

East Sussex County Council

Children Missing Education

Policy and Procedures

Last Updated: August 2018
Next Review: August 2019

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. Following changes in September 2016 by government this now includes independent educational establishments.
- 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 exploitation (both criminal and sexual), 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. Advice and guidance is found in East Sussex County Council School Attendance Guidance September 2017. 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.
- 3.4 CME Panel – ISEND (ESBAS, TLP and Assessment and Planning) and Admissions and Transport colleagues meet on a monthly basis to share information on the current CME list to try and locate pupils and update the CME list.

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
Ocean House
87-89 London Road
St Leonards-on-Sea
TN37 6DH

Telephone: 01273 481967
Email: 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 (MACE). ESBAS attends the MACE 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. The Children Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children and to share information appropriately. They have a responsibility to provide a duty of care which includes the duty to share and exchange information, particularly in terms of Child Protection. Where sharing is

likely to support the safeguarding and protection of a child, there should be no barriers to the sharing of information so that a proper assessment can be made.

Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 we may share information without consent if, there is a lawful basis to do so, for example if sharing is necessary to comply with a legal obligation such as the protection of children under the Children Act. However, any sharing of information by email or other means must comply with the law relating to data protection and should be done in line with local arrangements for recording and sharing information. For example, information that is shared must be: necessary and proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely, secure and recorded.

- 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

Further information can be found in the [DFE Information Sharing Guidance updated in July 2018](#).

6 FURTHER INFORMATION

Further sources of useful relevant information can be found on Page 9 of the [DFE's Statutory Guidance last updated September 2016](#)

CME Guidance from DfE quotes below legislation:

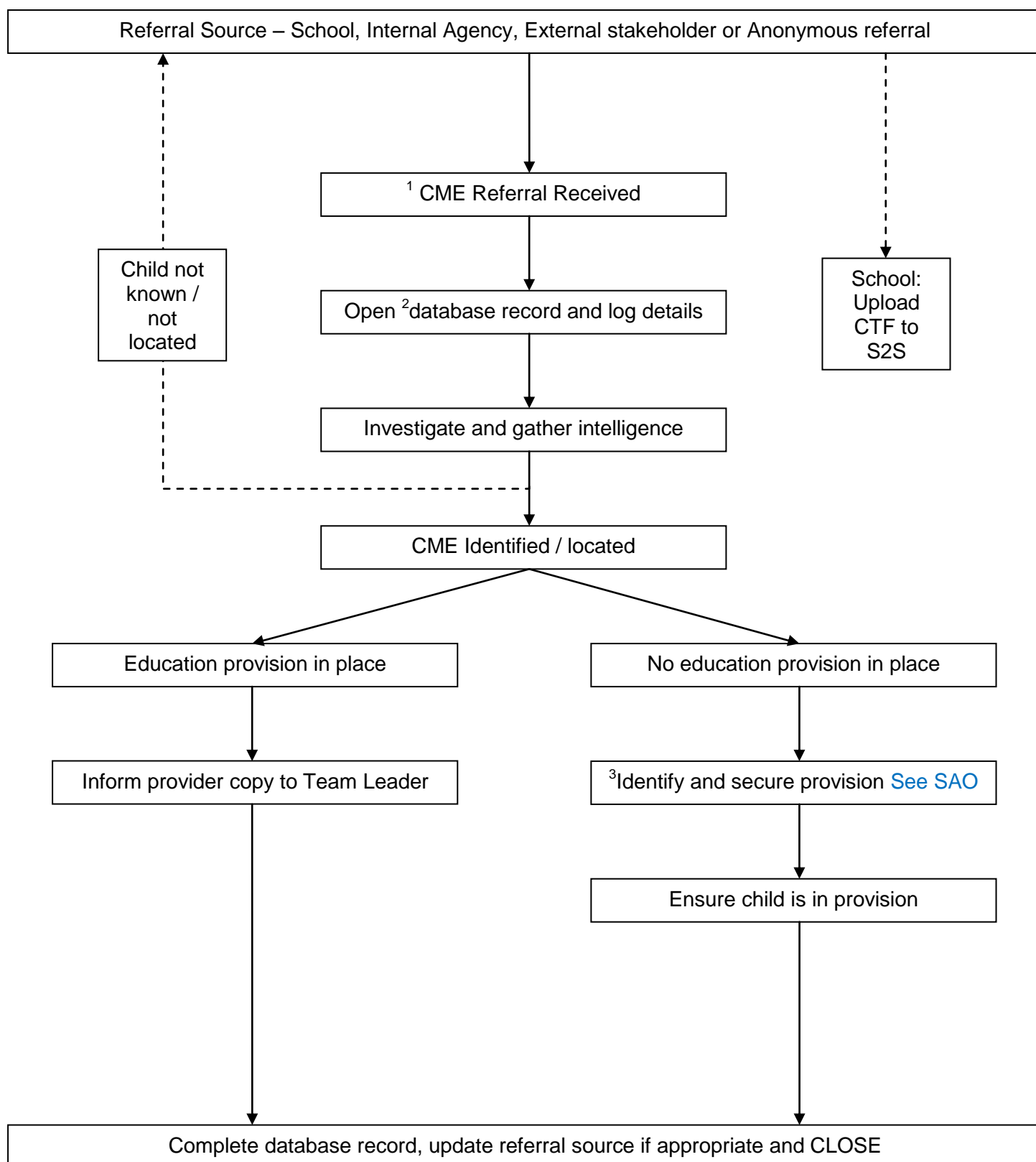
Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (added by section 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

