

Children Missing in Education

September 2023-2024

Date of Last Review: **September 2022**

Named Governor for Safeguarding: **Mohamed Azeem**

Date of Next Review: **September 2023**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Mariam Ashique**

Deputy DSL: **Zubeda Khan**

Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator: **Manjeet Pangli**

manjeet.pangli@coventry.gov.uk

LA Named Officer for Children Missing in Education: **Helen Fox Williams**

Children Missing in Education Policy Contents

1. Statement of intent
2. Definition
3. Why children miss education
4. Children at risk of missing education - including specific risks
5. Impact of poor school attendance
6. Roles and Responsibilities
7. Safeguarding
8. Admission register
9. Removing a pupil from the admissions register
10. When a child goes missing from home
11. When a child goes missing from care
12. Policy Review
13. Appendices

Appendix 1 How to notify A Missing child - Flow chart

Appendix 2 What to do if child goes missing on external visit- Flow chart

Appendix 3 LA Missing Absent Meeting Process Flow chart

Appendix 4 Student Leaver Form/removal from Admissions Register

Appendix 5 School Referral Form

Appendix 6 Pupil Leavers Checklist

Appendix 7 No Safeguarding Concerns

Appendix 8 Safeguarding Concerns

Appendix 9 Leavers Running Log

1. Statement of intent

All children are entitled to a full-time education, regardless of their circumstances. Unfortunately, children missing education (CME) risk underachieving, being victims of abuse, and not being in education, employment or training (NEET) in later life.

This policy should be used in conjunction with Missing Child Procedure, which sets out the actions required to locate the child, to affect their return and to identify the issues which caused, and may continue to cause, the child to go missing.

This policy complies with the following legislations and statutory guidelines:

- [Education and Inspections Act 2006 \(section 4 and 38 \)](#)
- [Section 436A of the Education Act 1996](#)
- [Education Act 1996 \(section 7, 8, 14 and 19\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)
- [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(Amendment\) \(England\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021](#)
- [Children Missing Education - DfE Statutory Guidance 2016](#)

2. Definition

Children Missing Education CME are children of compulsory school age (5-16) The DfE defines CME as: 'Children of compulsory school age who

- are not registered pupils at a school and
- are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school
- who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more).'

Children Missing Education should **not** be confused with:

- children who are on roll at a school but are not in regular attendance.
- children who are receiving Home Education (known as Elective Home Education)
- children whose parents have applied for a school place, and the referrer has confirmation that the application is in process via Admissions Service

Compulsory School Age - A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between 1st January and 31st March they are of compulsory



school age on 31 March; if they turn 5 between 1st April and 31st August they are of compulsory school age on 31st August; if they turn 5 between 1st September and 31st December they are compulsory school age on 31st December. A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year they reach sixteen.

'Suitable education' is defined as efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any additional educational needs.

3. Why children miss education

The most common reasons for children missing education include the following:

- Failing to be registered at a school at the age of five
- Failing to make a successful transition
- Exclusion
- Mid-year transfer of education provision
- Families moving into a new area

4. Children at particular risks of missing education

There may be many reasons for a child to be missing from education; the following is a list of pupils who are most at risk of missing education:

- Pupils at risk of harm or neglect
- Children of gypsy, Roma and traveller (GRT) families
- Children of service personnel
- Missing children/runaways
- Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice System
- Children who cease to attend school
- Children of migrant families

In addition to reducing the risks facing missing children, all agencies need to be able to recognise

and respond to risk factors that could lead to missing incidents. Children can go missing for any one of a number of reasons. The following section considers some of these factors in more detail.

Specific Risks

- **Child Abduction**

Where a child has been abducted or forcibly removed from their place of residence, this is a 'crime in action' and should be reported to the Police immediately.

- **Forced Marriage**

Some young people run away because they are at risk of abuse. Forced marriage in particular can lead to young people running away from home. Further guidance and information can be found in the Forced Marriage Procedure.

