

East Sussex County Council

# **Children Missing Education**

Policy and Procedures – Updated May 2015

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy clarifies the responsibilities of all staff working in schools (including their governing bodies) and the Local Authority (LA) in ensuring that all children and young people are given the opportunity to access appropriate and suitable education provision.
- 1.2 The focus of this policy relates directly to Children Missing from Education (CME). However, this should be recognised as being a part of the Local Authorities' broader remit to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within East Sussex.
- 1.3 Children Missing from Education are among the most vulnerable in society. It is therefore paramount that practitioners in all services collaborate to efficiently identify and engage children into appropriate education provision at the earliest possible opportunity. This includes supporting other Local Authorities who have reason to believe a child from their area may be in East Sussex.
- 1.4 The Education Act 1996 places a duty on 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.
- 1.5 The duty does not strictly include children who are registered at school but are failing to attend regularly. However, it must be recognised that experience demonstrates these children are often extremely vulnerable and are **at risk of becoming missing**. Consequently it is paramount that this category of children is adopted within this policy and should be a key focus for prevention, in particular those children who are persistently absent. This duty also applies to Elective Home Education (EHE) families who after repeated attempts of contact have failed to respond to our requests of communication.

## 2 CONTEXT

- 2.1 The Department for Education (DfE) defines CME as - *all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in an alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more),*
- 2.2 The overarching purpose of this policy and its relative procedures is to clearly set out principles which all Schools, Academies and agencies should subscribe to. It is underpinned by the local safeguarding board procedures and national CME guidance to ensure the LA can fulfil its statutory duty to;
  - Provide a rapid response when a CME is identified
  - Develop robust procedures to ensure systems in place can swiftly identify CME
  - Support strategies to prevent and minimise the possibility of CME
- 2.3 There are specific points when children are at most risk of becoming CME;
  - Children not registered at a school when reaching statutory school age or transferring
  - Children not registered at a school when arriving in East Sussex for the first time
  - Schools off rolling without following the off rolling procedures
- 2.4 Children who are disengaged from education, whether not being registered in provision or children persistently absent are at significant risk of exposure to harm. They may be at significant risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), forced marriage, teenage parenthood, mental health, substance misuse, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), criminal and anti-social behaviour. This list is not exhaustive.
- 2.5 Certain groups of children are at higher risk of becoming CME;

- Children who have had difficulties in school, particularly with attendance or bullying
- Children experiencing adverse family circumstances such as domestic violence
- Highly mobile families such as Gypsy Roma, Travellers and Migrant families
- Unknown / unregistered Electively Home Educated children

Further information can be found on page 6 of the [DFE's statutory guidance](#)

### **3 REDUCING THE RISK OF CHILDREN GOING MISSING FROM EDUCATION**

- 3.1 This policy sets expectations for there to be a multi-agency approach to identifying CME and the expectation extends to all Schools, Academies and agencies to ensure timely CME referrals are made using the appropriate procedure.
- 3.2 Schools should exercise appropriate measures to reduce children disengaging from education, using robust attendance monitoring and support referrals for attendance, behaviour, anti-bullying and reintegration. Within appropriate referrals there is scope for drawing down additional support including Family Key Work support and Social Care referrals.
- 3.3 CME staff will proactively interrogate information and databases to support early identification of children either missing education or at risk of doing so. This will include conducting register inspections in schools to ensure defined procedures are followed in respect of attendance management and removing children from school rolls, and inspection of part-time tables.

### **4 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ACTION**

- 4.1 In East Sussex, Local Authority responsibilities for CME sit within the Education Support, Behaviour and Attendance Service.
- 4.2 Appropriate CME staff will co-ordinate responses to referrals and also continually review and develop procedures to ensure all CME can be identified efficiently.

The contact details below should be used for any queries relating to CME;

Children Missing Education  
St Mark's House  
14 Upperton Road  
Eastbourne  
BN27 2JQ

Telephone: 01323 464 373  
Email: [cme@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:cme@eastsussex.gov.uk)

- 4.3 In the East and the West of East Sussex, there are monthly meetings relating to children who go missing from home/care (MISPER) and children who are being or at risk of being sexually exploited (MACSE). The CME practitioner attends the MISPER/MACSE meetings and holds responsibility for the input of education information and any other relevant intelligence that may be held.

