

# **Manor Park**

# **Primary School**



## **Children Missing Education**

## **Policy**

**This policy should be read in relation to the following documentation:**

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**
- **Attendance Policy**
- **Online Safety Policy**
- **Exclusion Policy**

**Review date: September 2022**

**Agreed by Governors: September 2022**

**Shared with all Staff: September 2022**

**Frequency of Review: Annually**

**Date of Next Review: September 2023**

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A child missing education from school due to repeated or unexplained absence, or by leaving the school unexpectedly is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, or where a family may be in need of additional support. The school has drawn up this policy to deal with children who miss schooling in these circumstances, particularly on repeat occasions and for those children who leave school without clear indications of where they will be continuing their education.

## **CONTEXT**

This policy should be read alongside the school's Attendance Policy and in particular with the school's Safeguarding Policy of which it is an integral part. The policy has regard to the DfE guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2022.

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Manor Park will carry out daily registration and absences will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Attendance Policy. This policy covers those instances where:

- there is a repeated pattern of absence;
- the reason for absence is unclear or unexplained;
- a member of staff has concerns about the nature of a pupil's absence.

Absence is closely monitored and tracked in school by robust procedures involving a dedicated Attendance Clerical Officer and Learning Mentor. These members of staff work closely with class teachers and families where patterns of absence arise and attendance becomes poor, and as a matter of course, our Local Authority Attendance Officer is alerted in order to work more closely with parents and carers.

Where concerns arise about the nature of a child's absence from staff, this should be reported to one of Manor Park's DSLs, who will then follow the procedure detailed in the school's Safeguarding Policy, Attendance Policy and Appendix 1 of this policy. A written report of actions taken and discussions held must be recorded on CPOMS.

When a pupil leaves Manor Park, the school will make contact with the receiving school to ensure the child is registered at the school and has started to attend. The Learning Mentor team will then forward the appropriate records to the receiving school.

### Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Safeguarding Leads of Manor Park and will be reviewed annually or in the light of changes to legislation.

## Appendix 1 Coventry CME Procedures

1. Definition “Children missing from education” refers to all children of compulsory school age:
  - Who are not on a school roll or being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision) for example children of travelling communities or immigrant families who never are registered for education; or
  - Who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as ten days without provision of reasonable explanation). According to Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (section 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) the Local Authority has a duty to identify, as far as it is possible to do so, children missing education (CME) and get them back into education. There should be a ‘child missing from education’ (CME) named point of contact in every local authority and every practitioner working with a child has a responsibility to inform that CME if s/he knows or suspects that a child is not receiving education.
2. Required Action by Schools

As a result of daily registration, schools are particularly well placed to notice when a child has gone missing. If a member of Manor Park becomes aware that a child may have run away or gone missing, they should try to establish with the parents/carers, what has happened. If this is not possible, or the child is missing, the DSL, together with the class teacher, should assess the child's vulnerability.

Once a child has ceased to attend school, Manor Park should make all reasonable enquiries to try and ascertain the child's whereabouts, before making a referral to the Children and Families First Service.

During a normal transition phase (e.g. reception, primary to secondary), a child becomes the responsibility of the new school when the child has been ‘allocated’ a place. Manor Park adopts this principle to prevent children from ‘falling through the net’ and becoming missing/lost.

Manor Park will endeavour to make reasonable enquiries:

- Make telephone enquiries to the parent/carer/relatives;
- Write to the parents/carers/relatives;
- Visit the home of the child/relatives;
- Speak to the child's friends to ascertain their whereabouts.

Where contact is successfully made with parents/carers but a pupil's attendance continues to cause concern i.e. below 90%, normal protocol to support attendance would follow.

After a maximum of 10 days, if the whereabouts of the child and family are still not known following these checks, a Learning Mentor will complete the Local Authority online Children Missing Education referral form and forward to: [CME@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:CME@coventry.gov.uk)

Manor Park will inform the Attendance School's Worker and the Local Authority of any child who has not attended for 4 weeks without provision of reasonable explanation.