- **Grooming for Potential Sexual Exploitation**

In some cases, children may run away or go missing following grooming by adults who will seek to exploit them sexually. Evidence suggests that 90% of children subjected to sexual grooming go missing at some point.

The supply of drugs and alcohol or the offering of gifts may be used to entice and coerce children into associations with inappropriate adults. Both girls and boys are at risk of sexual exploitation. Looked-after children may also be targeted by those wishing to abuse and sexually exploit them, and encouraging these children to run in order to disrupt their placement is often part of this abuse. Young people living within residential care units are particularly vulnerable to being directly targeted in this way. Further guidance and information can be found in the Child Sexual Exploitation Procedure.

- **Grooming for gang related activity/involvement in crime**

Recognise that young people who go missing can be being groomed by adults for the purposes of gang related activity or crime. Young people can be attracted to these activities or compelled to undertake them and may go missing in order to partake in them.

- **Asylum Seeking Children and Child Trafficking**

The response to a child seeking asylum going missing should be exactly the same as for all other children. There are complex issues facing children seeking asylum. Information about the location of some children is not always accurate due to transient accommodation arrangements. There is also a significant risk that some children who claim asylum are trafficked into, within and out of the UK. Often these children remain under the influence of their traffickers. Trafficked children are at high risk of going missing, with most going missing within one week of becoming looked after and many within 48 hours.

Unaccompanied migrant or asylum seeker children, who go missing immediately after becoming looked after, should be considered to have been at risk of trafficking. Further guidance and information can be found in the Trafficked Children Procedure.

- Radicalisation

It is possible that, children may run away or go missing following grooming, either on-line or through local contacts, which results in radicalisation. Radicalisation is a process where a person, often from a vulnerable background begins to adopt extreme political, religious, or social view(s) and, through these, engage in extremist activity. If there is any concern that a missing child has been exposed to radicalisation and may try to leave the country an immediate response may be required. This may involve referral to the Channel Panel for multi- agency review of the risk and the need for preventative interventions.

5. Impact of Poor School Attendance

Statistics show that children who suffer from a history of poor attendance, or have periods of missed education, are more likely to face future issues in relation to:

- Homelessness
- NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training)
- Anti-social/ Criminal behaviour /Child Criminal Exploitation
- Social disengagement
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse
- Neglect and emotional abuse
- Sexual exploitation/ involvement in the sex trade /Child Trafficking
- Teenage parenthood
- Physical health issues
- Forced marriage
- Poverty
- Radicalisation

6. Roles and responsibilities

i) Local Authority

- The local authority is expected to act in their capacity as a 'good parent' in relation to all looked after children, including those that go missing. They also have a duty to work together with other agencies, share information and take appropriate actions where there

are safeguarding concerns about a child, including those in connection with a missing episode.

- The local authority has a duty to make arrangements to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area who are of compulsory school age and not receiving a suitable education. This duty applies to any child who is not registered at an educational establishment suitable for their age and educational needs.

ii) The school

- The school will enter pupils on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the school, or the day that the school has been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.
- In the event that a pupil fails to attend the school on the agreed or notified date, the school will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the reason for this absence, and will notify the LA at the earliest opportunity and refer to the LA procedures in appendix 1
- The school will keep an accurate and up-to-date admission register by encouraging parents/carers to inform them of any changes.
- The school will monitor pupils' attendance through our daily register.
- The school will inform the LA of pupils who are regularly absent from school, or who have missed 10 school days or more without permission.
- The school will notify the LA if any pupil is to be deleted from the admission register in the circumstance outlined in Regulation 8 of the Education (pupil registration)(England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2016).
- Pupils who remain on the school roll are not necessarily missing education, but will be monitored and attendance will be addressed when it is poor.
- The school will provide information to the LA regarding standard transitions.

iii) Parents/Carers

- Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring that their children, who are of compulsory school age, are receiving suitable full-time education.

