



L A L E H A M L E A

A Catholic Independent Primary School for boys and girls aged 3 to 11

Headteacher: Mrs. M Reece

LALEHAM LEA SCHOOL & NURSERY

Children Missing in Education Policy

This is a whole school policy which applies to all sections of the school, including Early Years Foundation Stage, Out of School Care and Clubs.

	Date	Signed
Date reviewed	March 2026	M Reece Head Teacher
Ratified by the Board of Governors	March 2026	Y Epale Chair of Governors
Date of next review	March 2028	



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Statement of intent



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All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Unfortunately, children missing education (CME) risk underachieving, being victims of abuse, and not being in education, employment or training (NEET) in later life.

The LA has a legal duty to identify when there are CME and help them back into education. This policy highlights what our school will do to help the LA with its duty.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- KCSIE (2025)
- DfE (2023) 'Working together to safeguard children'
- DfE (2016) 'Children Missing Education' Statutory guidance for local authorities
- DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- The Education Act 1996 & 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (amended 2016)
- The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005 (as amended in 2018)
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2008 (as amended in 2018)
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended in 2014)

2. Definitions

2.1. For the purpose of this policy, 'Children Missing Education' are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school (as defined by the DfE).

CME includes children who:

- are in the process of applying for a school place
- have been offered a school place for a future date but have not yet started
- are receiving elective home education (EHE) that has been assessed as unsuitable
- have been recorded as CME for an extended period, for example where their whereabouts is unclear or unknown

CME are not children who:



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- are receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school (for example, pupils who are electively home educated or attending alternative provision) which is suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have
- are EHE but the local authority has not had an opportunity to assess whether the education being provided is suitable
- are registered at a school, even if they are persistently or severely absent from that school

3. Why children miss education

There are a number of reasons as to why children miss school, including the following:

- Failing to be registered at a school at the age of five
- Failing to make a successful transition
- Exclusion
- Mid-year transfer of school
- Families moving into a new area
- Aside from these reasons, if a child is missing from school, particularly repeatedly, this can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, such as the following:
 - Abuse and neglect – including sexual abuse or exploitation and criminal exploitation
 - Mental health issues – such as risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM or risk of forced marriage

Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, having poorer health outcomes, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET) later in life.

4. Children at particular risks of missing education

- 4.1. As there could be many reasons for a child to be missing from education, the LA will make a judgement on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.2. In Croydon, the main reasons behind Children Missing from Education are those who fail to start at an appropriate education provision either at the start of the new academic year or following a mid-year transfer, becoming lost from school rolls, or failure to register at a new school when moving in or out of the Borough.
- 4.3. There are also many other explanations behind CME, meaning that there are a lot of possible variants. As well as the main reasons already stated, please see below for a list of potential alternative triggers of CME and circumstances which may make a child more likely to be affected by these factors:
 - Moving in and out of boroughs and beginning the school application process;



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- Failure of schools to notify the Local Authority of a child being off-rolled, or being excluded;
- Withdrawal of a child from school by the parent/ carer;
- Failure to transition between schools;
- Disengagement;
- Frequent house moves, periods of homelessness or time spent in refuge/ temporary accommodation;
- Youth Offending Service involvement;
- Generational disengagement;
- Children of Gypsy, Roma and Travelling families;
- Children of immigrant families;
- Asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors (Looked After Children);
- Young carers;
- Children with Special Educational Needs;
- Children who are privately fostered or are known to Children's Social Care (e.g., Child Protection Plan, Child In Need)
- Trafficked children;
- Children who have experienced domestic violence and other adverse family circumstances.

5. Who does the school contact?

If we know or suspect that a child is missing from education, the school contacts Croydon straightaway. The DfE states in "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (updated February 2019) that "Every practitioner working with a child has a responsibility to inform their CME contact if they know or suspect that a child is not receiving education. To help local agencies and professionals find children who are missing from education and identify those that are at risk of going missing from education, guidance was issued in July 2004, identifying and maintaining contact with children missing, or at risk of going missing from education."

