in the identification and referral of Children Missing Education

- 7.1 Partner agencies include:
- Children's Services
 - Adult Services
 - Housing
 - Planning
 - Income and Awards
 - Powys Teaching Health Board

- General Practitioners
- Other Health agencies
- Police
- Fire Service
- Careers Wales
- Voluntary Agencies
- Homeless hostels
- Domestic abuse support services

- 7.2 Many, if not all, LA services and other partners have some level of responsibility around the issue of children missing education. Whenever anybody becomes aware of any child or young person who does not appear to be accessing an appropriate education, they should make a referral to the EWS. This may result in referrals being made for children and young people already known and on a school roll. However, given concerns around the safeguarding and welfare of this group of children, this is more beneficial than not receiving notification.
- 7.3 Partner agencies and services may become aware of children missing, or at risk of becoming missing from education. These services should make referrals but will not necessarily be best placed to pursue an appropriate provision, although where there are additional needs, some services may support a child in making the most of their educational opportunities.
- 7.4 Members of the public are also encouraged to make referrals where they have reason to believe that young people are not in education. This can be done by contacting educationwelfare@powys.gov.uk²³.

8. Local Authority and School Admissions Processes

- 8.1 The Schools Service Admissions Team and schools have an important contribution to make in ensuring pupils are on a school roll and attending school.
- 8.2 Reasons where children are not registered on a school roll may include:
- where a parent has not accepted a school place for a phase transfer;
 - failed to follow up an application after moving into the LA;
 - has been unable to secure a place in their preferred school and fails to take up another offer.
- 8.3 When the Admissions Team becomes aware that children/young people are living in Powys and not attending school they will inform the EWS. A record of the child(ren) should be recorded as a Child Missing from Education in the CME database by the EWS on receipt of the information.

²³ Children Missing from Education (CME), Powys County Council.
<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/11686/Children-Missing-from-Education-CME> Accessed on 28 August 2025

- 8.4 When children/young people do not arrive at school following the offer and acceptance of a place, the school should attempt to contact the parent/carer. When all attempts have failed, the school will need to contact the EWS.

9. Notification and referral routes

- 9.1 The EWS must be notified of any children thought, by a professional, to be missing from education through the appropriate referral route and using the appropriate referral form:
- Appendix 1: Child Missing Education Referral Form – School Form (for children on roll at a Powys School)
 - Appendix 2: Child Missing Education Referral Form for Other Agencies
- 9.2 Referrals can be submitted by email to educationwelfare@powys.gov.uk.
- 9.3 For advice and guidance, all Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) and the Education Manager will be able to support schools and partner agencies with CME concerns and process. The named lead officer for the LA for CME enquiries is:
- Michael Gedrim, Education Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead for Education
- 9.4 All cases of children and young people missing education or at risk of doing so should be reported to the EWS to ensure that comprehensive data is recorded. The case must be referred even if it is anticipated that the child or young person might soon be starting at a school or other educational provision.
- 9.5 Other LAs and agencies may use different methods to notify the Powys EWS of children new to the authority, including:
- CME Referral Form
 - Secure messaging
 - Secure email
- 9.6 Members of the public are not expected to use a formal referral route. They can make a referral by contacting educationwelfare@powys.gov.uk²⁴.
- 9.7 Once a referral has been received, the child's details will be checked against the LA's pupil information system (Teacher Centre). When a child is confirmed as missing education they will be added to the CME database and EWS will take steps to seek and locate the child and support their access into suitable education.

²⁴ Children Missing from Education (CME), Powys County Council.

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/11686/Children-Missing-from-Education-CME> Accessed on 28 August 2025

10. Children Missing Education Database

10.1 The Powys County Council CME database contains data relating to children and young people:

- identified as missing from education who have been removed from a school roll where the future educational provision is unknown;
- who have been permanently excluded and are not accessing full time provision;
- who have not started at a school following one of the key transition points;
- who have been identified as living in the LA but who have no known school base at the time of referral, e.g. as a result of a Police Protection Notice (PPN).

10.2 Tracing of CME will be undertaken proactively and the database will be updated to take account of any changes to the status of the children and young people concerned e.g. where an alternative educational provision has been made. Children will not be marked as closed on the database until;

- the LA is satisfied that the child has been located and is receiving a suitable education, or;
- has been transferred to another LA's CME database due to information as to their location, or;
- until the child ceases to be of statutory school age.

Efforts to locate children who remain on the CME database will continue to be made periodically such as via re-entering of their details on the School to school (s2s) database.

10.3 Where another LA has asked us to confirm if a child/ren is living in and/or receiving education in Powys, timely checks will be undertaken and the outcome will be notified to the requesting LA.