- Parents/Carers are responsible for notifying the school in writing where they will be home-schooling their child, in order for the child to be removed from the admission register.
- Parents/Carers will notify the school regarding any absences or changes to the pupils education arrangements.

iv) The Police

The Police are the lead agency for the investigation of missing children. They remain responsible for assessing the risk to each missing child reported to them and ensuring appropriate enquiries are made. They also have a duty to work together with other agencies, share information and take appropriate actions where there are safeguarding concerns about a child, including those in connection with a missing episode

7. Safeguarding

For the purpose of this policy, "reasonable enquiries" are defined as limited, investigative powers that the school may action to determine a child's whereabouts and whether they may be in danger.

The school will follow appropriate procedures when carrying out reasonable enquiries, such as the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) conducting discussions with neighbours, relatives or landlords, to determine whether a child may be at risk of harm.

The DSL will record that they have completed these procedures and, make a referral to the children's social care or police using the LA form and procedures as in see Appendix 4

Where the whereabouts and safety of a child is unknown, the school, in conjunction with the LA, may carry out the following actions:

- Make contact with the parent/carer, relatives and neighbours using known contact details.
- Follow local information sharing arrangements, and making enquiries via other local databases and agencies where possible.
- Check with agencies known to be involved with the family.
- Check with the LA and school from which the pupil moved originally.
- Check with the LA where the pupil lives, if this is different to where the school is located.



Lote Tree Primary

- Conduct home visits via an appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessments and making enquiries with neighbours or relatives, if appropriate.

Note: this list is not exhaustive - the school will use their judgement towards what reasonable enquiries are appropriate, once all the facts of the case have been taken into account.

8. Admissions Register

The school will ensure that the admissions register is kept up-to-date at all times, and will encourage parents/carers to notify the school of any changes as they occur, such as via email or newsletter.

Pupils will be recorded on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the school, or the day that the school has been notified, as the date that the pupil will attend the school.

Once a pupil has been recorded on the admissions register, the school will notify the LA within five days, and will supply the LA with all of the details contained on the admissions register for the new pupil.

Where a parent/carer notifies the school that a pupil will live at another address, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:

- The full name of the parent/carer with whom the pupil will live.
- The new address.
- The date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent/carer notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school, or will be attending a different school in future, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:

- The name of the new school.
- The date when the pupil first attended, or is due to attend, that school.
- Parents/carers are able to elect to educate their children at home, and will subsequently withdraw them from the school. This can happen at any time, unless the pupil is subject to a "School Attendance Order".

9. Removing a pupil from the admission register

Lote Tree Primary will inform the LA of any pupil who will be deleted from the admission register and will complete the **School Leavers Form** and **checklist** as in Appendix 5 and 6 where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents/carers and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home-schooled.
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the school.
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent/carer has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order, and the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.
- Have died.
- Have been registered at another school where it is not indicated this should not be the case.
- Are registered at more than one school, but have failed to attend the academy and the proprietor of any other schools concerned have consented their deletion.
- Have been granted authorised leave but have failed to attend school within 10 school days after the period of authorised absence ended and: there is reason to believe the pupil is not unable to attend school.
- The LA and school are unable to determine the pupil's whereabouts after making joint reasonable enquiries.
- Have been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than 20 school days and the absence was not authorised.
- There is reason to believe the pupil is not unable to attend school.
- Will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets, and the relevant person has indicated the pupil will not attend the school, or, the pupil does not meet the school entry requirements.