### **5 INFORMATION SHARING**

- 5.1 Sharing information is vital for early intervention to ensure that children receive the services that they require, to protect them from harm. Agencies and professionals have a responsibility to provide a duty of care which includes the duty to share and exchange information, particularly in terms of Child Protection. In these circumstances there should be no barriers to the sharing of information so that a proper assessment can be made. Information sharing also falls under the Fair Processing Notice (Privacy Notice) and Education (Pupil Information) (Wales) Regulations 2004 as amended in 2007, and secure systems are used to share personal information

5.2 The Local Authority has agreement with schools in regard to the sharing of absence data. All schools and Academies (including Free schools and Studio Schools) should submit 2 absence reports each term (6 per year). The first required report is the Group Analysis Report for the whole school. The second report is information supplied through the Persistent Absence workbook. This information is used, in part, to help early identification of CMEs and those young people that may be vulnerable to CSE. Schools who have queries relating to the supply of attendance data can contact [ESBAS@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:ESBAS@eastsussex.gov.uk)

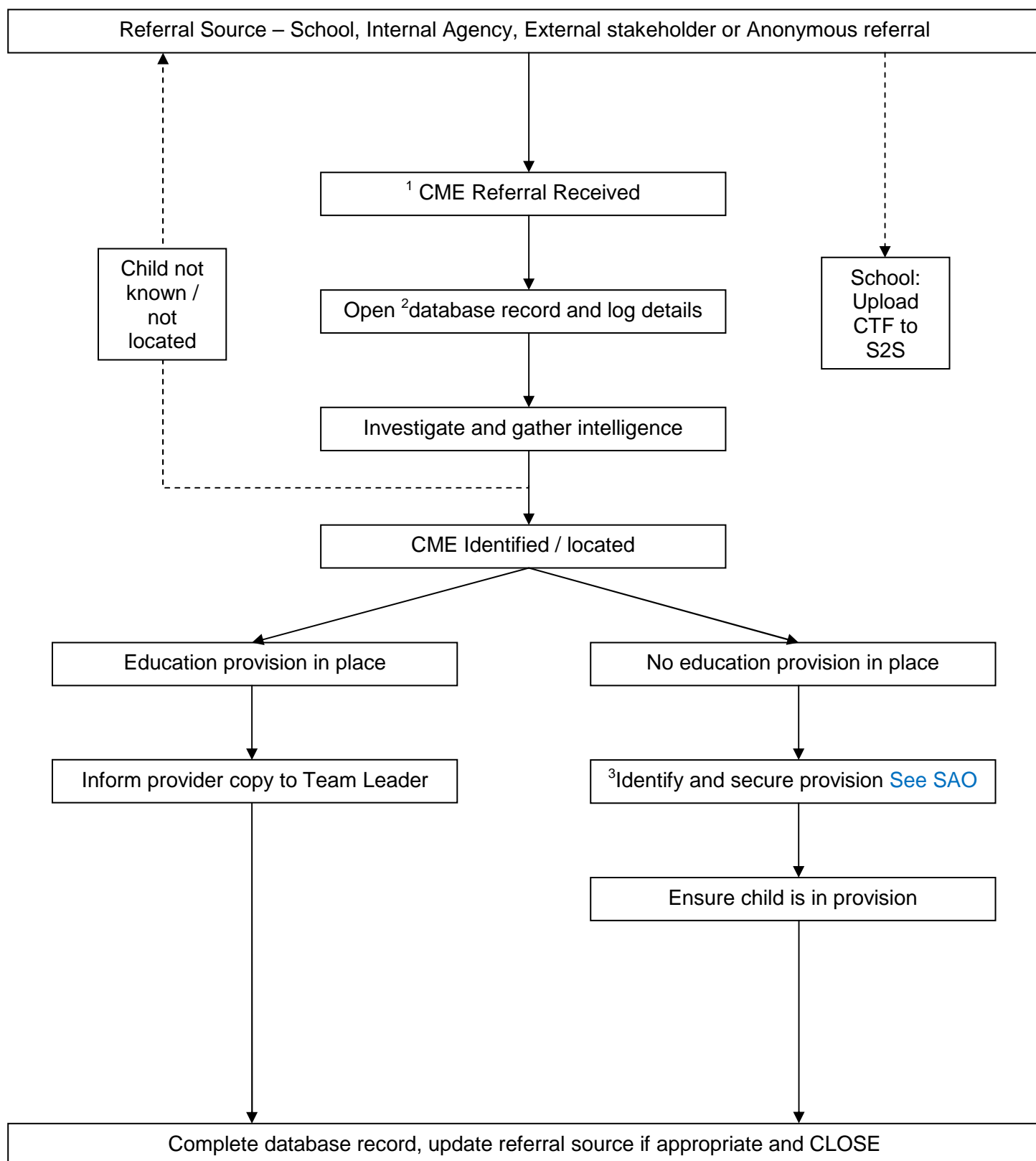
## **6 FURTHER INFORMATION**

Further sources of useful relevant information can be found on Page 9 of the [DFE's Statutory Guidance last updated January 2015](#)

## Children Missing Education Procedures

- Appendix 1 CME Referral Process (Internal)
- Appendix 2 CME Referral Process (Outbound)
- Appendix 3 School Attendance Order Process
- Appendix 4 Off Roll Logging Process
- Appendix 5 Register Inspection (CME Element)
- Appendix 6 Terminology
- Appendix 7 Multi-agency Network

