Hill Farm Primary

Children Missing in Education Policy

Local Level Policy

Date effective:	June 2025
Review Cycle:	Annually
Review Date :	September 2025 (KCSIE 25 is released)
Policy approved by:	October 2025
Author:	Leah Hammond
Signed – Headteacher	D.Wilson

1. Aims

Hill Farm is committed to ensuring that every child of compulsory school age is receiving an excellent full-time education which will give them the opportunity to build their own futures. Parents/carers have a duty to ensure children are receiving suitable full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

If a child is not in school, they are at significant risk of underachieving, becoming victims of abuse, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Children may not be attending or may leave school for a number of reasons, but if they are of compulsory school age, then parents, schools and local authorities have a responsibility to ensure the continuity of their education.

The purpose of this policy is to set out clear & robust procedures in order to try and locate children who are absent from school and their family whereabouts is unknown.

2. Legislation and guidance

The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Article 2 of protocol No 1 states:

“No person shall be denied the right to education”

Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 requires all local authorities to make arrangements to establish the identities of children of compulsory school age in their area who are not

registered pupils at a school, and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school.

Regulations 8(f) and 8(h) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, place a duty on schools and local authorities to jointly carry out reasonable enquiries to try and locate pupils absent from school whose whereabouts are unknown.

3. Definition – Children Missing from Education (CME)

This policy refers 'to any child of compulsory school age who has been registered at a formally approved education setting, e.g. school, academy, alternative provision, independent school or elective home education, and has been out of education provision for a period of time.

This might be:

- A child who is not at their last known address and:
- has 5 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or:
- has left school suddenly and their destination is unknown.

This policy does not refer to children who are missing from view or absent from Home or Care. When a child goes missing from the home, or from care, or where the school has significant safeguarding concerns for the child, the school will refer these children immediately to the Children's Services, and/or to the Police.

4. Roles and responsibilities:-

i) Parents/carers role

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are receiving efficient full-time education. Some parents may elect to home educate their children and may withdraw them from school at any time to do so (unless they are subject to a School Attendance Order). Where a parent notifies Hill Farm in writing of their intention to home educate, we will inform the local authority before deleting the child from our admission register. Hill Farm staff complete a referral to Coventry Elective Home Education Team- https://www.coventry.gov.uk/elective-home-education/educating-child-home-elective-home-education/6. If there are welfare concerns we will consult Children's Services.

ii) School's role and duties

Hill Farm has safeguarding duties under section 155 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of their students and in respect of this they should investigate any unexplained absences.

Hill Farm will monitor student attendance through daily registers and will address poor attendance whenever this occurs. Registers should be completed by 9.00am. The School Office will then contact parents/carers who have not contacted the school. Further phone calls and/or home visits will then be considered, particularly for vulnerable students.

Any child whose whereabouts are known and where this is local, but continues to have unauthorised absences, will be invited in for a meeting to discuss support and complete an Attendance Plan if necessary.

For any child whose whereabouts are known and where this is at a distance, but continues to have unauthorised absences, Hill Farm will complete a CME form within ten days, if a child has not already been admitted to a new school. (Appendix 1). A home visit will be completed if necessary as a further check. The CME form is sent to CME@coventry.gov.uk.

Hill Farm will also arrange appropriate education for excluded students up until the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion. If the student is permanently excluded, the Local Authority will arrange provision from the sixth day onwards.

If a child is absent from school and their whereabouts is unknown, Hill Farm will carry out a reasonable enquiry jointly with the local authority to ascertain the whereabouts, which might be a result of:-

- The family moving within the city but the parents fail to inform the school of the house move or transfer to a new school.
- The family move out of the city and relocate to a new area within the UK but parents fail to inform the school.
- The family relocate abroad and fail to inform the school of their destination.
- The family is displaced as a result of 'crisis' e.g. domestic violence, homelessness.
- Parent/school disagreement and parents withdraw the child from school.
- Family separation.

In these instances, Hill Farm will ensure the following actions are taken and recorded:

- Consider the likely reason for the absence – has the family been granted leave of absence or is the school aware of an extended trip abroad; has the child been absent due to sickness or unavoidable cause? If not:
- Make a first day of absence call to the parents to establish the reason for the absence and to confirm the child's whereabouts. If there is no response from primary carers, emergency contacts will contacted next.
- Check with all members of staff with whom the child may have had contact.
- Check with the child's friends, siblings and known relatives at Hill Farm or other schools.
- Make enquiries with other professionals who have been involved with the child.
- Make telephone calls to any numbers held or identified.
- Conduct a visit to the last known address of the child within the first five days of the child's absence.

- If possible, enquire of neighbours about the location of the family.
- Leave a note at the last known address and record the outcome.
- After 10 days, a Child Missing from Education form is completed and sent to CME@coventry.gov.uk.

Appendix 1

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
Telephone Number: Email Address:		
Date form completed:		

If this student/s have been removed from roll at the time of submitting this form, please indicate which regulation applies. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education	

Section 2

Pupil Details:	Current address:
Forename:	
Middle Name(s):	
Surname:	
DOB:	Forwarding address:
Alias:	
Unique Pupil Number:	
Gender:	
Year Group:	Temporary accommodation?
Ethnicity:	
Date child last attended school:	
Does the child speak English?	
If this is a move overseas, has the parent confirmed the move is permanent – Yes/No/N/A	
How was this information shared with school? **Please provide any information you have to support this**	

Sibling's details:			
Name	DOB	Address	School
Do you consider these child/children to be CME cases as well: YES/NO			

Section 3 **Parent/carer**:	
Relationship to child:	
Contact details:	
Landline:	
Mobile:	
E-mail:	
Family's first/home language:	
Is an Interpreter required?	

Parent/carer:	
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	
Name	
Address	
Telephone number	

Section 4

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 not known.	

Section 5

Prior to submitting CME paperwork, School to:	**Please indicate as appropriate.**
Home visit to the last known address	
Check emergency contact number	
Check free school meals database	
Check records to see if there are siblings at another school - ring school	

Section 6

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 Childrens Social Services/Early help	YES/NO
Name of allocated Social Worker/Early Help worker and contact details:	

Section 7

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 8

Please provide full details of all enquiries including telephone calls, home visits		
Date	Action taken	Outcome

Section 9

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 consideration to the possibilities of forced marriage, that those presenting themselves as parents/family/carers are not genuine, child trafficking, child sexual exploitation or that the child (ren) may not be leaving the country as reported.	
Proposed date of departure from UK	
Actual date of departure (if already left)	
Point of departure- airport, coach station etc.	
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 regarding the reason provided for the child/children leaving the UK?	

Please submit this form to: CME@Coventry.gov.uk – 02476 975491
Access to Education Team (Attendance & Children Missing Education Team)
Broadgate House
Floor 5
Coventry