10. When a child goes missing from home

- When a child goes missing parents and carers are expected to undertake basic attempts to locate their child, if it is safe to do so. This could include searching the home and, contact friends and relatives, or visiting locations the child may frequent. If the child is not found there is an expectation that parents and/or guardians will report the episode to the Police.
- The Police will assess the risk presented in each individual report of a missing child and will conduct appropriate enquiries. Where necessary these may be in conjunction with other agencies. The Police notify all missing episodes via the Police COMPACT (missing person's case management system) to the local authority children missing team.
- When a missing child is located or returns home, it is expected that the Police will conduct a safe and well check. The Police will notify the local authority children missing team of those who have been found. The missing children team will allocate a worker to undertake the return home interview and any subsequent interventions.
- In responding to a report of a missing child, all agencies should be alert to the potential significance of repeat missing episodes by a child. Children who repeatedly go missing should not be viewed as problem children. It is imperative that consideration is given to the reason why the child is repeatedly going missing and appropriate referrals made, so that additional support can be given
- Children and young people, who go missing under the age of 16 are not legally considered as being able to live independently away from home. Once located it is expected that they will return home, if it is safe for them to do so. Where a missing child is aged 16 - 17, consideration should be given to their physical and emotional needs when making a judgment as to whether they can live independently away from home.
- Where a child who has gone missing has a Child Protection Plan or is subject to a Section 47 enquiry there are additional responsibilities. The Police and local authority need to work closely together, with all other relevant agencies. The procedure to be followed is clearly outlined in the Missing Child Procedure.

11. When a child goes missing from a care

- Research shows that children looked after by the Local Authority are over-represented in the cohort of children who go missing on repeat occasions. Local authorities have a duty to place a looked after child in the most appropriate placement to safeguard the child and minimise the risk of the child running away. Care plans and placement plans should include details of arrangements of risk assessment on the child going missing and actions that

need to be in place to minimise the risk.

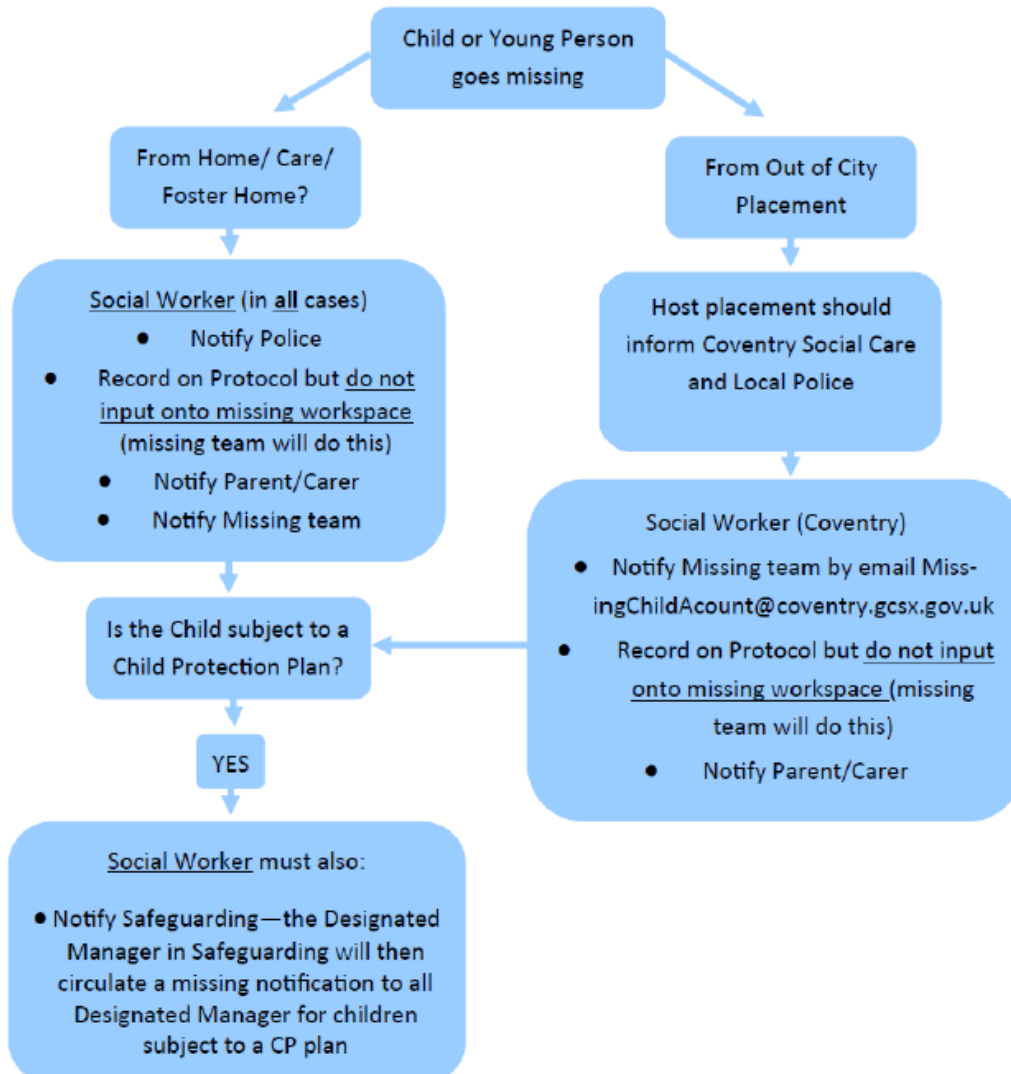
- Care providers, both local authority and private sector, should inform the local Police force of any new Children's Homes being established to enable local procedures to be prepared should children subsequently be reported missing from such an address.
- When a child or young person is reported missing, the local authority and the Police have a joint responsibility for protecting the well-being of the individual. When a child or young person goes missing from care it is expected that their carer(s) will act in their capacity as a 'good parent'. This means that every reasonable effort will be made to locate the child prior to them being reported to the Police and throughout the length of the enquiry. This should include local searches, and making early contact with family and friends to establish his/her location.
- Children/young people must not be reported missing as part of a strategy to manage behaviour. Once it is apparent that a looked after child has gone missing the episode should be reported to the Police. The approach taken by residential or foster carers to the child will be the same regardless of the Police categorisation of risk. As with non LAC children, the Police will notify the local authority children missing team who will arrange and facilitate a return home interview, once found.

12. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed every year, or sooner, if there are statutory guidance updates.

13. Appendices

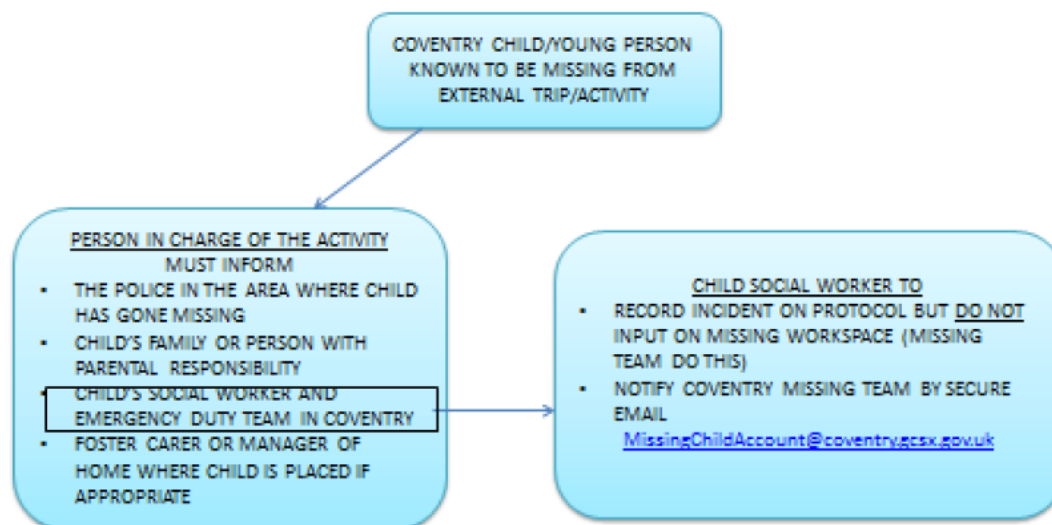
Appendix 1: How to notify a missing Coventry child/Young person Practitioners guide November 2015



