



Children Missing Education or Persistently Absent Policy

'Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility'

Policy Approved by Headteacher: September 2025

Policy Approved by Governors: TBC September 2025 Meeting

Policy review frequency: Every 2 years or in response to changes to legislation

Date of next review: September 2027

Introduction

Children missing education or being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. This policy explains our response to persistently absent pupils and children missing

education in order to support identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker.

All staff will be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect including children who are absent or missing from education and report safeguarding concerns in line with our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Children Missing Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

Children missing education are at risk of not achieving their full potential. These children also have the potential to be exposed to higher degrees of risk. Whenever a child is missing from education, the possibility of trafficking, sexual, criminal or commercial exploitation must be assessed. It is vital that all practitioners work together to identify and re-engage children missing from education as quickly as possible.

Children Missing Education Definition

Children missing education refers to all children of compulsory school age (5-16yrs):

- Who are not on a school roll or receiving suitable education otherwise than at school (e.g. privately, electively home educated or in an alternative provision);
- Registered at a Coventry school but their family has moved without providing a forward address or details of a new school;
- Who are registered at a school but for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as ten days or more), have not attended school or alternative education without provision of reasonable explanation.

Children Absent for prolonged periods

Stoke Park School staff will be alert to understanding the reasons for any absence, reporting any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, in line with our Safeguarding & Child Protection policy. However, it is particularly noted that repeated or persistent absence may be an indicator of abuse or additional support being required. A new or significant change in attendance even if it is not for prolonged periods or falls below 90% may represent a cause for concern and staff will be alert to any changes in circumstances.

Concerns may also relate to absence for parts of school days, not only being absent for an entire school day.

Persistent Absence Definition

Persistent absence is defined as below 90%. Persistently absent students will be particularly monitored to ensure reasons for absence do not relate to an ongoing safeguarding concern.

School Actions for Children Missing Education

- Daily attendance monitored by hub team after morning registration.
- First day absence procedures followed for all students, text message, phone call, home visit (see attendance policy and CME flowchart).
- Social Workers or Key workers of vulnerable children will be contacted on day 1 of a child's absence from school. For example, students who are Looked After, on a Child Protection or Child In Need plan or have other identified vulnerabilities, such as police notifications of Domestic Abuse with current Early Help services involvement. If there is any doubt as to whether a child may be at risk of harm, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be consulted.
- After 5 days the Children Missing Education Team (CME) will be informed if no contact has been made with the family, having followed the normal absence process (text messages, phone calls, home visits).
- After a maximum of 10 days, the Children Missing Education Form will be completed, and further advice sought.
- After 20 days, the Remove From Roll Checklist will be completed and advice will be sought from CME team. The child can only be deleted from the school's admission register, with the signature of the Head Teacher on the completed Remove From Roll checklist (see Appendix B).

School Actions for Persistently Absent Children

- Daily attendance monitored by hub team after morning registration.
- First day absence procedures followed for all students, text message, phone call, home visit (see attendance policy and CME flowchart).
- Social Workers or Key workers of vulnerable children will be contacted on day 1 of a child's absence from school. For example, students who are Looked After, on a

Child Protection or Child In Need plan or have other identified vulnerabilities, such as police notifications of Domestic Abuse with current Early Help services involvement. If there is any doubt as to whether a child may be at risk of harm, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be consulted.

- Letters outlining the consequences of poor school attendance on educational outcomes, social and emotional impact and potential indicators of safeguarding concerns are sent out as below. These offer avenues of support as well as potential consequences such as Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecution:-
 - Below 90% warning letter 1
 - Below 90% warning letter 2
 - Below 90% warning letter 3

Planned Moves out of Area/Country

If parents inform the school that they are intending to move out of the area/country then the Planned Move form will be completed at the earliest opportunity and the CME team informed (see contact details below). The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Head Teacher will be consulted, and the Off Roll Checklist will ensure that where applicable a Local Authority or a specific school has taken over responsibility before removing from roll.