- Education Act 1996 (section 7, 8, 14 and 19)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (section 4 and 38)
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2016

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 Emigration Safeguarding Process
- Appendix 7 Terminology
- Appendix 8 Multi-agency Network

APPENDIX 1 – CME Referral Process (Internal and Inbound)

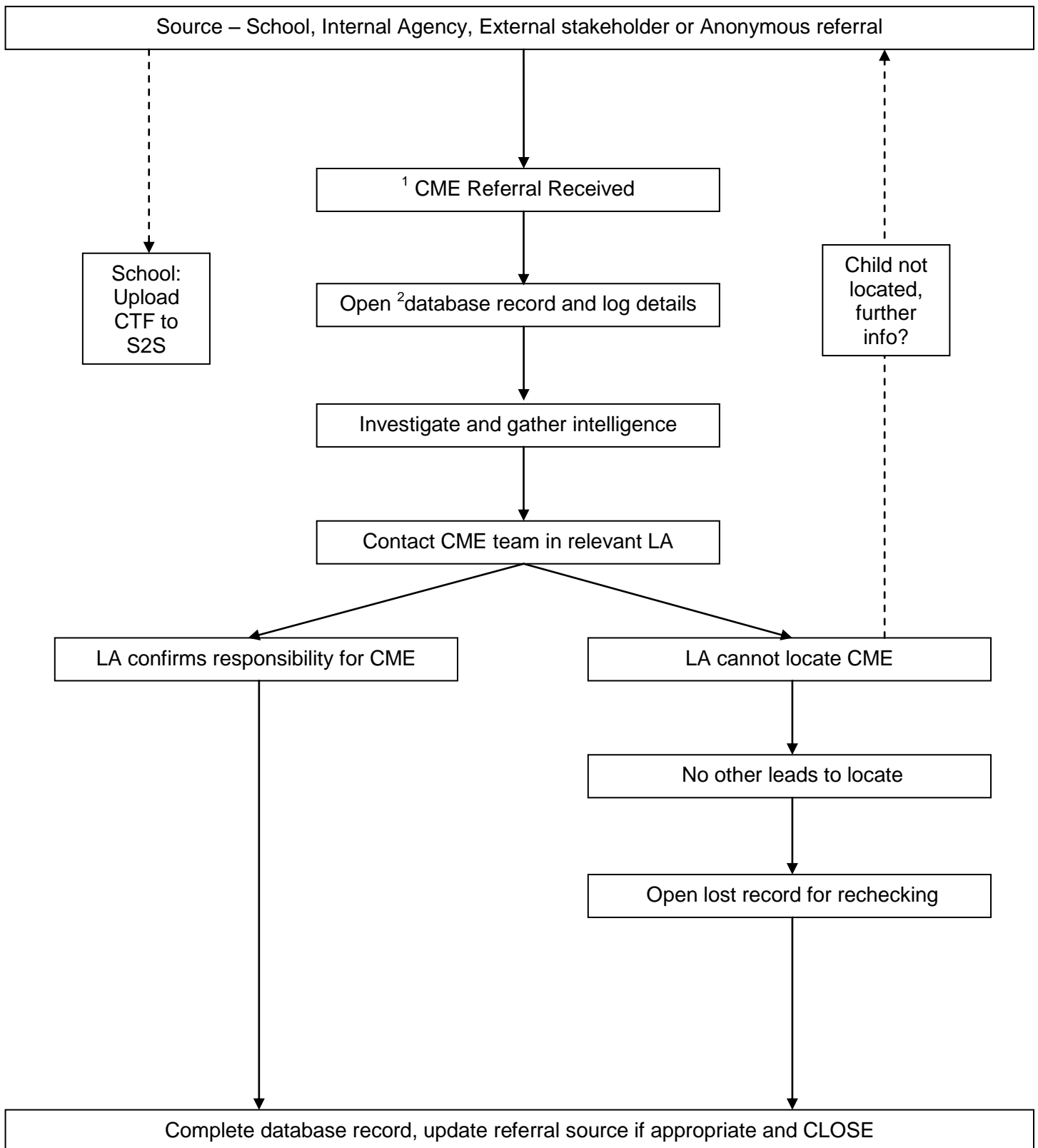


