

FINHAM PARK 2

Children Missing from Education
(CME)

September 2026



1. Introduction

Finham Park 2 is committed to ensuring that every child of compulsory school age is receiving an excellent full-time education.

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 still 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 and robust procedures in order to try and locate children who are absent from school and their whereabouts are unknown.

2. The legal framework

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.

Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 requires local authorities to make arrangements to identify, as far as possible, children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. The school works in partnership with the Local Authority in accordance with the **Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and Schools (DfE)** and the **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024** to identify, monitor and support children who may be missing education. Where a pupil's whereabouts become unknown, the school will undertake reasonable enquiries and share information with the Local Authority in line with statutory requirements.

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 must refer these children immediately to Coventry's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and/or 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 Finham Park in writing of their intention to home educate, the school must inform the local authority before deleting the child from its admission register. The school completes a pro forma and a safeguarding checklist (Appendix 1). If there are welfare concerns the school will consult Social Care.

ii) School's role and duties

Finham Park 2 has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (Section 175 of the **Education Act 2002**.) Therefore, Finham Park has a responsibility to investigate any unexplained absences.

Finham Park 2 must monitor student attendance through their daily register and should address poor attendance whenever this occurs. Registers should be completed by 9.30am. The Attendance and Admin Assistant will then send a message home to students whose parents/carers have not contacted school via MCAS. Further phone calls and/or home visits will then be carried out when we have not been able to contact the family.

For any child whose whereabouts are known and distant, and continues to have unauthorised absences, Finham Park 2 will complete a CME form in line with guidance from the LA, if a child has not already been admitted to a new school. (Appendix 2). The CME form is sent to CME@coventry.gov.uk.

Finham Park 2 must also arrange full-time education for excluded students from the sixth school day of a Suspension (previously referred to as **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, Finham Park 2 has a duty to carry out a reasonable enquiry 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, Finham Park 2 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.
- Check with all members of staff who the child may have had contact with.
- Check with the child's friends, siblings and known relatives at this school 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

This form must be completed by schools and returned to sen@coventry.gov.uk, with the letter from a parent removing a child from roll. A second copy should be stored in the child's school file. If you have any queries or concerns about Elective Home Education, please get in touch with the Elective Home Education Team on 02476 831614 or sen@coventry.gov.uk

Elective Home Education Checklist

Name of School:	
Name of child removed from roll:	
DOB:	
Year Group:	
SEN - Please Indicate N, K or E:	
Address:	
Email:	
Parent names and contact details:	
Please provide the child's last date on roll with school:	
Does the child have any siblings at the school and what year group are they in?	
Does this child have social worker/Early Help worker (if yes, what is their name and contact details?)	
Do you have any current or historical safeguarding concerns for this child?	
What are the child's current academic levels:	
Do you have any concerns about this child being removed from roll?	
Have the parents given any reasons for their decision to EHE? (If yes, what is the reasons/s?)	
If parents have raised concerns about current provision and are withdrawing their child as a result of these, has school had a meeting with parents to try and resolve these? If so, what was the outcome of this meeting?	
Person Completing this form/Professional to speak to regarding the child(ren):	
Contact details for above professional:	



Children Missing from Education (CME) School Referral Form

Please provide as much information as possible in order to assist with our further investigations.

Appendix 2



Section 1

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

Section 2

Pupil Details:

Address:

Forename:

Middle Name(s)

Surname:

Last known address

Alias

Unique Pupil Number:

Unique Identification Number

Gender:

Previous Address:

Year Group

Ethnicity:

Date child last attended school:

Does the child speak English?

Sibling details:

Name	DOB	Address	School
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Do you consider these children to be CME cases as well?



Section 3

Parent/carer details: (Please include all contact information held by the school)

Name:

Relationship to child: Mother

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?

Gypsy, Roma or Traveller?

A Refugee or Asylum Seeker?

Living in temporary accommodation?

Subject to a Child Protection Plan?

An open case to Children's Social Services?



Name of Social Worker:

Section 5

What are your concerns for the welfare of this child as a result of this referral:

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)

Risk of child being missing/running away from home.

Risk of child trafficking:

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 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 re any of the following;

Safety of the child(ren):

The reason given for leaving the UK:

That the information given is not accurate



CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION

Date reviewed:

September 2026

Next review date:

September 2027

Approved by Governors: 1st October 2026

Signed:

Signed:



WILL KEDDIE
Headteacher



Michelle Porter
Chair of Governors