THE MERCIAN TRUST

Increasing Opportunities | Improving Outcomes

Children Missing in Education Policy

Policy Owner	The Mercian Trust — Standards and Effectiveness Committee
Responsibility	Director for Safeguarding and Compliance/SEC
Effective from	1st October 2026
Review Date	1st September 2027 *(or earlier if legislation changes)*
Legislation	• Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (Department for Education, updated September 2025) • Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 • Working together to improve school attendance • School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 • Education Act 1996, including sections 7, 19, 436A and 437 • Education Act 2002, including section 175 • Alternative Provision statutory guidance • Suspension and Permanent Exclusion statutory guidance • Elective Home Education guidance • Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions • Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs • Working Together to Safeguard Children • Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty • Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
Changes since the last update	

This policy replaces all previous versions.

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This policy sets the Trust-wide strategic framework and non-negotiable expectations for children missing education and for pupils at risk of missing education. Each school must maintain separate, accessible local procedures that explain how this policy operates within the school and its local-authority context.

The Mercian Trust Vision for Attendance, Inclusion and Educational Visibility

At The Mercian Trust, we believe that every child and young person deserves to be visible, known and supported throughout their educational journey. Attendance, inclusion, safeguarding, alternative provision, pupil movement and children missing education are not separate responsibilities but interconnected elements of our commitment to social mobility, social justice and educational opportunity for all.

We recognise that children who are absent from education, attend alternative provision, experience disruption to their schooling, receive a reduced timetable, move between settings or become difficult to locate are often amongst the most vulnerable pupils within our communities. These children may experience multiple and overlapping vulnerabilities, including safeguarding concerns, SEND, poor attendance, exclusion risk, mental health difficulties, family adversity or involvement from children's social care.

Consistent with our commitment to Increasing Opportunities and Improving Outcomes, our expectation is that every child remains visible within school systems, known to responsible adults and able to access suitable education appropriate to their needs, abilities and circumstances. Educational placement, attendance status or location must never reduce professional curiosity, accountability or aspiration.

Across The Mercian Trust we therefore seek to ensure that every child is:

- visible;
- safe;
- included;
- learning;
- progressing;
- connected to their community;
- supported towards positive outcomes.

This policy reflects our commitment to ensuring that no child becomes invisible within the education system and that schools and Trust leaders can demonstrate not only compliance with statutory responsibilities, but also the positive impact of their actions on children's safety, belonging, educational engagement and life chances

1. Purpose and principles

1.1 Every child of compulsory school age is entitled to an efficient, suitable, full-time education. Children who are not receiving suitable education are at increased risk of harm, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation, poor outcomes and becoming not in education, employment or training. This policy is intended to ensure that no child in, joining or leaving a Mercian Trust school becomes invisible.

1.2 Being on a school roll is not the same as receiving suitable education. The Trust therefore maintains oversight not only of children who meet the statutory definition of children missing education, but also of registered pupils whose whereabouts, attendance, welfare or education is not sufficiently known or assured.

1.3 This policy should be read with the Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Admissions Policy, Suspensions Permanent Exclusions and Pupil Movement Policy, Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy, Supporting Children with Medical and Health Needs, including First Aid Policy. Where there is an immediate safeguarding concern, safeguarding action takes priority and must not be delayed by CME enquiries.

1.4 Trust non-negotiables

- Every unexplained absence is followed up promptly on the first day and schools know where pupils are expected to be during the school day.
- No pupil is removed from the admission register unless a lawful ground is fully met, evidenced and approved. Deletions are never made retrospectively.

- Off-rolling, informal or unrecorded exclusion, and the use of part-time or reduced timetables to manage behaviour are not acceptable.
- The commissioning school retains oversight and safeguarding responsibility for pupils it places in alternative or off-site provision. Attendance is confirmed every day.
- Required notifications and returns are made to the relevant local authority accurately and within statutory or Trust timescales.
- Where there is a risk of harm, the safeguarding route is followed immediately.
- Assurance is based on evidence and verification, not self-report alone. Weaknesses are followed through and re-verified.
- The Trust Board receives proportionate and accurate assurance on CME, pupils at risk of missing education and alternative provision regularly.

2. Definitions

2.1 A child missing education (CME) is a child of compulsory school age who is not a registered pupil at a school and is not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. This includes children applying for a place, children offered a place who have not started, children whose elective home education has been assessed as unsuitable, and children whose whereabouts are unclear or unknown.