10.4 Where a child/ren are found to be living in Powys but not receiving education, the EWS will make immediate contact with the family to discuss the situation and provide support to ensure the child/ren receive their statutory entitlement to education.

10.5 An overview of the fields on the database is included at Appendix 4.

11. Locating children identified as missing education

11.1 If a child is not registered with an educational provider, then the EWS will make reasonable enquiries in an effort to locate the child. These processes are outlined in section 12 of this guidance.

11.2 Checks will be undertaken against existing databases within the Schools Service and with those held by partner agencies and may include the following:

- Children's Services
- Powys Teaching Health Board
- Housing
- Income and Awards
- Police Service
- Any other agency believed to be involved with family
- The LA from which child moved originally, if known
- Where appropriate, the custodial institution from which a child has left via the Youth Offending Service (YOS)
- Any LA to which a child may have moved
- Inland Revenue

11.3 In the case of children from families of those in the Armed Forces, checks will be made with the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS).

11.4 The EWS will attempt to make direct contact with the child's family by telephone, post, visiting the home or other appropriate methods such as SMS/text messaging. Enquiries may be made of any known emergency contacts for the child held by a school, and, if appropriate, enquiries will be made with neighbours.

11.5 If information is received which establishes that the child/children has/have moved, but there is no clear information about whether they have registered at new schools, enquiries will be made of relevant LAs, using the Children Missing Education – Enquiry/Notification form to Another LA (Appendix 3) by the EWS.

12. School to school (s2s) Website and the Lost Pupil Database

12.1 The Pupil Information (Wales) Regulations 2011²⁵ require schools to transfer pupil data in electronic format. All maintained schools in Wales have a statutory responsibility to use the Common Transfer System (CTS) for England and Wales to transfer specific information electronically, via s2s when a pupil joins or leaves a school²⁶.

12.2 s2s is a data transfer website designed and managed by the (UK) Department for Education to enable Common Transfer Files (CTF) to be securely transferred. The (UK) Department for Education provides guidance on how to use s2s²⁷. Access to s2s requires a DfE Sign-in account²⁸.

²⁵ The Pupil Information (Wales) Regulations 2011. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2011/1942/contents> Accessed on 28 August 2025

²⁶ Common Transfer System (CTS) and s2s: guidance for schools, Welsh Government. <https://www.gov.wales/common-transfer-system-cts-and-s2s-guidance-schools> Accessed on 28 August 2025

²⁷ School to school service: how to transfer information. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-to-school-service-how-to-transfer-information> Accessed on 28 August 2025

²⁸ <https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/> Accessed on 28 August 2025

- 12.3 If a school knows which school a pupil is moving to they must ensure that the Common Transfer File (CTF) is sent to the receiving school via s2s as quickly as possible. The new school may then apply for the full school record.
- 12.4 The Lost Pupil Database is the searchable part of s2s which contains CTFs where the (next) destination was "unknown" or "non-maintained". CTFs for these destinations should contain one pupil only. Schools can populate this section but only Lost Pupil LA officers are permitted to search/download from the Lost Pupil Database. CTFs will contain UPNs plus other personal data, securely stored until the pupil returns to a maintained school. Where a child transfers to an establishment that does not participate in s2s, the CTF should be posted for "non-maintained". This destination includes independent sector providers, confirmed moves overseas and/or parent education at home (EHE).
- 12.5 School management information systems are set up to include the following destinations:
- Destination Unknown (LA number XXX establishment number XXXX)
 - Destination Non-Maintained (LA number MMM establishment number MMMM)
- 12.6 When a pupil leaves and the CTF is posted for a specific establishment number but rejected, the original school must consider CTF for Destination Unknown.
- 12.7 When a pupil arrives at a new school without a CTF (the previous destination is unknown/non-maintained), the new school should ask Lost Pupil LA officer to search the Lost Pupil Database. This includes arrivals from Scotland, Northern Ireland, Crown Dependencies, overseas territories and other nations. If the LA officer locates the pupil, CTF will be removed and re-posted for the new school using the correct 7-digit reference number. s2s should alert establishments of pending CTF downloads.
- 12.8 When a learner's CTF has been uploaded to the Lost Pupil Database, Powys Education Services will routinely check the Database to monitor whether the CTF has been downloaded by another LA. This will allow contact to be made and education provision established.

13. Children Missing Education Processes

- 13.1 This section and the accompanying flowcharts explain the processes to be followed in different circumstances when it appears that a child may be missing education.
- 13.2 Children may become known as missing education at a natural transition point, which includes:
- The start of compulsory schooling (the Primary School Admissions Round);

- Transition from pre-school to school (the Primary School Admissions Round);
- Transition from primary school to high school (the Secondary School Admissions Round);
- In-year transfers, whether between Powys schools or because of a move into the county.