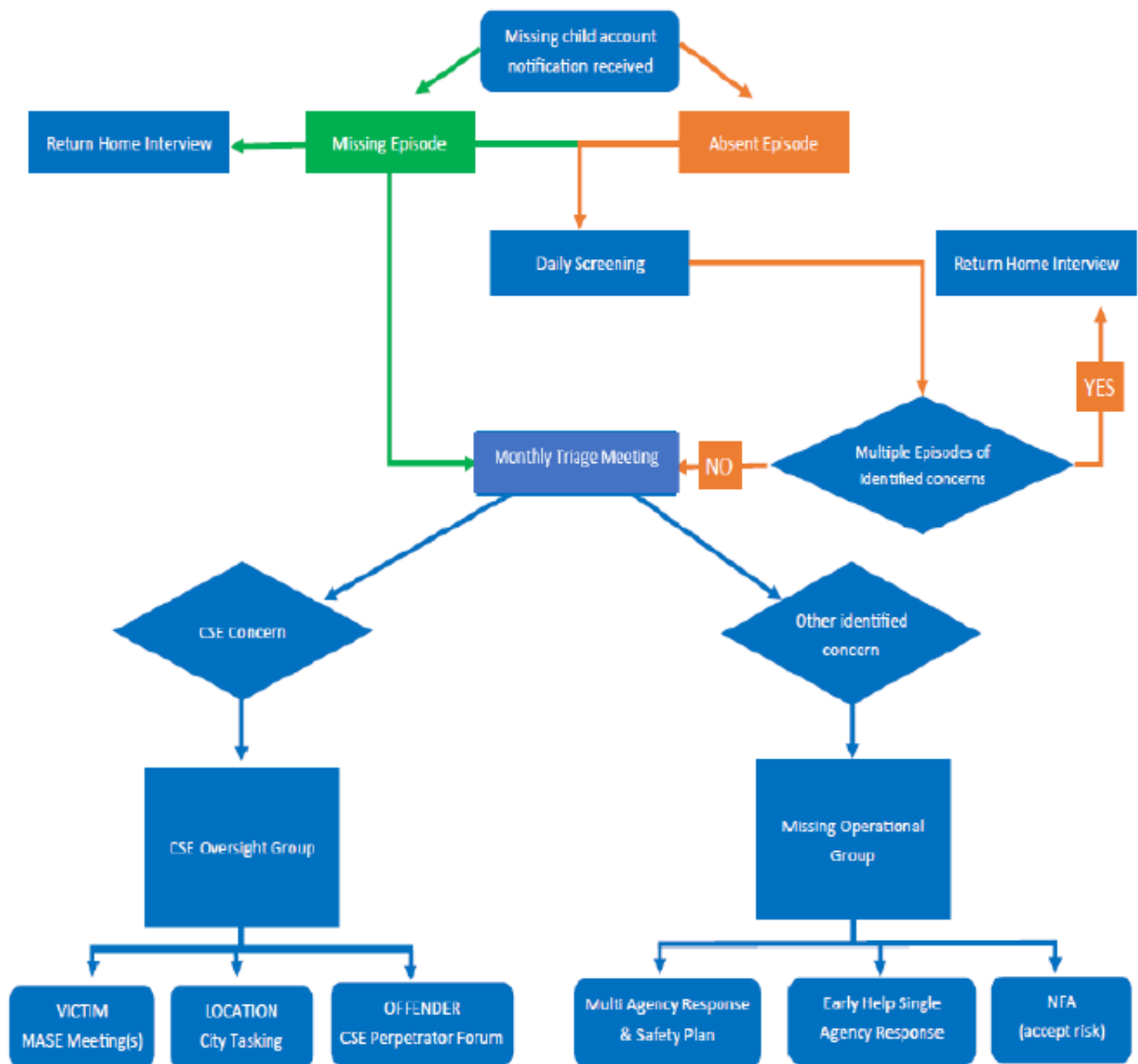
Appendix 2: Missing child on an external trip