2.2 The statutory definition does not include registered pupils, even where they are persistently or severely absent, or children receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. This distinction must not lead to reduced vigilance.

2.3 For internal safeguarding and assurance purposes, the Trust uses the term pupils at risk of missing education for registered pupils who:

- are absent without explanation, persistently or severely absent, or whose whereabouts are unknown;
- attend alternative or off-site provision where attendance, quality, safety or safeguarding is not confirmed;
- are on a part-time timetable, long-term isolation, removal or reduced educational offer;
- are dual registered, awaiting a managed move or placement, or moving between schools;
- are not attending because of unmet health, SEND, mental health, family or other need;
- have a social worker, previously had a social worker, are looked after or previously looked after, and whose attendance or education causes concern.

2.4 Compulsory school age ends on the last Friday of June in the school year in which the child reaches 16. The statutory CME arrangements apply to children of compulsory school age. Young people who are above compulsory school age but remain under 18 continue to be children for safeguarding purposes, and child safeguarding arrangements continue to apply. For learners aged 18 or above, adult safeguarding arrangements may apply where relevant.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility under this policy
Trust Board	Retains ultimate strategic accountability for statutory compliance, safeguarding effectiveness and the adequacy of Trust arrangements. Receives assurance, challenges significant themes and risks, and acts where assurance is insufficient.
Standards & Effectiveness Committee (SEC)	Scrutinises CME compliance, attendance, exclusions, pupil movement, admission-register duties and the safeguarding compliance aspects of alternative and off-site provision. Refers significant control or strategic risk to AROC and provides assurance to the Board.
Audit, Risk & Opportunity Committee (AROC)	Scrutinises the effectiveness of Trust controls, risk management, internal assurance and escalation arrangements. Receives significant, systemic or increasing CME and AP risks.

Role	Responsibility under this policy
Schools, Staff & Students Committee (SSSC)	Receives thematic intelligence about safeguarding culture, inclusion, belonging and the lived experience of pupils who are absent or educated away from the main site, including relevant LGB insight. It does not duplicate compliance assurance.
Safeguarding Link Trustee	Provides strategic oversight and professional challenge on the safeguarding dimensions of CME, absence and AP. The role does not replace Board or committee accountability.
Local Governing Bodies / Vulnerable Groups and Safeguarding Champion	Provide local intelligence about culture, inclusion, belonging, pupil and family experience and the visibility of vulnerable pupils. They do not undertake case auditing, operational oversight or statutory compliance monitoring.
CEO and executive leaders	Ensure sufficient leadership, capacity, systems, expertise and resources and that significant risks are escalated.
Executive Director, Standards, System and Sector	Holds the accountable executive route for statutory education assurance, including attendance, exclusions and safeguarding compliance.
Director for Safeguarding, Compliance & Risk	Leads this policy, coordinates Trust assurance, verification, professional challenge, trend analysis and complex-case support, and reports themes, weaknesses and risks through the established governance routes.
Trust attendance, inclusion, AP and SEND leads	Provide subject expertise, support schools, analyse relevant data, verify implementation within their remit and escalate weaknesses.
Headteachers	Are accountable for effective local procedures, admission and attendance register accuracy, lawful deletions, appropriate notifications and approval and oversight of AP and part-time timetables.
DSL / Deputy DSLs	Provide safeguarding oversight of suspected CME and pupils at risk of missing education, including those in AP; determine safeguarding referrals; and oversee secure transfer of child protection information.
Attendance, admissions and data staff	Undertake daily monitoring, first-day response, enquiries, register changes, returns, evidence retention and liaison with local authorities.
SENCO, pastoral, medical and behaviour leads	Identify barriers and unmet need early; contribute to risk assessment, support, provision, review and reintegration.
All staff	Report unexplained absence and concerns promptly and never assume another person has acted.

4. Prevention and early identification

4.1 Schools monitor attendance daily and take proactive, supportive and proportionate action before absence escalates. Attendance, safeguarding, SEND, pastoral, behaviour and medical information must be brought together to identify risk and unmet need.

4.2 Schools maintain accurate addresses, contact information and, where reasonably possible, more than one emergency contact number. Parents and carers are regularly reminded to report changes.

4.3 Schools record additional addresses and the parent or carer with whom the pupil normally lives, including the date from which an arrangement applies, where required by the registration regulations.