- 13.3 Children may go missing at these points for a variety of reasons. Where a parent has applied for a school place, any of the following may occur:
- The parent fails to accept the place;
 - The parent accepts the place, but the school is unable to contact the parent to arrange a start date;
 - The parent accepts the place, the school arranges a start date, but the child fails to attend.
- 13.4 Additionally, a child may already be known, but an expected application is not made (e.g. the parent of a Year 6 pupil fails to make an application for a high school place).
- 13.5 The School Admissions Team will lead on cases up to the acceptance of a school place. Where a parent has not accepted a place, the School Admissions Team can refer the case to the EWS using the Child Missing Education Referral Form for Other Agencies (see Appendix 2).
- 13.6 Where a place has been accepted, the relevant school will take the lead. The school must use the Child Missing Education – School Form (Appendix 1) to make the referral to refer cases where they are unable to make contact with the family to arrange a start date, or where a child has failed to attend as per the arranged start date. Schools must make all reasonable attempts to make contact with the family and to arrange a start date, usually over a 10-day school period, as usual. However, individual cases may be judged to be more urgent, and a school can seek advice from the Duty Education Welfare Officer (EWO) at any point via educationwelfare@powys.gov.uk. The Duty EWO will advise the school whether an earlier referral is appropriate: the school will still have to refer the case formally using the form at Appendix 1.
- 13.7 Flowchart A shows the above process.
- 13.8 Children who are on the roll of a school, and are attending, may cease to attend. Schools must follow usual procedures for school absence/attendance, including First Day Calling.
- 13.9 While schools may seek advice from the EWS at any time, it is expected that schools make best efforts to contact the child and their family, locate them and – ideally – speak to or see the child before making a referral as a possible Child Missing Education case.

- 13.10 Having made best efforts, schools must make a formal referral after 10 school days of absence. Referrals must be made using the Child Missing Education – School Form (see Appendix 1).
- 13.11 However, If the school has any concerns about the welfare of a child at the Safeguarding threshold, they must follow normal Safeguarding procedures immediately, including within the first 10 days of absence. Advice can be sought from and referrals made to:
- Children's Services Front Door
Telephone 01597 827666
Email csfrontdoor@powys.gov.uk
Webpage and online referral [Report Child Abuse - Powys County Council](#)
- 13.12 Schools are advised to keep robust records regarding school absence and actions taken to contact or locate a child. The School Form (Appendix A) supports with this.
- 13.13 Flowchart B shows the processes to be followed by schools where a pupil on roll is suspected to be a Child Missing Education.
- 13.14 Children may not be known to the LA or a Powys maintained school at all. This may be because:
- The family live in Powys, the child attends a school in a neighbouring authority, and the child has ceased to attend (e.g. due to permanent exclusion, persistent absence, etc).
 - The family live in Powys, the child attends an independent school, and the child has ceased to attend.
 - The child has become resident in Powys, but no application has been made to school.
 - The child has always been Electively Home Educated, but the parents have not informed the LA of this (which is their legal right).
 - The child has always been Electively Home Educated, and the family have moved into Powys.
 - No education appears to be being made for the child.
- 13.15 In these circumstances, another professional, department of the LA, or other agency may become aware of the child through the course of their work and may have concerns that the child is not receiving an education.
- 13.16 In such cases, the professional or agency should make a referral to the EWS using the Child Missing Education Referral Form for Other Agencies (see Appendix 2).
- 13.17 Members of the public who are not acting in a professional capacity may also make the LA aware of a child missing education. They are not expected to do so in a formal manner. Information is provided on the Powys County Council

website in regards to Children Missing Education²⁹, which guides any person to contact the educationwelfare@powys.gov.uk if they have concerns that a child may be missing education. However, they may contact in other ways. Any such contact will be processed appropriately.

- 13.18 Where it appears that a child suspected of missing education has moved out of county, the EWS will notify that authority using the Enquiry/Notification form at Appendix 3.
- 13.19 Similarly, the EWS will receive enquiries and notifications from other authorities of children believed to have moved into Powys. It is acknowledged that those authorities will use their own systems/forms to make those enquiries.
- 13.20 When the EWS is notified of a possible child missing education by a school, by another professional, by another LA, or by a member of the public, the Service will make their own enquiries to locate a child. This will include checks with other departments and agencies both inside and outside Powys County Council. These are logged on the CME Tracker. Attempts to contact or locate family members will be logged on the Child Missing Education Referral Form – School Form (where relevant) or in the case file held on Sharepoint.
- 13.21 Schools must maintain children on roll until instructed otherwise by the EWS. A completed Child Missing Education Referral Form – School Form will be returned to the school with confirmation of the date on which the child can be removed from roll for the school's own records.
- 13.22 It is expected that almost all cases of a Child Missing Education will be resolved, either through:
- working with the family to secure an education provision for the child (including Elective Home Education); or
 - locating the child/family in another authority and passing the case to that authority, who then are able to secure an education provision; or
 - positively identifying that the family have moved/returned overseas; or
 - being unable to locate the child at all, in which case the child's details will be uploaded to the Lost Pupil Database on s2s.
- 13.23 In very isolated cases, a child and family may be located but the family chooses not to engage with the LA, and the LA is unable to verify that the parent is fulfilling their legal duty to ensure that their child is receiving a suitable education. In such cases, the LA may seek to serve a Statutory Attendance Order (SAO).
- 13.24 SAOs apply when a parent of a child of compulsory school age fails to satisfy the LA that the child is receiving a suitable education and where the authority