6. Roles and responsibilities

The school

- 6.1. Laleham Lea will monitor pupils' attendance daily through their attendance register, and should take proactive steps to address poor or irregular attendance to prevent children becoming CME
- 6.2. The school will enter pupils on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the school, or the day that the school has been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. In the event that a pupil fails to attend the school on the agreed or notified date, the school will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the reason for this absence, and will notify the LA at the earliest opportunity.



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- 6.3. The school will keep an accurate and up-to-date admissions register by encouraging parents to inform them of any changes.
- 6.4. The school will monitor pupils' attendance through a daily register in line with chapter 2 of Working Together to Improve School Attendance'.
- 6.5. In Croydon, referrals for CME are accepted after 10 working days of reasonable checks being carried out by the educational provider and their Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 6.6. Schools should monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority.
- 6.7. Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from the school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admission register if the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.
- 6.8. The school must notify their LA when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulations outlined in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2016). – Appendix C
- 6.9. Pupils who remain on the school roll are not necessarily missing education, but will be monitored, and attendance will be addressed when it is poor.
- 6.10. The school will arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed-period exclusion, which may include home school work.
- 6.11. The school will provide information to the LA regarding standard transitions, if requested to do so by the LA.

Staff members

- 6.12. All staff will be alert to the potential need to implement early help for a pupil who is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home.
- 6.13. All staff will be aware of the school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.
- 6.14. Where staff have concerns about pupils relating to CME, staff will use their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated to the DSL or DDSL, who will then decide if there is a need to take forward as appropriate (e.g., to MASH or LADO).

The Local Authority



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6.16. Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (amended - Education and Inspections Act 2006) requires all local authorities to make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children residing in their area who are not receiving a "suitable education". We stand a better chance of ensuring a child's safety if we know how and where they are receiving their education.

By "suitable education" we mean efficient full-time education suitable to the child's age. Children Missing from Education should not be confused with:

- children who are on roll at a school but are not in regular attendance. In this case, referrals should be made to the Education Welfare Service, or the school's Attendance and Welfare Officer
- children who are receiving Home Education (known as Elective Home Education)
- children whose parents have applied for a school place, and the application is being dealt with via the Admissions procedures.

6.17. The LA will provide full-time education for permanently excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed-period exclusion.

6.18. When it is brought to the LA's attention that a child may not be receiving a suitable education, the LA will serve notices on parents to assure that LA that their child is receiving such an education.

6.19. The LA will issue School Attendance Orders to parents who fail to assure the LA that their child is receiving a suitable education, and the LA believes that the child should attend school.

6.20. The LA will prosecute parents that do not comply with a School Attendance Order.

6.21. The LA will prosecute or fine parents/carers of school-registered children who fail to ensure their child attends school regularly.

6.22. The LA will ensure that children identified as not receiving suitable education are returned to full-time education either at the school or elsewhere.

6.23. The LA will ensure that the school demonstrates prompt action and effective early intervention procedures to ensure children are safe and receiving suitable education.

6.24. The LA will apply to court for an Education Supervision Order for a CME.

6.25. The LA will ensure that children who return to full-time education are appropriately supported, taking into account the reasons why they missed education in the first place.

6.26. Pupils with SEN statements, or EHC plans, are able to be home educated. If the statement/EHC plan sets out the provision that the pupil should receive at home, or names



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a school where the provision will be received, but the parent/carer chooses to home educate the child, the LA will arrange the provision and ensure that it is suitable to the child's special educational needs. The LA will review this statement annually.

- 6.27. The LA is responsible for liaising and sharing information with other agencies to support children who miss education.
- 6.28. The LA is responsible for referring to the LA children's social care where there is concern for a child's welfare, as well as the police if there is reason to suspect a crime has been committed.