¹ Referrals from schools should be via the online Eform situated on Czone. External stakeholders or anonymous referrals from members of the public can refer via multiple methods including; Phone calls, email, S2S and in the case of some Local Authorities an outbound CME enquiry form

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

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

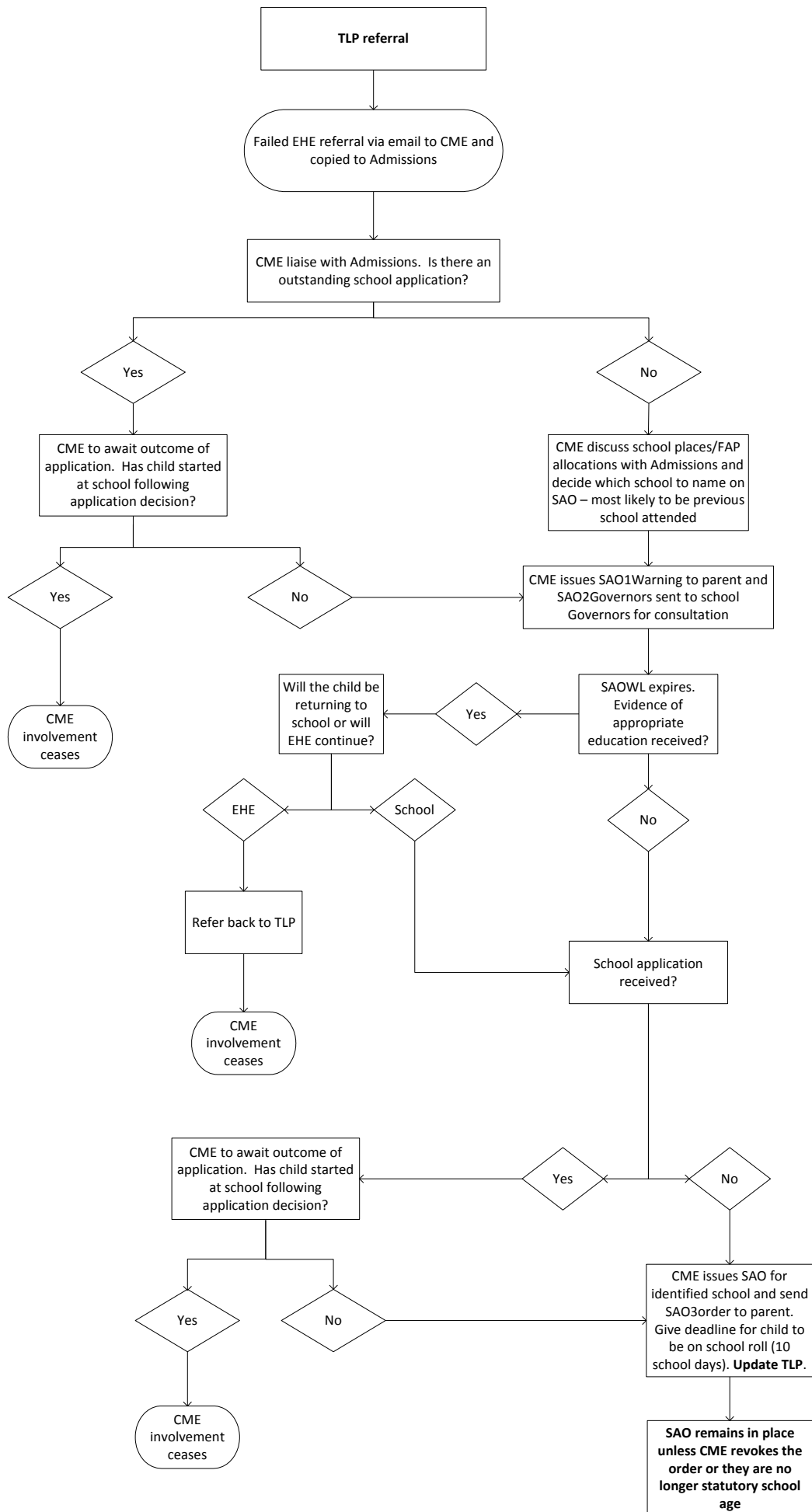
APPENDIX 2 – CME Referral Process (Outbound)