²⁹ Children Missing from Education (CME), Powys County Council.
<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/11686/Children-Missing-from-Education-CME> Accessed on 28 August 2025

believes the child should attend school, as outlined in Section 437 of the Education Act 1996³⁰.

- 13.25 The Authority will initially write to the parent to serve notice of the intention to seek an SAO. The parent will have 15 days in which to satisfy the LA that a suitable education is being provided, as outlined in Section 437(1) and 437(2)³¹.
- 13.26 If the parent fails to satisfy the LA, then the Authority will serve an SAO. The SAO will name a school, and the Authority will liaise with the governing body and head teacher, who will be required to admit the child (see Section 437(5) and 437(6)³².
- 13.27 Once an SAO is served, parents must either comply with the order, or may present evidence to the LA that demonstrates that they are providing a suitable education. The SAO will either remain in effect for the duration of the child's compulsory schooling, or be revoked if the Authority is satisfied that the parents have now provided an education.
- 13.28 Should a parent fail to comply with the SAO, the LA will consider whether prosecution for non-compliance is appropriate. The LA may, as part of any prosecution, seek a cost order.
- 13.29 The LA may also seek, either as an alternative to or alongside a prosecution, an Education Supervision Order (ESO).
- 13.30 ESOs give LAs a formal supervisory role in the education of children under Section 36 of the Children Act 1989³³.

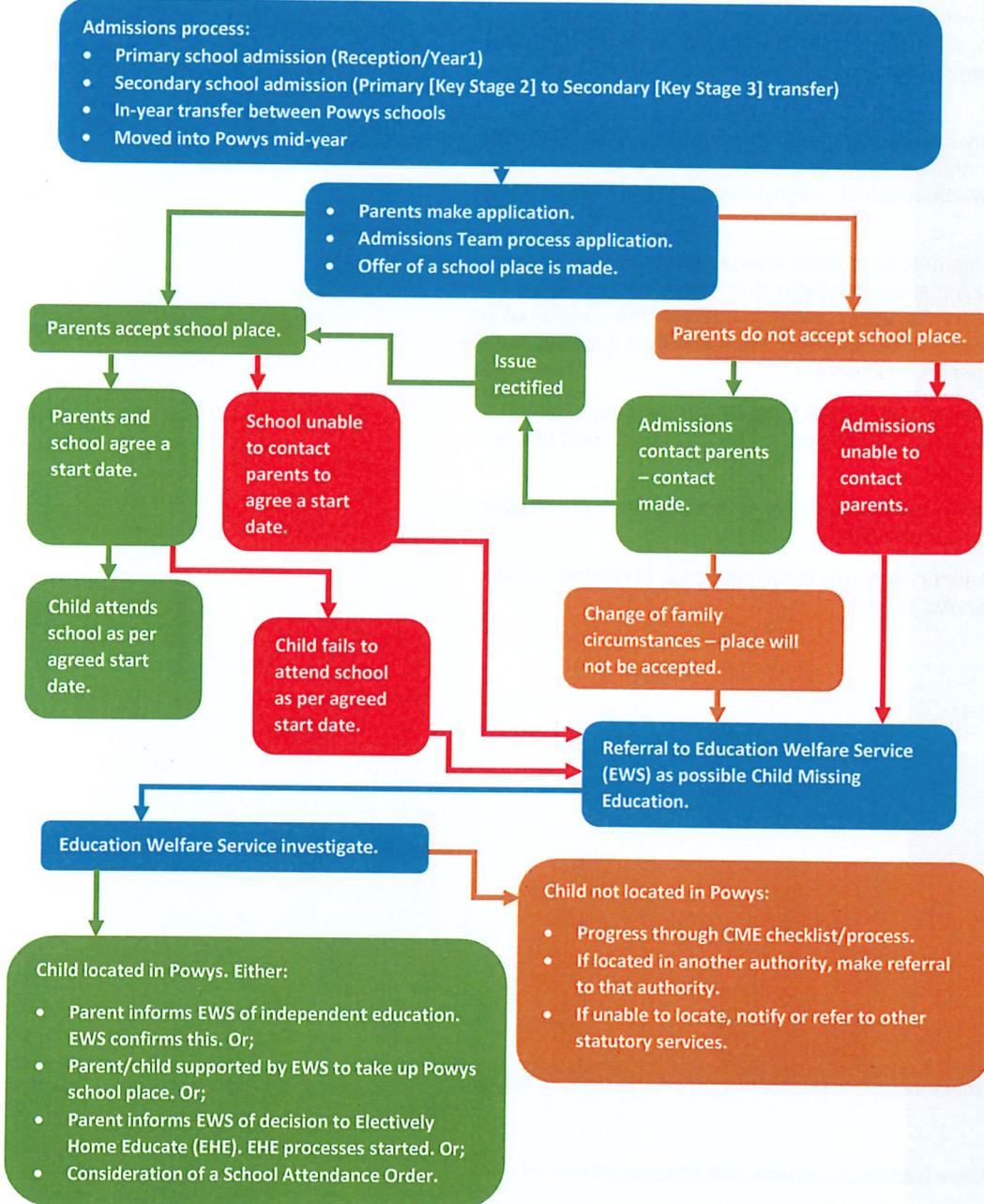
³⁰ Education Act 1996, Section 437. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/437> Accessed on 28 August 2025

