



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 under UN 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 otherwise through elective home education. 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](#).

Full-time education is broadly outlined as 25 hours per week for 39 weeks per school year. If a young person 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 25 hours of education per week as a result of illness or specific circumstance to the individual young person. 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 the pupil is too ill for school, with non-attendance for over 15 days with either physical or mental health needs and medical evidence referred to the Medical Needs Teaching Service (MNTS);
- Young mothers of compulsory school age during the 18-week maternity leave period. Schools may offer remote learning or refer to the Pupil Tuition Team who offer 5 hours a week of individualised home-based tuition; and / or
- Where the 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.

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?

Ofsted expect the local authority to identify and track children and young people who may not be accessing 25 hours.

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 which also allows tracking 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.

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 and attending full time?
- Check with schools on attendance to ensure more than 90%?
- Are they being educated at home and there is 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?
- Is the 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.

For more information and the key contacts

For more information or to request advice with specific cases, please contact:

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