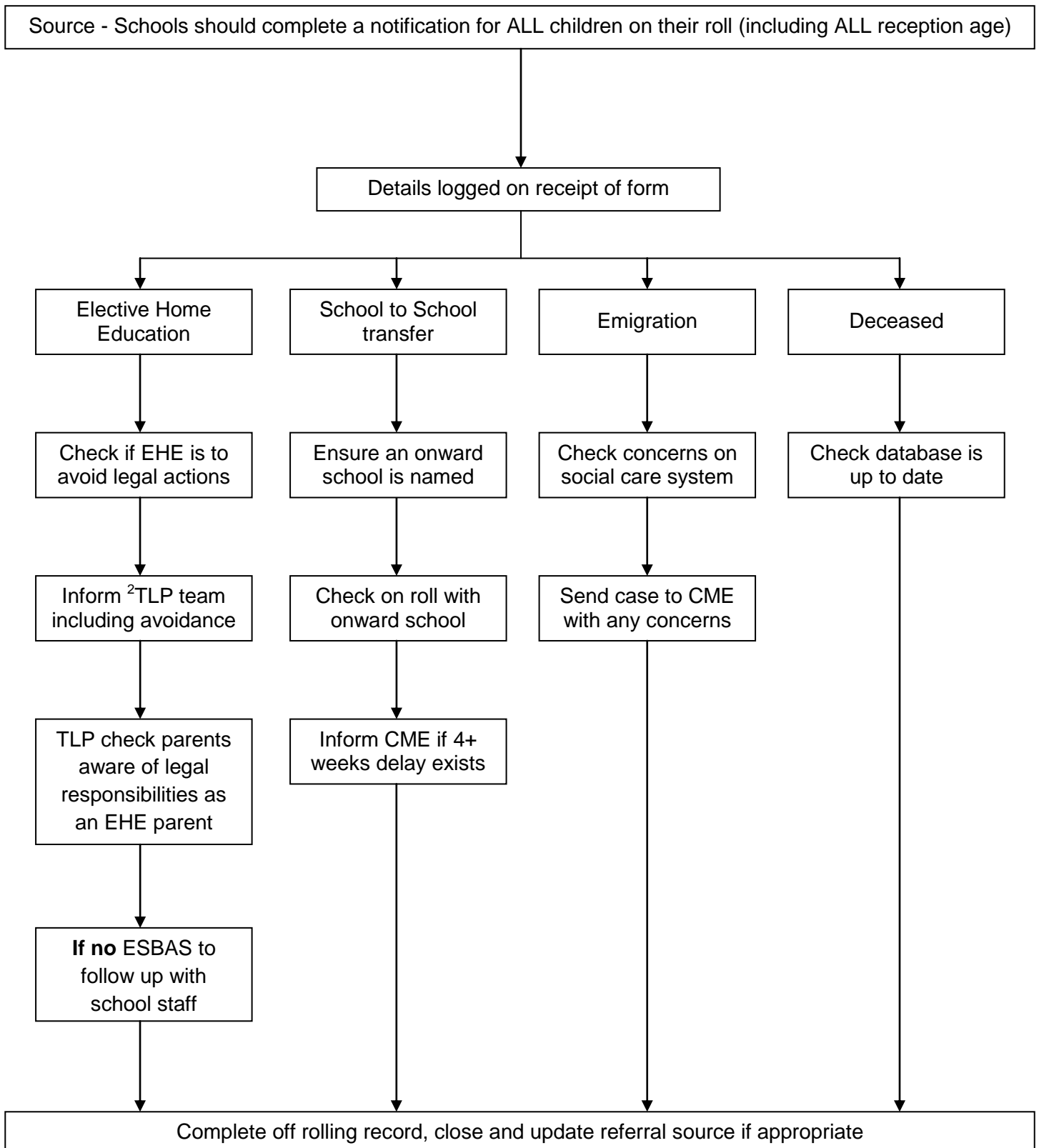
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APPENDIX 3 – School Attendance Order (SAO) Process