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Children Act 1989, Section 36. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/36> Accessed on 28 August 2025

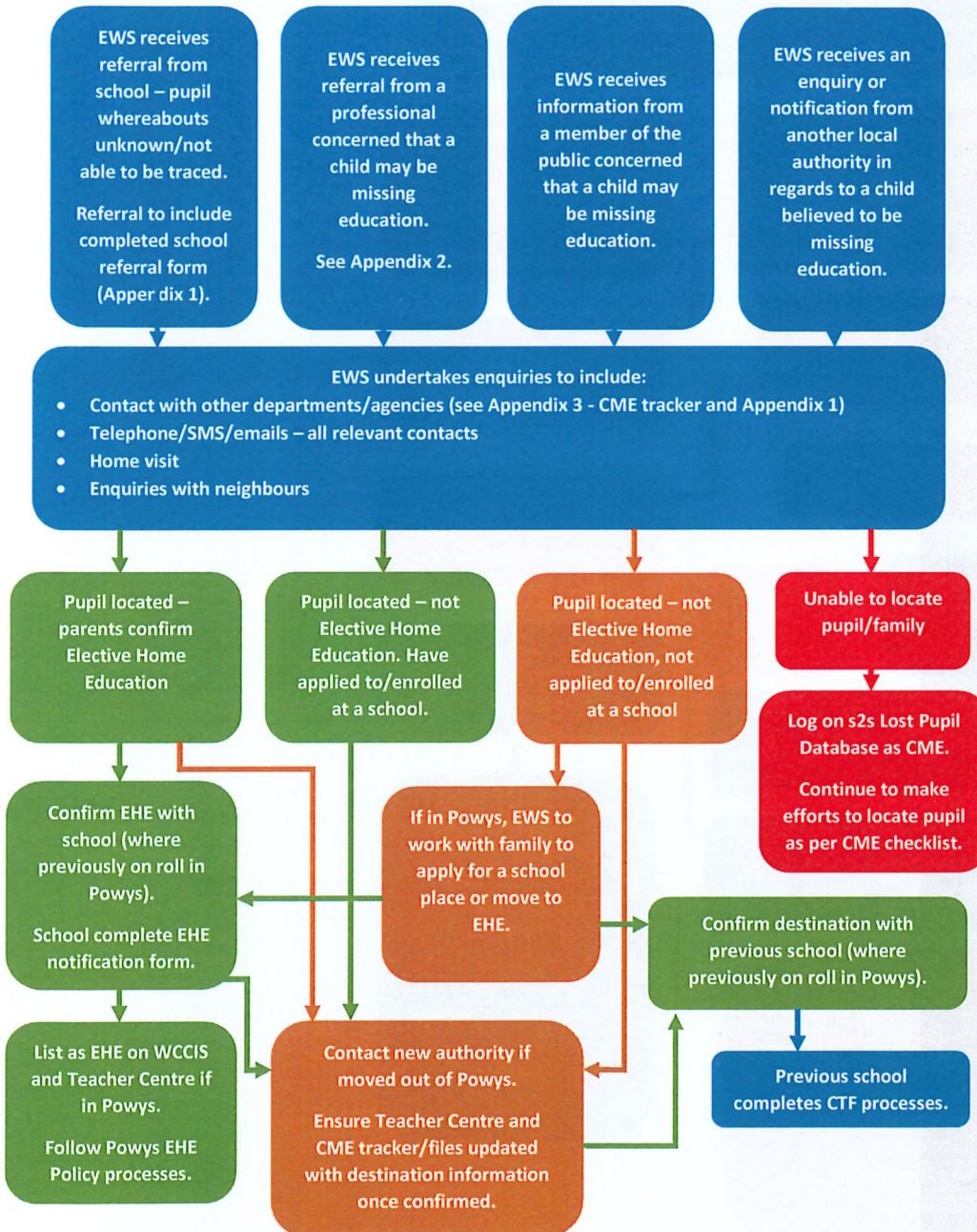
Flowchart A – Children Missing Education at Start of Education/School Transfer/Transition