## APPENDIX 1 – CME Referral Process (Internal and Inbound)

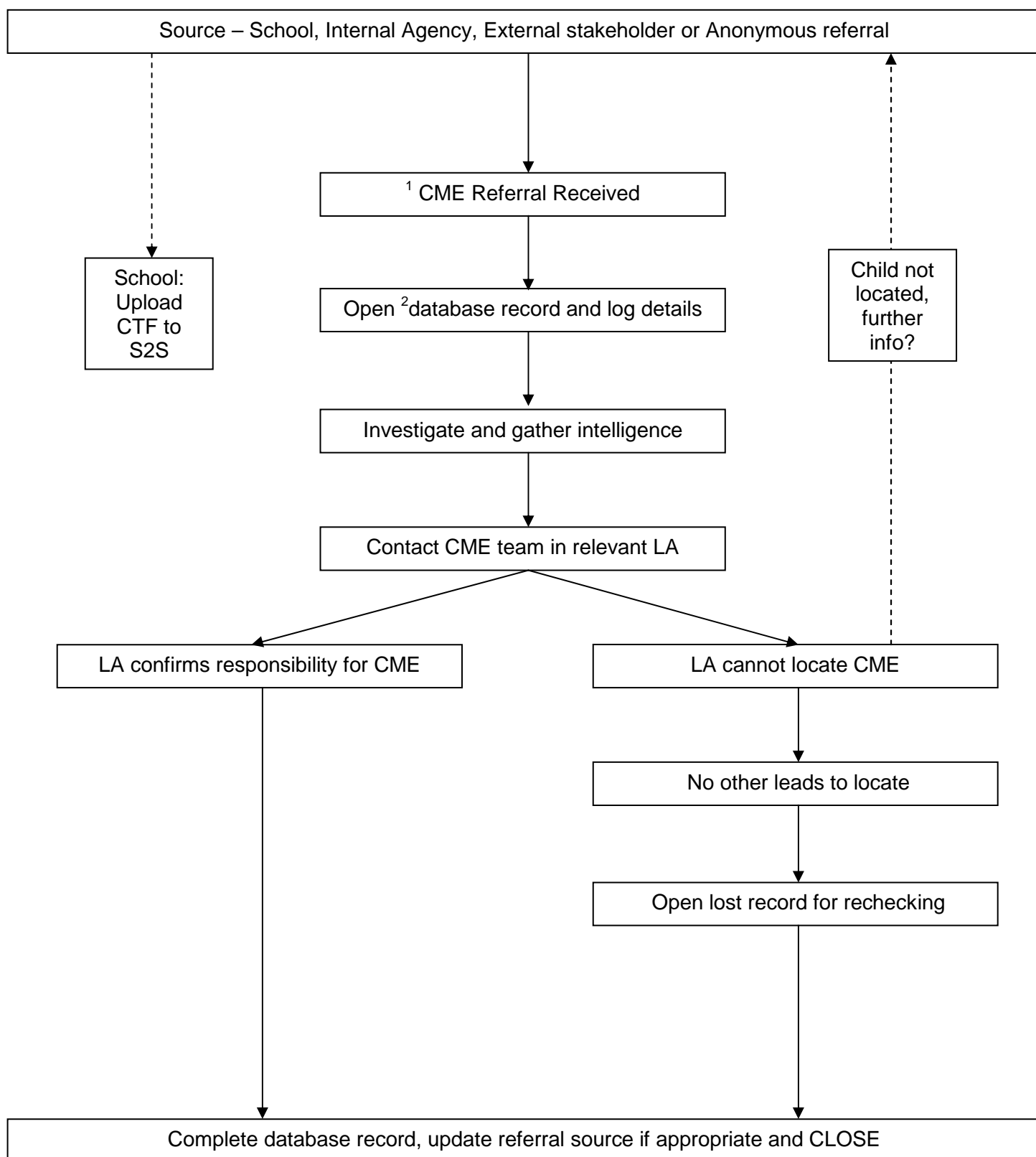


<sup>1</sup> Referrals from schools should be via the online Eform situated on Czone. External stakeholders or anonymous referrals from members of the public can refer via multiple methods including; Phone calls, email, S2S and in the case of some Local Authorities an outbound CME enquiry form