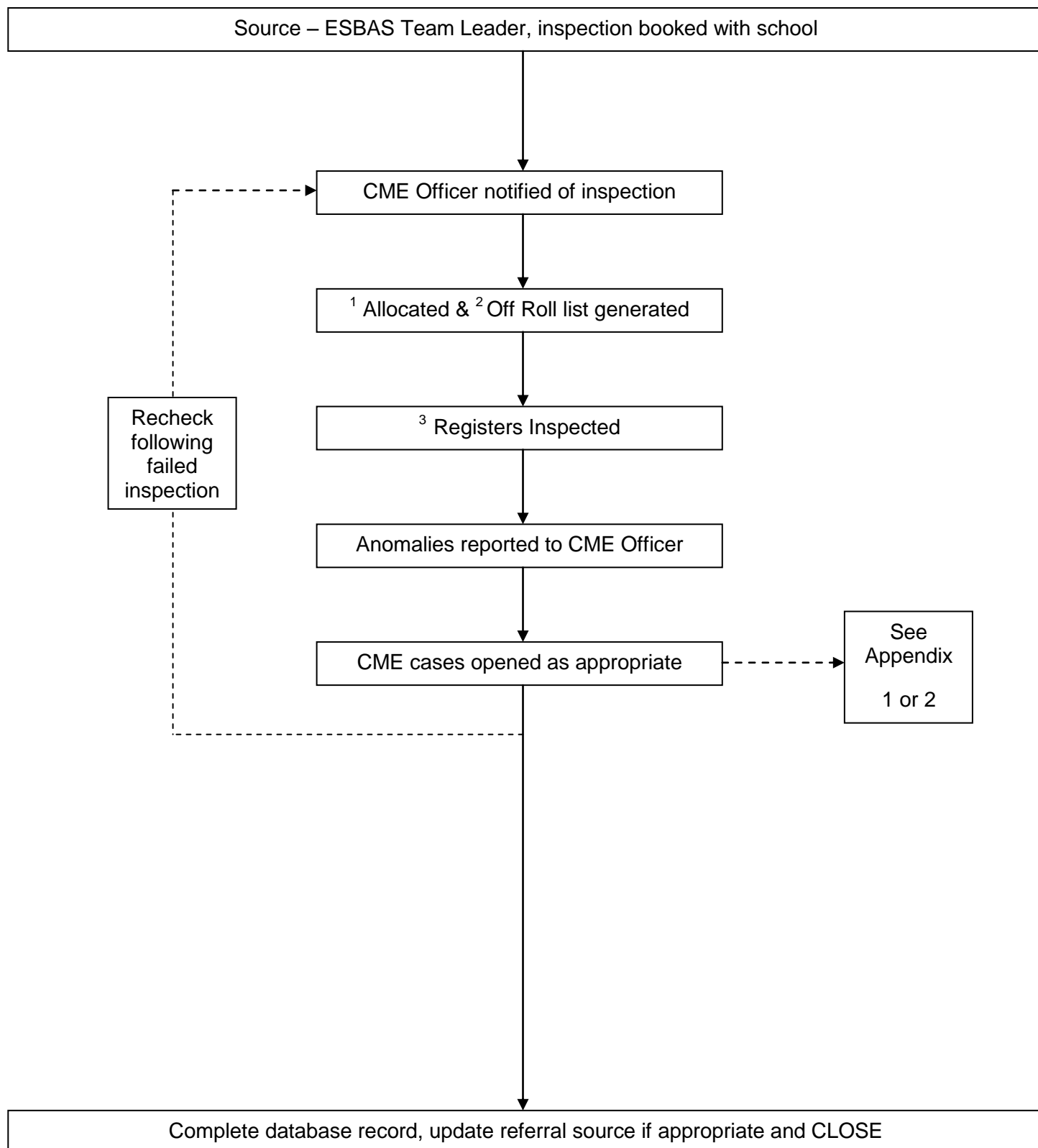
APPENDIX 4 – Off-Roll Logging Process



¹ CME in this context relates to lost pupils who a school can remove from their roll after 20 school 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