Flowchart B – Children on roll at a Powys School who are suspected of being a Child Missing Education – School processes



Flowchart C – EWS processes on receipt of a Child Missing Education Referral



Appendix 1 – Child Missing Education Referral Form – School Form (for pupils on roll at a Powys School)

This form includes school CME checklist Actions to be taken by **Schools** to locate the pupil prior to referral to the EWS.

Through registration, the school identifies that a pupil is not in school. After completing First Day Contact procedures, the school identifies that the pupil may be 'missing'. It is good practice to keep a record of efforts made to trace the child.

If the school has any Safeguarding concerns, the matter must be immediately referred to Children's Services and/or the police. You must still proceed with the referral to the Education Welfare Officer, even if a Safeguarding referral has been made.

PUPIL INFORMATION			
Name of Pupil [one pupil per form – GDPR]:	DOB	M/F	NCY
Name of parent(s)/carer(s):			
Address (pupil):		Contact detail (telephone and email):	
Basic details of concerns: (e.g. <i>Has not been in school since.....; There has been no communication/contact from home.....; etc</i>)			
Is this a case where the pupil has not returned to school after a holiday/school break:		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
To the best of your knowledge, is the pupil:			
Refugee/Asylum seeker?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Or from another particular background/origin?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, what is that background?			
On the Child Protection Register?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
A Child Looked After (in public care)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Known to Youth Offending Team?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other well-being concerns?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, what are those concerns?			
Are they at risk of radicalisation or exploitation?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, please provide details.			

SCHOOL ACTIONS – Within the first 10 school days that a pupil is missing the school should complete the following: (Keep any evidence; letters sent etc)

INITIAL ACTIONS – FIRST DAY			
Actions	Date/Time	By whom	Outcome
First day calling/contact carried out			
If the pupil is on the Child Protection Register or is Looked After, contact social worker			
Attempt telephone contact with all emergency numbers			
If siblings attend different schools, make contact to share information			

ONGOING ACTIONS – DAY TWO TO DAY TEN			
Actions	Date/Time	By whom	Outcome
Check with wider school community, e.g. staff, other pupils, carers, friends and any known relatives			
Attempt email or SMS contact with any appropriate contacts			
Write to last known address and addresses of emergency contacts if known.			
Contact appropriate agencies involved with pupil/family			
Other action (please specify):			

The school should notify the Education Welfare Officer on the tenth day of school absence. Send a copy of this checklist to the EWO and keep a copy in school.

Continue to make efforts within the school and assist the EWO and other agencies in the search.

NB Do not remove pupil from roll until EWO has concluded investigations and confirmation that the pupil can be removed has been received.

Referral Details	
Date referred to EWS	
Name of School	
Name of Referrer	
Position/Job title of Referrer	
Contact number of Referrer	
Contact email address of Referrer	

EWS ACTIONS – After 10 school days of absence and on receipt of a referral, the EWS should complete the following: (Keep any evidence; letters sent etc)

EWS ACTIONS			
Actions	Date	By whom	Outcome
Log on CME tracker and initiate agency checks (refer to tracker for details)			
Attempt contact with immediate family, including last known address			
Attempt contact with emergency contacts, neighbours, etc.			
Check with friends, siblings and other relatives of the pupil (i.e. those who may attend a different school)			
In cases where instances of Domestic Abuse are known, agency enquiries must include:			
MFCC (covers Montgomeryshire)			
Calan DVS (covers Radnorshire and Brecknockshire)			

At any point in your investigation where there is reason to suspect that the child or young person is at risk, the LA Safeguarding Procedures should be followed.

Removal from school roll

After completing the above checklist and having concluded all enquiries, if the pupil:

- Remains missing; or:
- Is on roll at an independent school; or:
- Has moved out of Powys but does not yet have a school place or confirmation of EHE with the new authority;

discuss the removal of the child / young person from the school register with the School and Senior Education Welfare Officer or Education Manager.

1. Upload a copy of this completed checklist, with a copy of the child's Attendance Certificate to the CME Sharepoint site.
2. Complete the School management information system details section of the form, and return a copy of the entire form to the school.
3. Check that pupil's CTF have been uploaded onto the Lost Pupil Database in s2s with a file destination of XXX XXXX (or MMM MMMM if on roll at an independent school).