4.4 Schools identify cohorts at greater risk of becoming CME or missing education, including children at risk of harm or neglect; children missing from home or care; children in temporary accommodation; Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families; asylum-seeking and migrant children; children with SEND or health needs; children with a social worker or previous social worker; looked-after and previously looked-after children; children affected by suspension, exclusion or youth justice; children attending unregistered settings; and children at critical transition points.

4.5 Part-time or reduced timetables are exceptional, temporary and subject to a written plan, risk assessment, reintegration objective, start and end date, regular review and headteacher approval. The DSL and SENCO contribute where relevant. They are recorded and reported to the Trust and must not be used informally to manage behaviour.

5. Responding to unexplained absence and suspected CME

5.1 Day one. Every unexplained absence is followed up promptly on the first day using known contacts. If there is reason to believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, the DSL is informed immediately and a referral is made to children's social care and/or the police as appropriate. Enquiries must not delay protective action.

5.2 Risk-based escalation. Local procedures must set clear escalation points. As a minimum:

- Day one: contact attempts, initial checks and assessment of immediate safeguarding risk.
- By day three, where whereabouts remain unconfirmed: senior attendance and DSL review, wider contact attempts and consideration of a home visit following risk assessment.
- By day five, where unresolved: wider reasonable enquiries, local-authority liaison and consideration of formal CME referral.
- Earlier action: immediate escalation whenever vulnerability, suspected harm, exploitation, family flight, unknown whereabouts or other risk requires it.
- Day ten must never be treated as the point at which safeguarding or CME action begins.

5.3 Reasonable enquiries. Schools undertake and record proportionate enquiries, which may include parents and emergency contacts; agencies involved with the family; siblings' schools; previous or destination schools and local authorities; the authority where the child lives; housing services where appropriate; School to School and Get Information About a Pupil systems; relatives or neighbours where appropriate; and risk-assessed home visits. Records show the date, person, action, outcome and decision rationale.

5.4 Referral to the local authority. As a Trust non-negotiable, where the school reasonably believes a child may be missing education, referral is made as soon as possible and no later than two school days after that belief is formed, unless risk or the relevant local-authority procedure requires earlier action. Where the child lives in a different authority from the school, the relevant authorities are notified. The school continues to cooperate, share updates and make enquiries until responsibility and next steps are agreed.

5.5 The DSL is informed of every suspected CME case. Concerns suggesting neglect, exploitation, trafficking, radicalisation, forced marriage, FGM, abduction or other harm are managed under the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

5.6 A case is described as resolved only where the educational destination has been appropriately verified. Where a child transfers to another school, this includes confirmation that the child has commenced at the destination school. Where reasonable enquiries have been exhausted but the child's destination remains unverified, the case remains recorded as unresolved, subject to continuing oversight, scheduled local review, liaison with the local authority and Trust assurance reporting. The school's local CME procedure must identify responsibility for the live record, ongoing oversight and evidence of enquiries.

6. Admission register, deletions and off-rolling

6.1 Pupils are entered on the admission register in accordance with the 2024 Regulations. If a pupil does not start on the agreed date, the school makes and records reasonable enquiries and completes the required local-authority return.

6.2 A pupil is deleted only when a lawful ground under regulation 9 is fully met. The headteacher approves each deletion, the ground and evidence are recorded, and deletion is not backdated.

6.3 Where a ground requires joint reasonable enquiries with the local authority, deletion must not occur until the statutory conditions are satisfied and the evidence of joint enquiries and agreement is retained.

6.4 On deletion, the school provides the local authority with the information required by the regulations, including contact, address, destination and deletion-ground information where known.

6.5 Elective home education. Where written notification is received, the school follows the lawful deletion process and notifies the local authority. Before deletion, the headteacher or DSL offers a conversation to understand the reasons, identify pressure or unmet need and offer support. Schools must never encourage or pressure a family to home educate to avoid exclusion, manage behaviour or improve data. The DSL is consulted where the pupil is vulnerable or there are safeguarding concerns. A pupil registered at a special school under local-authority arrangements must not be removed from roll following parental notification of elective home education unless the local authority's consent has been obtained where required. The local procedure must set out how that consent is obtained, evidenced and checked before deletion.