² Teaching and Learning Provision

APPENDIX 5 – Register Inspection (CME Element) Process

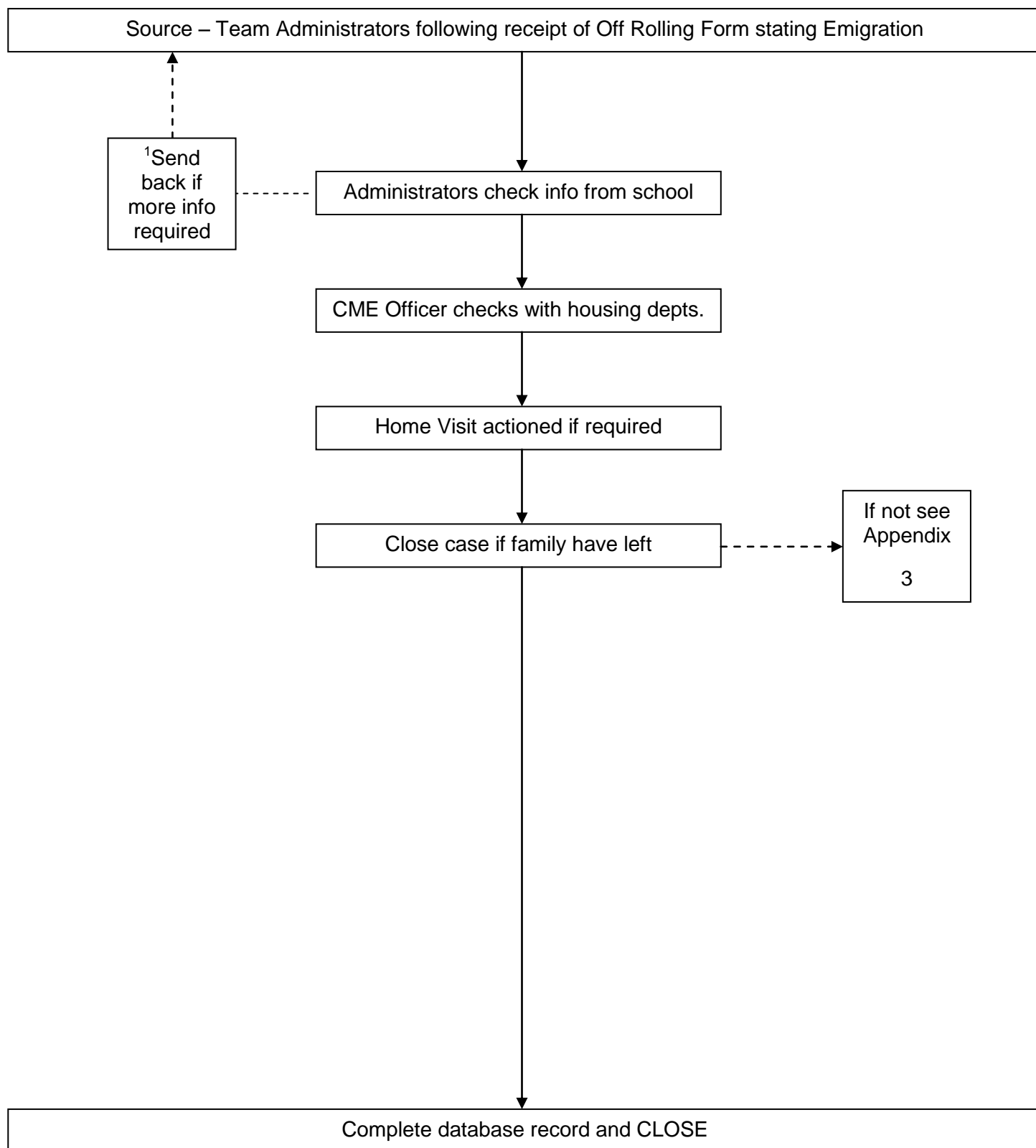


¹ The 'Allocated' list comprises of the young people who have been allocated to the named school in the current academic year and of whom may or may not have started.

² 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.

³ 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 – Emigration Safeguarding Process



¹ It is expected that when school staff are notified that a family are emigrating they request the destination address and must confirm the date the family are leaving the country. When there is an extensive period between emigration and parents wishing to remove children from school roll then schools should not immediately off roll.

APPENDIX 7 - 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 8 – Multi-Agency Network

CHILDREN'S SERVICES	HEALTH SERVICES
Pre Schools Early Years Provisions iSEND Services Youth Supports Teams Family Supports Teams Duty and Assessment Youth Offending Team School Improvement Service Schools (including independents) Targeted Youth Support	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Health Visitors Accident and Emergency centres GP Surgeries PCT/CCG Safeguarding Teams School Nurses Homeless Health team

DISTRICT COUNCILS	EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS
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.