When a pupil leaves our school without clear indication of a receiving school and whereabouts cannot be established after all reasonable attempts, Manor Park will contact the Coventry Children Missing Education Team to advise them of the situation and to start their tracking procedures – a referral form will be completed and submitted. In case of serious concerns the DSL will contact MASH and/or Police in line with the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

**N.B.** If the missing pupil, or any sibling, is subject to a **Child Protection Plan**, then action should be taken on the same day. Schools should refer to the Child Protection Plan and inform the Social Worker of the child's circumstances immediately.

Similarly, if the child is **Looked After** by the Local Authority, then the child's Social Worker should be contacted directly.

Other missing families might also give cause for concern, for example, if domestic violence has been a known feature of family life. Schools will need to decide whether these children are at risk and should be referred immediately to MASH.

If a parent advises Manor Park the child is to leave a school, the following information is required:

- Parent/carer contact details;
- Address moving to;
- Intended educational provision if known;
- If leaving the country / area, date of departure, flight details. If returning, expected date of return;
- Specific concerns e.g. health, Domestic Violence, Forced Marriage, Child sexual Exploitation.

These enquires will support the CME officer in verifying the location of the child and agreeing as to whether or not the child can be taken off roll.

Manor Park has responsibilities in relation to keeping the LA informed about children on our roll but **not attending school for reasons of exclusion** or alternative educational arrangements having been made:

- *All fixed term exclusions should be reported to the LA (this is a legal requirement);*
- *Informal exclusions are not used under any circumstances, i.e. students must not be sent home without a formal exclusion process (informal exclusions are illegal);*
- *Part-time timetables are used only in exceptional circumstances and only for an agreed short fixed period of time with a clear plan of reintegration. Arrangements for part-time study should be clearly explained to parents/carers and the details recorded in the student's Personal Support Plan.*

For children missing education for the reasons above, the headteacher must notify the Special Educational Needs Service on 02476 831614 or Email the SEN inbox: [SEN@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:SEN@coventry.gov.uk).

### **Removing pupils from the school roll**

Manor Park adheres to the strict Government regulations relating to deleting pupil names from the register as set out in the **Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for**

**Local Authorities (DfE, September 2016)**. A child can only be removed from a school roll in the limited circumstances which are listed in **Regulation 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 (as amended by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016)**. All pupils who are removed from our school roll must comply with these regulations.

Specific attention is drawn to the following regulation categories:

- **Category H** - States that a registered pupil has been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than twenty school days and both the proprietor of the school and the children and young people's services have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate the pupil;
- **Category F** - States that in the case of a registered pupil granted leave of absence exceeding ten school days for the purpose of a holiday, the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted, and the proprietor is not satisfied that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause;
- **Category D** - States that a registered pupil has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent/carer that the pupil is receiving education other than at school'. It is good practice and recommended in Coventry that a pupil should not be removed from the school roll until the Education department has confirmed that they have been satisfied that the parent/carer is able to provide a suitable education for that child. For further information on education at home by parents please see **Educating your child at home (elective home education)**.

Where a child on Manor Park's school roll is missing, the child's name must not be removed from the school roll until they have been continuously absent for not less than twenty school days and both the school and the local authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate the pupil and their family.

In these circumstances the child's name is kept on a centrally held register, and should be clearly identified as missing from education.

A child must not be removed from our school roll until notified by the CME Officer that it is appropriate to do so. It is essential that schools comply with this duty to ensure the Local Authority can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

Once the school has been advised they can take the child off roll, the school will then need to update the pupil record in SIMS.Net by entering a "*Date of Leaving*" and selecting a "*Reason for Leaving*" code in the "*School History*" section of the "*Pupil Details*" screen. The "*Reason for Leaving*" code selected should be "*Other / Unknown*".

Following this, the school should create a 'lost pupil' common transfer file (CTF) with **XXXXXXX** as the destination. This CTF should be immediately uploaded onto the DFE School2School secure internet site where it will be held in the Lost Pupil Database. This is underpinned by a statutory responsibility placed on schools and a description of the process is contained on the homepage for **School to School Service: How to Transfer Information**.

If a pupil leaves the UK, enters independent/private provision, or becomes home educated, then the school should send the pupil details to the lost pupils Database using the **MMMMMMM** destination code.

If at any time after the child has been removed from Manor Park's roll, the school receive any information regarding the child's whereabouts or are contacted by a receiving school, the Children and Families First Service must be informed.