Parents

- 6.29. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children, who are of compulsory school age, are receiving suitable full-time education.
- 6.30. Parents are responsible for notifying the school in writing where they will be home-schooling their child, in order for the child to be removed from the admissions register.
- 6.31. Parents will notify the school regarding any absences, including reasons for the absence, or changes to the pupil's education arrangements.
- 6.32. Parents are responsible for providing the school with more than one emergency contact number where possible.

7. Induction and training

- 7.1. The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education will be explained to staff during their induction.
- 7.2. All staff will receive annual safeguarding and child protection training, including an update on the various safeguarding concern possibilities that CME could represent, any changes to the early help process and staff members' role in this process.

8. Working with others

- 8.1. Families moving from one LA to another can sometimes lead to a child being lost in the system and consequently missing education. When a child moves, LAs will work with other LAs, regionally or nationally, to ensure this does not happen.
- 8.2. The school uses a secure internet system to allow schools to transfer pupil information when a child moves education setting.

9. Safeguarding

- 9.1. For the purpose of this policy, "**reasonable enquiries**" are defined as limited, investigative powers that the school may action to determine a child's whereabouts and whether they may be in danger.



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- 9.2. In line with the Children Act 2004, the school may follow appropriate procedures when carrying out reasonable enquiries, such as the DSL conducting discussions with neighbours, relatives or landlords, to determine whether a child may be at risk of harm.
 - 9.3. The DSL will record that they have completed these procedures and, if necessary, make a referral to the children's social care or police.
 - 9.4. Where the whereabouts and safety of a child is unknown, the school, in conjunction with the LA, may carry out the following actions:
 - Make contact with the parent/carer, relatives and neighbours using known contact details
 - Check local databases
 - Check data transfer systems.
 - Follow local information sharing arrangements, and making enquiries via other local databases and agencies where possible
 - Check with UK Visas and Immigration and/or the Border Force
 - Check with agencies known to be involved with the family
 - Check with the LA and school from which the pupil moved originally
 - Check with the LA where the pupil lives, if this is different to where the school is located
 - Check with the Ministry of Defence Children's Education Advisory Service in the case of children of Service Personnel
 - Conduct home visits via an appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessments, and making enquiries with neighbours or relatives, if appropriate
- NB.** This list is not exhaustive – the school and LA will use their judgement towards what reasonable enquiries are appropriate, once all the facts of the case have been taken into account.
- 10. Admissions register**
 - 10.1. The school will ensure that the admissions register is kept up-to-date at all times, and will encourage parents/carers to notify the school of any changes as they occur, such as via email or newsletters.
 - 10.2. Pupils will be recorded on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the school, or the day that the school has been notified, as the date that the pupil will attend the school.



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- 10.3. Once a pupil has been recorded on the admissions register, the school will notify the LA within five days, and will supply the LA with all of the details contained on the admissions register for the new pupil.
 - 10.4. Where a parent/carer notifies the school that a pupil will live at another address, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:
 - The full name of the parent/carer with whom the pupil will live
 - The new address
 - The date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address
 - 10.5. Where a parent notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school, or will be attending a different school in future, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:
 - The name of the new school
 - The date when the pupil first attended, or is due to attend, that school
 - 10.6. Parents are able to elect to educate their children at home, and will subsequently withdraw them from school. This can happen at any time, unless the pupil is subject to a School Attendance Order. If a parent notifies the school, the pupil will be deleted from our admission register and the school will inform the LA.
- 11. Removing a pupil from the admissions register**
- 11.1. The school will inform the LA of any pupil who will be deleted from the admission register where they:
 - Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system, e.g., home-schooled.
 - Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the school.
 - Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither they nor their parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
 - Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order, and the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning at the end of that period.
 - Have been permanently excluded.
 - Have died.
 - Have been registered at another school where it is not indicated this should be the case.
 - Are registered at more than one school, but have failed to attend the school and the proprietor of any other schools concerned have consented to the deletion.