<sup>2</sup> Database refers to local East Sussex case management system within ISEND, Behaviour & Attendance Service.

<sup>3</sup> Provision is sourced via school admissions in most cases, however SEND will allocate for EHCPs

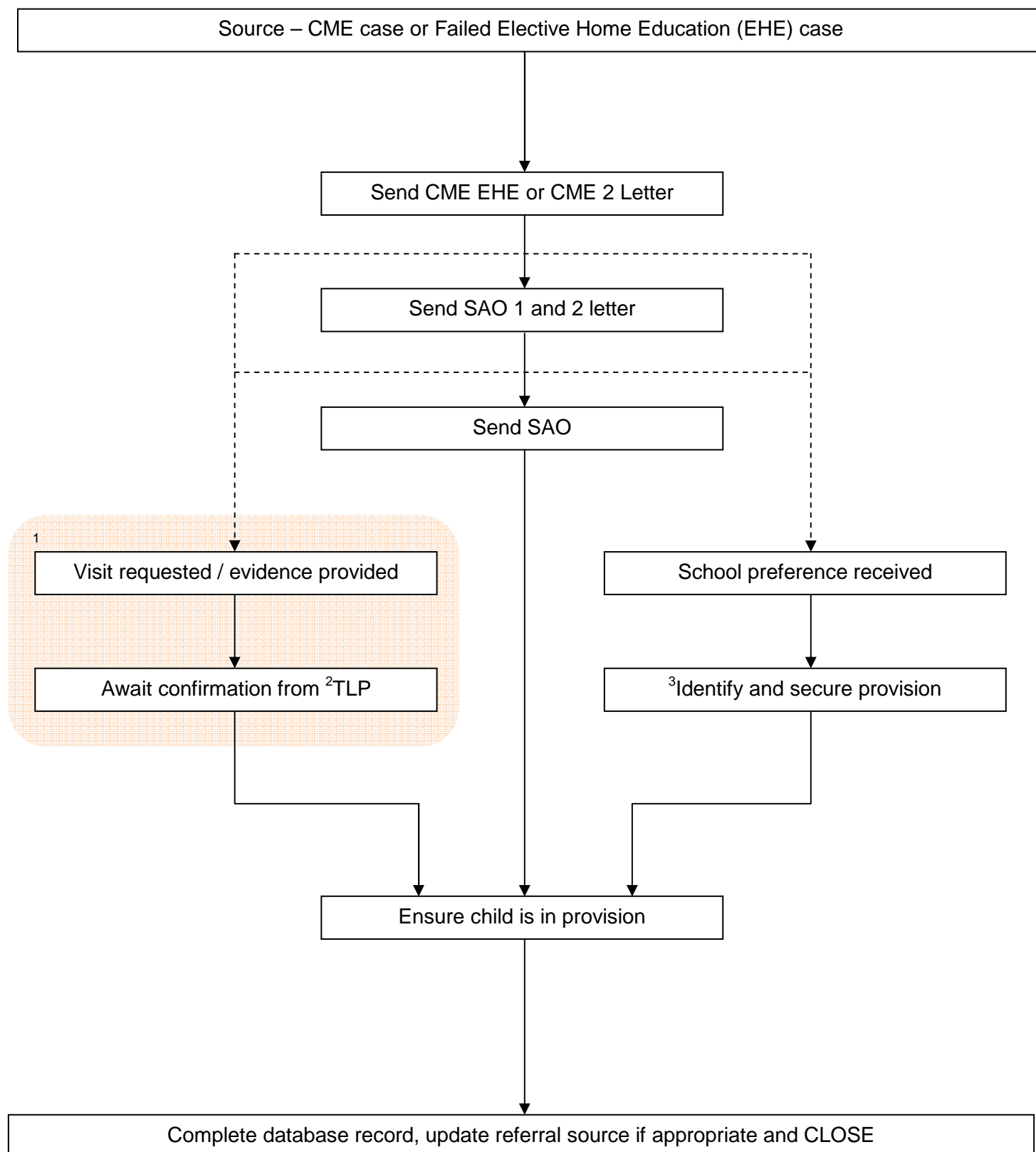
## APPENDIX 2 – CME Referral Process (Outbound)



