



One minute guide

Children missing out on education

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What do we mean by children 'missing out' on education?

All children are entitled to an education by law. It is the legal responsibility of parents, as outlined in [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#), to ensure that their children receive access to a full-time education suitable to their age and aptitude, either through being on school roll, or through [elective home education](#) or education otherwise. Parents who choose to electively home educate also take full responsibility for providing a suitable full time education themselves and must comply with the Department for Education [Elective Home Education guidance](#).

A full-time education offer should be the same number of hours that most other children receive in school, which is broadly outlined as 25 hours per week for 39 weeks per school year. If a child is not receiving or attending this entitlement at school/ alternative educational provision, they are considered to be 'missing out' on education and may be vulnerable to less positive outcomes.

Why might children miss out on education?

There may be particular times in a child or young person's life when they cannot access a full time education as a result of illness or particular circumstances. Schools may offer a reduced timetable or organise alternative arrangements such as access to remote learning or specific services in these circumstances.

It is the responsibility of those working with children and young people to check that any such arrangements are planned in accordance with an assessment of the child's educational, social, emotional and health needs and are time limited or regularly reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the child or young person, which may change over time.

The following outlines specific circumstances that may lead to less than 25 hours education provision:

- Where a pupil is too ill for school, with non-attendance for over 15 days with either physical or mental health needs;
- Where a pupil has particular social and behavioural difficulties which may require personal learning plans. These plans may involve children and young people not attending their usual school full-time and can include accessing alternative provision; however, the aim should always be a full-time offer wherever possible.

Children or young people who have had low attendance may also have personalised learning plans as part of their re-integration towards full-time education and may access flexible learning options such as e-learning. Any such arrangements must have parental consent, in accordance with parents' responsibilities towards their child's education.

What is in place to track children 'missing out' on education?

The local authority is required to identify and track children and young people who may not be accessing a full-time offer.

In Leeds, we regularly collate lists of children and young people who may be 'missing out' on education and check in on reasons and plans. Updated live data from schools allows tracking and is being developed to include working with practitioners to identify young people at risk and putting in place effective interventions, where possible, to prevent them from missing out on their entitlement to education.

What should practitioners do to help?

There are a few simple questions that all practitioners should ask in relation to every child they work with, to ensure they are not missing out on education:

- Is the child on roll at a school?
- Is the child attending education more than 90% of the time?
- Are they being educated at home and is there evidence of learning happening (electively home educated children are not considered to be necessarily missing out)?
- If the child is not receiving/ accessing 25 hours a week at school, has this been agreed as part of a plan to meet their individual needs and is the aim to get back to full time education?
- Is that plan reviewed regularly to ensure that the arrangements are still appropriate for the child's current circumstances and progress?

If the answer to any of these questions is no, or any other concerns emerge about the education provision of any child or young person, practitioners need to speak to their line managers about raising the issues with the relevant school or education provider. Early identification is particularly helpful, to ensure that we minimise risk of missing out and support the young person appropriately.

Key contacts

In Leeds, the Learning Access Service is responsible for ensuring that children receive the education they are entitled to, whatever their circumstances. The service includes the [Children Missing Education \(CME\)](#) team, [Elective Home Education \(EHE\)](#) team, [School Attendance](#) service, Pupil Tuition team, [Exclusions](#) team and Medical Needs Teaching Service.

For more information or for advice on specific cases, please contact the relevant team:

Children not currently on a school roll – cme@leeds.gov.uk

School Attendance Service – schoolattendanceservice@leeds.gov.uk

Elective Home Education Team – EHE@leeds.gov.uk

Excluded children – exclusions@leeds.gov.uk

Education support for school-age parents ptt@leeds.gov.uk



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