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- Have been granted authorised leave but have failed to attend school within 10 school days after the period of authorised absence ended, and:
 - Have been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than 20 school days, and:
 - The absence was not authorised.
 - There is reason to believe the pupil is not unable to attend school.
 - The LA and school are unable to determine the pupil's whereabouts after making **joint** reasonable enquiries. Local authorities and schools should agree roles and responsibilities locally in relation to making joint enquiries.
- 11.2. The school will notify the LA that a pupil is to be removed from the admissions register as soon as any of the above criteria are met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is actually removed.
- 11.3. If a pupil's name is to be removed from the admissions register, the school will provide the LA with the following information:
- The full name of the pupil
 - The full name and address of any parent/carer with whom the pupil lives
 - At least one telephone number of the parent/carer with whom the pupil lives
 - The full name and address of the parent/carer who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable
 - The name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date, if applicable
 - The grounds for removal from the admissions register under Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended), as outlined in section 10 of this policy.

12. Croydon's Contacts for CME Team

Email: ChildrenMissingfromEducation@croydon.gov.uk

Telephone: 0208 726 6000

Children, Families and Learning

Croydon Council

4th Floor, Zone A

Bernard Weatherill House

8 Mint Walk

Croydon,

CR0 1EA

Lead – Strategic Lead for Safeguarding, Behaviour and Inclusion– Val Burrell-Walker
Valerie.Burrell-Walker@croydon.gov.uk



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Children Missing in Education Lead – Nabeela Boodoo-Uddin
Nabeela.Boodoo-Uddin@croydon.gov.uk

CME inbox Children
MissingfromEducation@croydon.gov.uk

13. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed every two years by the Headteacher, DSL and the Governors



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Appendix A (Taken from Croydon Council - Children Missing from Education & Pupils Added/Removed from Roll - Information & guidance for all schools, including independent schools, free schools & academies)

Notification of Child Missing from Education

Once completed, please email to childrenmissingfromeducation@croydon.gov.uk with any additional documents.

Your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should also be notified of this notification.

Child Details:

Child's FORENAME:	
Child's SURNAME:	
Ethnicity:	
First Language:	
Unique Pupil Number (UPN):	
Date of Birth:	
Gender:	
Current Address:	
New address (if known or applicable)	
Parent/Carer (1) Name:	
Parent/Carer (1) Address:	
Telephone Number	
Email Address	
Parent/Carer (2) Name:	
Parent/Carer (2) Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Email address:	
Emergency Contact details provided in pupil registration:	
GP Surgery:	

Reason for Referral



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Name of Agency/School:	
Name of Referrer:	
Referrer Position/Job Title:	
Referrer Email Address:	
Referrer Telephone Number:	
Referral Date:	
Last day of attendance:	

Please provide information below regarding attempts to make contact with the family within the last 10 days: please note if these checks are not complete or evidence of attempts to gain information not provided your referral may be returned.

SCHOOL CHECK:	DATE(S)	OUTCOME	COMPLETED BY
Phone call – parent			
Email to parent			
Letter sent			
Home visit made			
Sibling schools contacted.			
Phone call - Emergency Contacts			
New School, new address and travel information (if applicable)			
Contact with other agencies involved with family			
Contact with new boroughs Admissions Team. (If applicable)			
Any other additional information relevant to this referral:			

Where possible please submit a photo of the child and copies of identification available, e.g. passport, birth certificate via childrenmissingfromeducation@croydon.gov.uk



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Appendix B

Summary of school action when decision made to remove pupil from roll:
 (Taken from Croydon Council - Children Missing from Education & Pupils Added/
 Removed from Roll - Information & guidance for all schools,
 including independent schools, free schools & academies)