<sup>1</sup> Referrals from schools should be via the online Eform situated on Czone. External stakeholders or anonymous referrals from members of the public can refer via multiple methods including; Phone calls, email, S2S and in the case of some Local Authorities an outbound CME enquiry form

<sup>2</sup> Database refers to local East Sussex case management system within ISEND, Behaviour & Attendance Service.

**APPENDIX 3 – School Attendance Order (SAO) Process**



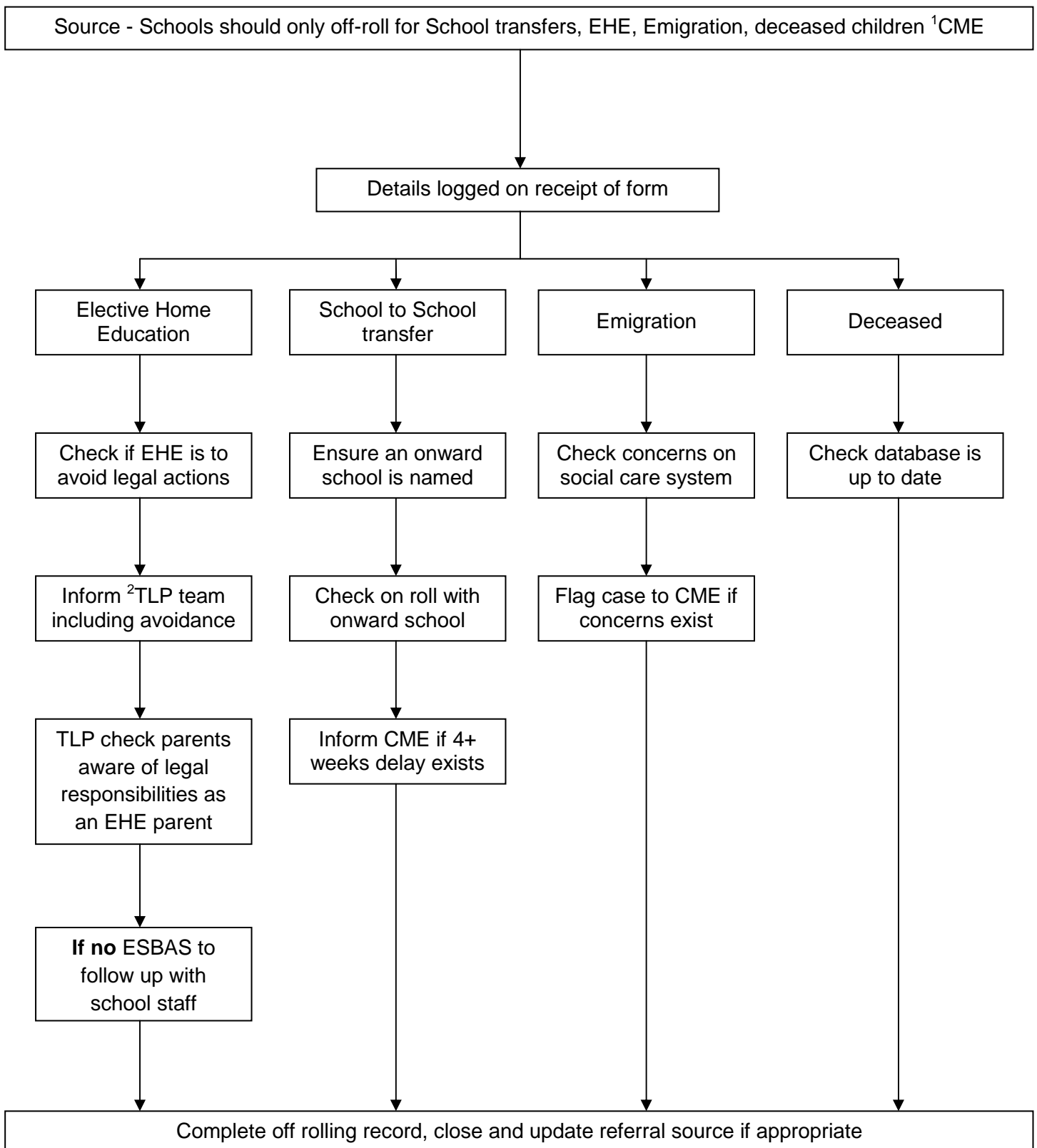
<sup>1</sup> This only forms part of the process where elective home education could not be verified because visits were not granted by the family and evidence of work was not provided

<sup>2</sup> Teaching and Learning Provision

<sup>3</sup> Provision is sourced via school admissions in most cases, however SEND will allocate for EHCPs