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM DETAILS

Name of School	
Date decision made that pupil can be removed from school roll	
Effective date of removal (as date may be backdated or a future date)	
Authorised by EWS (Name of officer)	
Authorised by Member of School SMT (Name of staff)	

CTF AND S2S PROCESSES

Date CTF transferred to next school or Date CTF uploaded to s2s/Lost Pupil Database	
Date of notification to another LA and name of LA	

**Appendix 2 – Child Missing Education Referral Form for Other Agencies
Notification to the LA of a Child or Young Person Missing Education**

This form should be completed by any professional or agency undertaking an assessment or being aware of a child or young person of compulsory school age who does not appear to be attending a school.

DETAILS OF AGENCY MAKING THE REFERRAL			
Name of professional making referral:			
Role:			
Agency/Department/Organisation:			
Address:			
Contact number:			
Contact email:			
Date that child became known to agency as missing education:			

DETAILS OF THE CHILD		
Name of child [one child per form – GDPR]:	Date of Birth	Male/Female
Address:	Contact information, incl. email:	
Parent(s)/Carer(s) name(s):	Relationship to child.	
Any previous addresses known to agency?:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please provide details:		

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHILD			
To the best of your knowledge, is the child:			
Refugee/Asylum seeker?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Or from another particular background/origin?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, what is that background?			
On the Child Protection Register?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
A Child Looked After (in public care)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Known to Youth Offending Team?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other well-being concerns?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, what are those concerns?			

Are they at risk of radicalisation or exploitation? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, please provide details.	

REASONS FOR CHILD MISSING EDUCATION CONCERNS

Child not registered at a school <input type="checkbox"/>	Not known if registered at a school <input type="checkbox"/>
Whereabouts unknown <input type="checkbox"/>	House empty/appears unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/>
How did this child/young person come to your attention?	
What are your concerns?	
Do you have any information about previous educational provision?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, what information can you provide? (e.g. date of last educational provision; name and address of educational provision; known attendance difficulties; etc).	

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

What other agencies are known to be involved with the child/young person/family?
Any other relevant information, including any safety factors to be acknowledged when visiting this family:
Any relevant information about the child's/young person's health and well-being, including mental health?

Please submit this form to educationwelfare@powys.gov.uk

Date sent:		Date received:	
Date acknowledged:		Acknowledged by:	

Date added to CME tracker:	
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**Appendix 3 – Child Missing Education – Enquiry/Notification form to Another LA
Enquiry Form - Movement of Children/Young People**

The children/young people below are reported to have moved into your authority. Would you kindly make enquiries to establish if they are now resident in your area? Where not known, please notify me as soon as possible.

Please return form to: [Redacted]

educationwelfare@powys.gov.uk

Officer making enquiry:	Date of enquiry:
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Details of children/young people (one linked sibling group per form)			
Name:	DOB:	Last school attended:	School admitted to: Child Protection Register (Yes/No):

Last known address:	New address:
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Name of parent/carer:	Relationship to child:	Contact number(s):	Email:

Guidance: School admitted to and New address fields to be completed by Powys if known, and confirmed or corrected by LA to whom enquiry is being made. If not known, LA to whom the enquiry is being made will complete.

Appendix 4 – Child Missing Education Tracker/Database

The Schools Service maintains a tracker/database of Children Missing Education. The tracker contains the fields shown below. Each section of the tracker has a number of fields. The table below shows the fields, and the responsibility to action each field. Which fields are completed in any given case will vary depending on the circumstances of that case. Some fields are compulsory in any and all cases.

CME QUERY DETAILS				
Child Name	D.O.B / Age	Query From	Date Received	Officer Who Received Query
<i>All fields in this section are compulsory and are completed by the Officer who received the query.</i>				
INTERNAL CHECKS				
Teacher Centre Check To be actioned by Receiving Officer	School Check To be actioned by Duty EWO	WCCIS Check To be actioned by Education Manager	PCC ALN & CLA Check To be actioned by Duty EWO	PCC Benefits Check To be actioned by Service Manager
Compulsory check for all cases. Teacher Centre is the Information Management System.	Where a referral indicates a possible school, a check with that school can be actioned.	Compulsory check for all cases that cannot be found on Teacher Centre or located at a school. WCCIS is the Social Services and Health case management system.	Where a referral indicates that a child may be subject to an LA IDP or equivalent, a check can be made with the ALN team. Where it appears that a child may be Looked After, a check can be made with the Powys Virtual School.	Where it has not been possible to identify children, their family or their address via the previous four checks, then additional checks can be made with these Powys County Council teams.
			PCC Housing Check To be actioned by Education Manager	PCC Fraud Team Check To be actioned by Service Manager

Commented [SQ1]: MG - I will need to check if it is ok to publicise this

Commented [MG2R1]: @Sarah Quibell Need you to check on this, but not sure we can make such checks if we're not going to be open with the public.