Children Missing or Absent from Home or Care

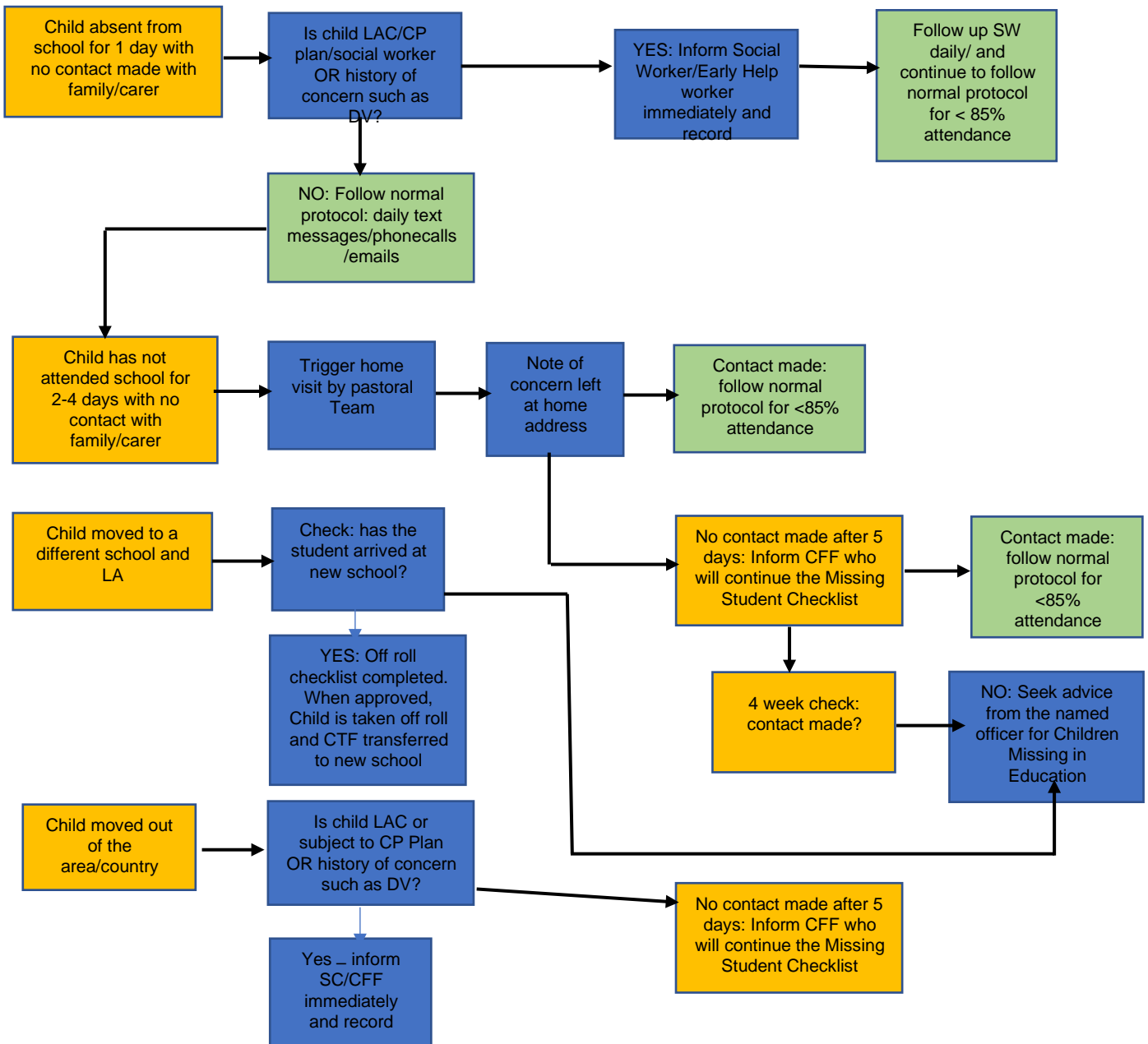
It is noted that the statutory guidance on Children Missing from Home or Care states that “looked after children missing from their placements are particularly vulnerable”. It also highlights the importance of Local Authorities having risk management plans, the key driver of placement instability, and importance of Safe and Well Checks and Return Home Interviews. The school will work in partnership with the relevant agencies to support all children, including Children who are Looked After (CLA).

Children who are not where they are expected to be, such as at home or at school, are considered absent and this also places them at increased risk of harm.

Home Elective Education

Where parents wish to home educate their child, they must write to the Head of School confirming their decision with a date of when they wish this to begin. Home Elective Education requests cannot be taken verbally and will only be considered once in writing.

Appendix A - Children Missing from Education or Persistently Absent– Flowchart



Appendix B - Remove from Roll Checklist



STOKE PARK
— SCHOOL —

LEAVERS – STUDENTS TO TAKE OFF ROLL

NAME:	
D.O.B:	
YEAR/TUTOR GROUP:	
DATE OF LEAVING:	
REASON FOR LEAVING:	
AUTHORISED BY HEADTEACHER/SIGNATURE:	
DATE AUTHORISED:	
DATE DATA TEAM EMAILED TO TAKE STUDENT OFF ROLE:	
DATE UPDATED "TRANSFER LIST" SPREADSHEET (OFF ROLL TAB):	
DATE COVENTRY ADMISSIONS INFORMED OF CHILD TAKEN OFF ROLE:	

Appendix C CME Referral form

http://www.proceduresonline.com/covandwarksscib/p_miss_child.html#education

Download form "Appendix 6" at the end of above webpage.