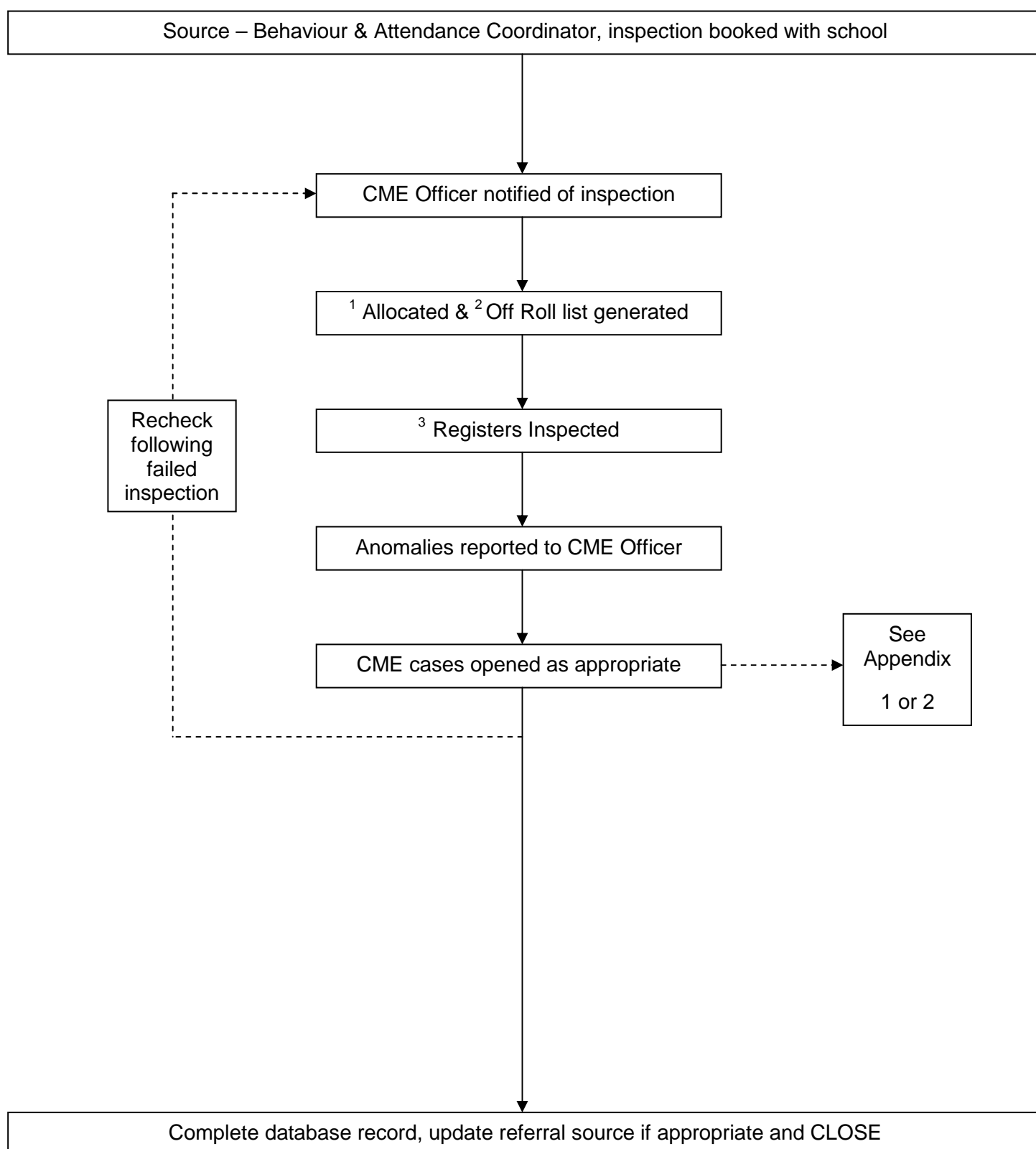
## APPENDIX 4 – Off-Roll Logging Process



<sup>1</sup> CME in this context relates to lost pupils who a school can remove from their roll after 20 schools days of continuous absence. This should only happen where there is no contact from parents and the location of the child is unknown despite best efforts to try and investigate

<sup>2</sup> Teaching and Learning Provision

## APPENDIX 5 – Register Inspection (CME Element) Process



<sup>1</sup> The 'Allocated' list comprises of the young people who have been allocated to the named school in the current academic year and of whom may or may not have started.

<sup>2</sup> The 'Off Roll' list comprises of those young people who have been off rolled where an Off Roll notification has been submitted. It does not include those whom school have not submitted a form.

<sup>3</sup> The CME element of the inspection is to check for young people off rolled but no notification was submitted and to check the whereabouts of any young people allocated a place but did not take it.

## APPENDIX 6 - Terminology

CME	Children Missing Education
ESBAS	Education Support, Behaviour & Attendance Service
TLP	Teaching and Learning Provision
LA	Local Authority
S2S	School to School transfer system
SEND	Special Education Needs and Disability
ISEND	Inclusion Special Educational Needs and Disability
EHE	Elective Home Education
EHCP	Education Health and Care Plan
Eform	Electronic version of a form completed online
SAO	School Attendance Order

## **APPENDIX 7 – Multi-Agency Network**

<b>CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>	<b>HEALTH SERVICES</b>
Pre Schools Early Years Provisions iSEND Services Youth Supports Teams Family Supports Teams Duty and Assessment Youth Offending Team School Improvement Service Schools Targeted Youth Support	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Health Visitors Accident and Emergency centres GP Surgeries PCT Safeguarding Teams School Nurses Homeless Health team
<b>DISTRICT COUNCILS</b>	<b>EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS</b>
Homeless teams Housing teams Neighbourhood managers Leisure services Libraries	Children's Charities Police Immigration/Borders Agency Non East Sussex Schools Colleges Alternative Education Providers Independent Schools Employability Services External CME Officers Homeless Support Charities.