WHAT TO DO IF A COVENTRY CHILD GOES MISSING ON AN EXTERNAL ACTIVITY/TRIP

PRACTITIONERS GUIDE OCTOBER 2015



Appendix 3: Missing/Absent meetings process for children and young people in Coventry





Appendix 4: School Referral Form

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	Last known address
Alias	
Unique Pupil Number	
Unique Identification Number	
Gender	
Year Group	Previous Addresses
Ethnicity	
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:	
Families 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:	

Please indicate any further details:

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	

Details of enquiries made: Dates, Times, Letters sent and Home visits



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 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:

Lote Tree Primary



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 Helen Fox, named Officer for CME. Children & Families First Service, 82 Moseley Avenue, Coventry, CV6 1AB. 02476 786879



Appendix 5 Student Leaver Form/removal from Admissions Register

Section 1: Pupil Details				
Surname		Forename		Middle names
Date of Birth				
Current Address				
Contact Number				
Section 2: Primary Caregiver Details				
Name:			Relationship to pupil	
Section 3: Reason For Leaving				
Full details should be outlined here:				
Section 4: Details of New Address				
New Address				
Date moving in				
Section 5: Detail of New School				
Name of School				
Address of School				
Last date at current school				
Starting Date				



Section 6: Action			
Local Authority Contacted		Evidence of contact, please attach email/other	
CME Further action			
Below please include brief details and dates, include evidence of postage or delivery of student file			
Contact with new school			
Pupil file forwarded			
Safeguarding file forwarded			
Updated information			
Section 7: Outstanding Finance			
Fees outstanding		Signed	
Other Monies owed		Signed	
Agreed Action			
Section 8: Signatures			
Primary care giver signature		Print Name	
Head teacher Signature		Date	



Pupil name:	Date:	Signed	Date
Leavers request: (form blue)			
Information completed on form:			
Pupil is considered CME	Yes		No
Contact with CME:			
Copy of CME form filled and sent:			
Pupil is being home schooled:	Yes		No
Copy of letter signed and dated from parents/carer if home school is being considered:	Yes		No
Copy of Elective Home Education form filled:	Yes		No
Correspondence with new school:	Contact's Name	Details	Date:
New school details:			
Pupil File			Date:
Details of Pupil file forwarded: (any postage receipts) Name of person posting:			
Safeguarding	Tick	Signed/Staff	
Mint/green form completed:			
Safeguarding File Transfer Details	LA Lilac Form Completed:		
Safeguarding Concerns communicated to school			
Early Help communicated			
Any other information			



Appendix 7 No Safeguarding Concerns

To be inserted in the child's yellow folder. Printed on mint green paper please

For the attention of the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead

Child's Name -----

As far as we are aware there are no safeguarding concerns regarding this child.

Signed: _____

DSL at Lote Tree Primary School

Date _____



Appendix 8 Safeguarding Concerns

School/ College details: Top half to be retained by receiving school, lower half for original school. To be printed on lilac paper.

To _____

For the attention of the school's Designated safeguarding Lead

Please find enclosed paper work in respect of _____ child's name.

Year group.....

Date of Birth.....

Attendance

Date of admission

Previous schools attended

CP	CIN	Early Help	LAC	General concerns

Case open/closed dates.....

Please sign and return slip below as acknowledgement of receipt.

Kind regards

Name and title

Delivered by.....

Received by



Appendix 9: Leavers Safeguarding running log

Leavers Running Log



Pupil Name:

Year:

Date	Information	Name and Signed