6.6 Transfers. The common transfer file is transferred securely through the appropriate system. Where the destination is unknown it is uploaded to the lost-pupil area. Child protection information is transferred securely, separately and promptly, with confirmation of receipt and direct DSL-to-DSL communication for significant or complex concerns.

6.7 Off-rolling is unacceptable. Trust analysis considers deletions by ground, EHE, managed moves, off-site direction, AP, part-time timetables and pupil movement, including patterns affecting vulnerable groups and pupils in Years 10 and 11.

7. Suspension, permanent exclusion and pupil movement

7.1 Schools make required local-authority notifications for suspensions and permanent exclusions without delay. Informal or unofficial exclusions are unlawful and are not permitted.

7.2 Suitable full-time education is arranged from the applicable statutory day. From the first day, the pupil remains safe, visible and in contact, receives education and is considered through a safeguarding and SEND lens.

7.3 Managed moves are voluntary, planned, in the child's best interests and agreed by the relevant parties. Information, risk and support needs are shared before the move. The home school remains accountable until the move is confirmed and the destination is evidenced.

7.4 Vulnerable-pupil managed moves, off-site directions, repeated suspensions and moves to EHE are notified through Trust reporting and escalation routes so that themes and risk can be identified.

8. Alternative provision, off-site education and in-school units

8.1 The commissioning school retains responsibility for oversight and safeguarding. A pupil placed in AP remains in the school's attendance, safeguarding, SEND and pupil-voice systems and is not removed from roll merely because they attend AP.

8.2 AP is used only where it is suitable and in the pupil's best interests, with clear objectives, review arrangements and reintegration or sustained destination planning. It is not used for administrative convenience or to improve school data.

8.3 Before placement, the headteacher approves the placement after DSL and SENCO input. The school completes and retains due diligence; confirms registration status, safeguarding arrangements, staffing checks, sites, subcontracting and travel; consults the pupil and parent; involves the local authority where required; and agrees a personalised written plan.

8.4 Attendance is confirmed directly with the provider every day. Unconfirmed attendance is treated as unexplained absence and followed up on the same day. A pupil must not be marked as attending off-site without evidence from the provider.

8.5 A part-time AP offer must form part of a written plan towards full-time suitable education. The plan states where the pupil is expected to be at all other times. Remote education is used only where suitable and justified.

8.6 Placements are reviewed at least half-termly and more frequently according to risk. The school maintains regular direct contact with the pupil and family, obtains progress and welfare information and undertakes

proportionate visits. Safeguarding concerns trigger immediate review and possible suspension or termination of the placement.

8.7 The school meets applicable notification and review requirements for off-site direction and ensures parents understand the arrangement and review route.

8.8 Schools do not commission an unregistered setting where the nature of provision means the provider is required to register as an independent school. Each use of unregistered AP is explicitly approved, risk assessed and recorded on the Trust AP register.

8.9 A unit at another school, including another Trust school, is treated according to the legal nature of the arrangement. Registration, admissions, safeguarding, travel, attendance, accountability and local-authority notification are agreed in writing. Units must not be used to obscure exclusion or pupil-movement data.

8.10 Where a pupil cannot attend because of health needs, the school continues support and works with the local authority to secure suitable education when the applicable threshold is met. Medical, SEND, attendance and safeguarding plans remain connected.

8.11 Placement endings include a reintegration or destination plan, final information from the provider, transition support and confirmation that the next placement or post-16 destination has commenced.

9. Information sharing, records and engagement

9.1 Data-protection law does not prevent necessary information sharing to safeguard children. Information is shared lawfully, proportionately, securely and promptly with local authorities, safeguarding partners, providers and schools.

9.2 Records are factual, timely, complete and secure. They distinguish fact, professional judgement and third-party information and show enquiries, decisions, authorisation, notifications, outcomes and rationale.

9.3 Families are engaged supportively and communication is adapted to need. Schools seek to understand barriers, explain processes, offer support and obtain the child's views. Engagement does not delay action where safety or statutory compliance requires it.

10. Data, assurance, verification and governance reporting

10.1 Each school maintains live and accurate records covering suspected CME, pupils at risk of missing education, admissions and deletions, EHE notifications, AP and off-site placements, part-time timetables, managed moves and unresolved destinations. Relevant Trust leads have access to the information required for assurance.