Statutory Ground for deletion from roll	School Action Required
Subsection (1) (a) LA amendment to existing School Attendance Order	Submit a Pupil Migration form
Subsection (1) (b) Pupil has transferred and been registered at another school	Submit a Pupil Migration form
Subsection (1) (c) Dual registration has come to an end	Submit a Pupil Migration form
Subsection (1) (d) the school has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is to be home educated	Submit a Children Missing Education referral and provide copy of written notification from parent. Pupil should remain on roll until confirmation is received from the LA's Elective Home Education Monitoring and Support Teacher. Once confirmation is received a Pupil Migration form should be submitted.
Subsection (1) (e) Pupil no longer ordinarily resides at an address which is a reasonable distance from the school	Submit a Children Missing Education referral and provide copy of written notification from parent of new address. Pupil should remain on roll until confirmation is received from Children Missing Education Engagement Key Worker. Once confirmation is received a Pupil Migration form should be submitted
Subsection (1) (f) (i) (ii) (iii) Leave of absence exceeding 10 school days granted AND pupil	Submit a Children Missing Education referral and provide copy of any



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<p>has failed to return to school within 10 school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which leave of absence was granted</p>	<p>correspondence with parent re the period of leave. Pupil should remain on roll until confirmation is received from Children Missing Education Engagement Key Worker. Once confirmation is received a Pupil Migration form should be submitted</p>
<p>Subsection (1) (g) School medical officer has certified that pupil unlikely to be in fit state to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age</p>	<p>Submit a Children Missing Education referral and provide copy of any correspondence relating to the illness. Pupil should remain on roll until confirmation is received from Children Missing Education Engagement Key Worker. Once confirmation is received a Pupil Migration form should be submitted</p>
<p>Subsection (1) (h) Child has not been located following 20 days unauthorised absence and reasonable enquiries have confirmed child no longer resides at given address</p>	<p>Submit a Children Missing Education referral and provide copy of any correspondence relating to any change of address and enquiries made by the school. Pupil should remain on roll until confirmation is received from Children Missing Education Engagement Key Worker. Once confirmation is received a Pupil Migration form should be submitted.</p>
<p>Subsection (1) (l) Pupil is detained for a period of not less than four months and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will return at the end of that period</p>	<p>Submit a Children Missing Education referral and provide copy of any correspondence with the Youth Offending Service. Pupil should remain on roll until confirmation is received from Children Missing Education Officer. Once confirmation is received a Pupil Migration form should be submitted.</p>



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Subsection (1) (j) Pupil has died	Submit a Pupil Migration form
Subsection (1) (k) Pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age when the school next meets and school has been informed that pupil will cease to attend school	Submit a Pupil Migration form
Subsection (1) (l) Pupil has ceased to be a pupil at an Independent school	Submit a Statutory Notification of a Deletion from a Croydon School Roll
Subsection (1) (m) Pupil has been permanently excluded from school	Complete a notification of permanent exclusion to the LA. Once the permanent exclusion is ratified submit a Pupil Migration form.
Subsection (1) (n) Pupil was on roll during nurse education phase but has not transferred to a reception or higher class within the school	Submit a Pupil Migration form



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Appendix C - Grounds for deleting a pupil from the school admission register

	Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended
1	8(1)(a) - where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.
2	8(1)(b) - except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school, in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) or regulation 9, that he has been registered as a pupil at another school.
3	8(1)(c) - where a pupil is registered at more than one school, and in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (j) or (m) or regulation 9, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.
4	8(1)(d) - in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.
5	8(1)(e) - except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.
6	8(1)(f) - in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation 7(1A), that — (i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted; (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
7	8(1)(g) - that he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
8	8(1)(h) - that he has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and —



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	<p>Grounds for deleting a pupil of compulsory school age from the school admission register set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended</p>
	<p>(i) at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor in accordance with regulation 6(2);</p> <p>(ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and</p> <p>(iii) the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.</p>
9	8(1)(i) - that he is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.
10	8(1)(j) - that the pupil has died.
11	<p>8(1)(k) - that the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and—</p> <p>(i) the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school; or</p> <p>(ii) the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form.</p>
12	8(1)(l) - in the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, an Academy, a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school.
13	8(1)(m) - that he has been permanently excluded from the school.
14	8(1)(n) - where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher, class at the school.
15	<p>8(1)(o) where—</p> <p>(i) the pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or an Academy;</p> <p>(ii) charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the pupil; and</p> <p>(iii) those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.</p>