Commented [3R1]: It makes it sound like we are checking for fraud and we're not. We're just seeing if they have any mention on their databases, so I suggested 'Other PCC Departments'

EXTERNAL AGENCY CHECKS			
Health Board Check	Other LA Admissions Check	Other LA EWS Check	Police Check
To be actioned by Education Manager Where all other checks have been unable to identify or locate a child or family, a request can be made to the Powys Teaching Health Board Safeguarding Team for a check for any information they may be able to access that helps to identify or locate the child or family.	To be actioned by PCC Admissions Team Where a CME query indicates a move out of county, Powys School Admissions can liaise with their counterparts to verify whether an application for a school has been made.	To be actioned by PCC Duty EWS Officer Where a CME query indicates a move out of county, Powys EWS can liaise with their counterparts.	To be actioned by Senior EWO This check must be discussed with the Education Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead for Education prior to being undertaken.
		Where the family history suggests that other agencies may be working with the family, a check with that agency can be made. The agency approached will be logged. In cases of families fleeing domestic violence, checks will be made with the relevant support service, which in Powys are: Montgomeryshire: MFCC Radnorshire and Brecknockshire: Calan DVS	

OUTCOME OF CHECKS			
Child Located in Other LA	Child Not CME – Final Status	Child Located – is CME – Action Taken	Child Not Located – Action Taken
			Response to Enquirer
To be completed by relevant CME Team Member			
These fields are completed as appropriate to each case to show what the final status of the child is, and what action was taken. The date and a summary of the response to the person or agency making the enquiry or referral is recorded. Once a final status has been determined and the child is no longer missing education, the case is marked as closed.			

Resolved: No Further Action Required
Case Closed

Appendix 5 – Leaving School Form for Parents/Carers

NAME OF SCHOOL:	
Note to Parents/Carers:	Where your family is moving home, or your child is leaving school for other reasons, we ask that you provide us with some details. Please fill in this form as fully as you can, even if you do not know all the details yet.

CHILD(REN)'S DETAILS		
Name of Child	Date of Birth	Class/Tutor Group

DETAILS OF MOVE/LEAVING SCHOOL			
My child(ren) will be leaving school on/their last day will be (date):			
The reason they are leaving is (<i>please tick</i>):	a) we are moving house <input type="checkbox"/>	b) we are returning to our country of origin/we are emigrating <input type="checkbox"/>	c) Other – please give details below <input type="checkbox"/>

ONWARD CONTACT DETAILS			
Do you know your new address? If yes, please provide details	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	New address:
Do you know your child(ren)'s new school? If yes, please provide details.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	New school:
If you do not yet know your new address or your child(ren)'s new school, please provide the town/local authority/area/country you are moving to:			

TELEPHONE CONTACT INFORMATION		
Will you be keeping the same mobile telephone numbers? Please confirm current numbers or list new numbers below.		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
		No <input type="checkbox"/>
Name	Number	Relationship to child(ren) (e.g. mother, father, etc)

EMAIL CONTACT INFORMATION		
Will you be keeping the same email addresses?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
Please confirm current addresses or list new addresses below.		No <input type="checkbox"/>
Name	Email address	Relationship to child(ren) (e.g. mother, father, etc)

EMERGENCY CONTACT		
If possible, please give the name, address and telephone number of a friend or relative in the UK who is not moving and who you will be staying in touch with. We will only contact them if we need information about your child's new school and we cannot contact you. In most cases this will not be necessary because the new school will contact us to transfer your child's information.		
Name	Address	Contact numbers/email

DECLARATION/SIGNATURES		
Please ensure that all persons with Parental Responsibility are aware of the move. Where possible, all those with Parental Responsibility should sign this form.		
Full name of parent/carer	Relationship to child	Signature

<p>Attached to this form is a school compliments slip Please pass this on to the new school and ask them to contact us.</p> <p>NB: The school is required to transfer information as quickly as possible to your child's new school; and both the school and the Local Authority have a legal duty to try to locate your child if he or she stops attending and we do not know the details of the new school or other educational provision. This may include contacting Social Services or the Police if you have not given us the information and we are unable to contact you. By filling in this form and enabling us to keep in contact with you, you are ensuring we do not need to refer to other agencies and that their time is not wasted, nor are you contacted unnecessarily.</p>

For school use only:			
Date form returned to school:		Date form copied to EWS:	
Form to be copied to educationwelfare@powys.gov.uk			

SIGNED
DATE



HEADTEACHER

SIGNED
DATE



CHAIR OF GOVERNORS