10.2 Trust assurance will not rely on school self-report alone. It will include proportionate use of:

- school self-evaluation and compliance returns;
- documentary evidence and data reconciliation across attendance, safeguarding, SEND, AP and admissions systems;
- case sampling and file review;
- testing of admission and deletion grounds and local-authority notifications;
- verification that AP attendance is confirmed daily and concerns are followed up;
- review of EHE, managed moves and part-time timetable controls;
- pupil and parent voice and, where proportionate, provider contact or visits;
- formal recording of strengths, weaknesses, challenge, actions, owners and deadlines;
- follow-up and re-verification until identified weaknesses are evidenced as resolved.

10.3 Schools submit core CME and AP information when requested. Significant cases, statutory breaches, failures to confirm attendance, unresolved destinations and emerging risks are reported immediately and are not held until the next scheduled return.

10.4 Governance reporting. SEC receives termly assurance on CME and alternative provision through the established safeguarding, compliance and risk assurance arrangements. This includes unresolved cases and destinations, material themes and risks, findings from Trust verification and outstanding actions. Significant safeguarding or statutory concerns are escalated when identified rather than waiting for routine reporting. Significant, systemic or increasing risks and control weaknesses are escalated through the risk-management framework to AROC and, where necessary, directly to the Board. Safeguarding culture, inclusion, belonging, pupil

and parent experience and relevant LGB intelligence are reported through SSSC. Detailed evidence requirements, sampling methodology and verification tools sit within the Trust assurance framework.

10.5 The measures in Annex C form part of the Trust compliance and assurance cycle, including AUT 1 and related evidence collection. Measures may be refined to reflect statutory, contextual or risk changes without reducing the non-negotiables in this policy.

11. Training and induction

11.1 All staff receive induction and regular updates on children absent from education, first-day response, safeguarding escalation and the importance of professional curiosity.

11.2 Headteachers, DSLs, attendance leads, admissions and data staff, SENCOs and staff commissioning AP receive role-appropriate training on register duties, regulation 9 deletion, reasonable enquiries, local-authority returns, EHE, off-rolling, AP and record keeping.

11.3 Training assurance includes testing understanding and application, not attendance records alone. Identified gaps lead to support, improvement action and re-checking.

12. Local-authority and multi-agency relationships

12.1 Each school maintains current details of its local-authority CME route, named contacts, response expectations, fair-access and in-year admission arrangements. For pupils living across authority boundaries, procedures identify which authorities must be contacted and how disagreements or delay will be escalated.

12.2 Schools cooperate with local safeguarding arrangements and relevant agencies. This policy does not replace local statutory or multi-agency procedures.

13. Equality and inclusion

13.1 The policy is applied lawfully, fairly and without discrimination. Schools and the Trust analyse whether CME, absence, deletions, EHE, part-time timetables, suspensions, exclusions and AP placements disproportionately affect pupils with SEND or EHC plans, looked-after and previously looked-after children, children with current or previous social-work involvement, disadvantaged pupils or pupils sharing protected characteristics.

13.2 Findings lead to reasonable adjustment, support, challenge and action. Vulnerability or difference must not be used to justify a reduced educational entitlement or lower safeguarding expectation.

14. School-level CME procedures

14.1 Each school must maintain separate, accessible local CME procedures that implement this Trust policy within its staffing, local-authority and contextual arrangements. Procedures are operationally approved by the headteacher, provided to the Trust, shared with relevant staff and reviewed at least annually and whenever arrangements change.

14.2 Local procedures must contain the minimum requirements in Annex A and must not reduce, qualify or replace a Trust non-negotiable.

14.3 The Trust may request local procedures, registers, case records and supporting evidence and may undertake verification activity to confirm implementation. Where weaknesses are identified, the school must complete agreed action and provide evidence for follow-up and re-verification.

15. Review, approval and publication

15.1 This policy is reviewed annually and earlier where legislation, statutory guidance, inspection expectations, local arrangements, Trust structure, risk or assurance findings require change.

15.2 The final approval route will be confirmed against the approved 2026/27 Policy Schedule and Scheme of Delegation. Once approved, the policy will be published through the Trust's agreed arrangements and schools will ensure local procedures are accessible.

Annex 1: Minimum content of each school CME procedure

- Document owner, version, approval date, review date and headteacher approval.