Local Authority Children Missing Education Team

Helen Fox-Williams

Senior Education Officer

Education Services

Coventry City Council

2476 786700

07908 211061

CME@coventry.gov.uk



Appendix A

Children Missing from Education (CME) School Referral Form Please provide as much information as possible in order to assist with our further investigations.

We will use the information within this form to record, give advice and follow the Children Missing Education, statutory guidance for local authorities. As part of this, the local authority may need to share your information provided with other Local Authorities and services. Any other information provided subsequently, whether by meeting, phone, fax or mail, might also be used for this purpose. More information on how we handle personal information and your rights under the data protection legislation can be found in the local authority's Privacy Notice.

Section 1

Name of School	Contact person in school	Position
Contact details:		
Date form completed:		

Section 2

Pupil Details:		Address:	
Forename			
Middle Name(s)			
Surname			
DOB			
Alias		Last known address	
Unique Pupil Number			
Unique Identification Number			
Gender			
Year Group			
Ethnicity		Previous Addresses	
Date child last attended school:			
Does the child speak English?			
Sibling details:			
Name	DOB	Address	School
Do you consider these children to be CME cases as well? YES / NO			

Section 3

Parent/carer details: (Please include all contact information held by the school)	
Name:	
Relationship to child:	
Contact details:	
Landline:	
Mobile:	
E-mail:	
Family's first/home language:	
Is an Interpreter required?	

Parent/carer details: (Please include all contact information held by the school)	
Name:	
Relationship to child:	
Contact details:	
Landline:	
Mobile:	
E-mail:	
Family's first/home language?	
Is an Interpreter required?	

Other contact information held by School: Relatives etc	
Contact 1: Name, Address & telephone number	
Contact 2: Name, Address & telephone number	
Other Agency Details:	

Section 4

Is this child:	
A Looked After Child?	YES/NO
Gypsy, Roma or Traveller?	YES/NO
A Refugee or Asylum Seeker?	YES/NO
Living in temporary accommodation	YES/NO

Subject to a Child Protection Plan? YES/NO
An open case to Children's Social Services YES/NO
Name of Social Worker:

Section 5

What are your concerns for the welfare of this child as a result of this referral including attendance and behaviour?

Do you have any reason to be concerned that any of the following may be relevant in this case? (If answered Yes please give details)
Risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) YES/NO
Risk of child being missing/running away from home. YES/NO
Risk of child trafficking. YES/NO

Section 6

What is the primary reason for referring this child to your CME?	Please indicate as appropriate.
Child has failed to take up a place at your school	
Child's whereabouts are unknown	
Parent is fleeing domestic violence	
Child/ family is reported to have left the area	
Child is reported to have left the UK with/without parents / carers (please complete section 8)	
Child has failed to return from an agreed holiday in term time	

Child has failed from an unauthorised holiday in term time	
Parents have taken child out of school for an extended period without school agreement	
Child has failed to return after summer holidays and whereabouts are unknown.	

Section 7

Prior to submitting CME paperwork, School to:	Please indicate as appropriate.
Ask the friends of missing pupils for any current information	
Check emergency contact number	
Check free school meals database	
If a voluntary aided school, check with the priest	
Check records to see if there are siblings at another school - ring school	
Check with the School Nurse	

A home visit must be undertaken before this form is submitted. Please provide full details of any contact/attempted contact with the family.

Section 8

Information required for children leaving / left the UK
Please try and provide as much of the following information as possible, especially in cases where you have an indication of an intention for the family/child to leave the UK. Please give

Time of departure	
Flight numbers and name of airline	
Have you seen copies of the tickets?	
Please attach copies of tickets if possible	
What country are they returning to?	
Who is leaving the UK (please tick all that apply)	
Mother	
Father	
Other siblings that are not part of this referral	
Extended family (please give details)	
If child (ren) is not leaving with parent(s) who is accompanying them?	
What is their relationship to the child?	
Why is / are the parent (s) not leaving with the child (ren)?	
Who will be caring/ responsible for the child (ren)	
Please obtain	
Name	
Relationship to the child:	
Address:	
Contact number:	
Email:	
Details of school(s) child (ren) will be attending or applying to	
Address:	Email:
Contact Number:	Website:
Do you have any concerns re any of the following:	
Safety of the child(ren):	YES/NO
The reason given for leaving the UK:	YES/NO
That the information given is not accurate	YES/NO

Please submit this form to: CME@Coventry.gov.uk

Education Entitlement
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Friargate
02476 975434