- Named attendance, DSL, admissions/data and senior leads, with absence and holiday cover arrangements.
- First-day contact process, contact hierarchy and risk assessment.
- Day one, three and five escalation and explicit provision for earlier risk-based action.
- Home-visit protocol and risk assessment.
- Local-authority CME route, referral form, named contact, response expectations and date last checked.
- Out-of-hours, school-holiday and cross-border local-authority arrangements.
- Step-by-step reasonable-enquiries checklist and recording template.
- Admission and deletion decision controls, including lawful ground, evidence, headteacher approval and returns.
- EHE notification process, pre-deletion conversation, safeguarding review and local-authority notification.
- Method for confirming that the pupil has commenced at a destination school or education placement.
- Process for unresolved children and scheduled review.
- Fair-access and in-year admission arrangements.
- AP and off-site process, daily attendance confirmation, due diligence, reviews and provider escalation.
- Part-time timetable authorisation, monitoring and reintegration.
- Managed moves, suspension and permanent-exclusion links.
- Local contextual risks and critical transitions.
- Record keeping, information sharing and child-protection-file transfer.
- Trust reporting, immediate escalation, evidence requests and verification arrangements.

Annex 2: Minimum assurance standards for alternative and off-site provision

Stage	Minimum standard
Before placement	Headteacher approval after DSL and SENCO input; suitability decision; due diligence; registration and independent-school threshold check; safeguarding and staffing assurance; all sites and subcontracting known; travel assessed; pupil and parent consultation; local-authority involvement where required; personalised objectives, duration, review and reintegration plan; entry on Trust AP register.
Registration and attendance	Correct registration and attendance coding; home-school accountability retained; attendance confirmed directly with the provider every day; unconfirmed or unexplained absence followed up the same day.
During placement	Regular direct pupil and family contact; provider reports concerns immediately; attendance, welfare, progress, SEND and safeguarding information reviewed; review at least half-termly; proportionate visit or direct provider verification; pupil voice; access to home-school belonging and opportunities where appropriate.
Ending placement	Reintegration or destination plan; final provider report; support after return; Year 11 destination planning; evidence that the next placement or destination has commenced; register updated.
Trust verification	Risk-based evidence sampling, including placement files, due diligence, daily attendance confirmation, reviews, pupil visibility and destination evidence. Weaknesses are logged, challenged, followed up and re-verified.

Annex 3: Trust CME, attendance and AP assurance measures

These measures support the Trust assurance and compliance cycle. They combine quantitative information, professional evaluation and verification evidence.

- Number of CME investigations, referrals, unresolved cases and average time to referral or resolution.
- Unexplained, persistent and severe absence, including risk analysis and verification of attendance coding.
- Admission and deletion activity by ground, evidence of joint enquiries where required, destination confirmation and timeliness of returns.
- EHE notifications, including vulnerable pupils and pupils in Years 10 and 11, with evidence of safeguarding review and local-authority notification.
- AP and off-site pupils: provider, registration, attendance confirmation, placement length, reviews, due diligence, pupil visibility, safeguarding concerns, endings and destinations.
- Part-time or reduced timetables: number, duration, authority, attendance coding, review and reintegration.
- Managed moves, suspension and permanent exclusion, including education and safeguarding arrangements and confirmed destinations.
- Pupils with SEND or EHC plans, looked-after or previously looked-after status, current or previous social-worker involvement, disadvantage and protected-characteristic analysis.
- Pupil and parent voice and evidence of belonging, safety and access to education.
- Internal school sampling: number reviewed, strengths, weaknesses, actions and evidence of completion.
- Trust verification: records sampled, controls tested, discrepancies identified, challenge issued, actions agreed and re-verification outcome.
- Significant breaches, unresolved risks and matters escalated outside the normal reporting cycle.

Annex 4: Minimum verification record

Field	Required record
Scope	School, period, cohort/system, reviewer and purpose.
Evidence tested	Documents, records, systems, interviews, pupil/parent voice and external confirmation used.
Sample	Selection rationale, number sampled and risk factors represented.
Finding	What the evidence demonstrates, including strengths and weaknesses.
Cross-system check	Whether attendance, safeguarding, SEND, admissions, AP and local-authority evidence is consistent.
Risk and immediacy	Any immediate safeguarding or statutory action required.
Action	Specific action, owner, deadline and escalation route.
Re-verification	Date, evidence reviewed and outcome.
Assurance conclusion	Secure; secure with improvement; limited assurance; or insufficient assurance, with rationale.