



OVERSTONE PARK SCHOOL

Children Missing Education Policy



Date	September 2026
Review Date	September 2027
Coordinator	Mrs M Brown Mrs D York Mrs L Vippond

This policy is a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos and enables consistency and quality across the school.

This policy applies to all members of the school community and relates to the following legislation:

- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Children Act 2004
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and Schools (DfE) — updated September 2025

Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE) — statutory guidance Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (DfE)

- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (DfE)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years (DfE and DoH)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children (HM Gov)
- Prevent Strategy (HM Gov)
- Teaching Approaches that Help Build Resilience to Extremism Among People (DfE)

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, a child missing education (CME) is a child of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll and is not receiving a suitable education otherwise, for example through approved elective home education (EHE) or alternative provision arranged by the local authority (LA). This includes children who may be in temporary accommodation, awaiting allocation of a school place with no interim education in place, or who are receiving an education that is not suitable to their age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

In line with the September 2025 DfE statutory guidance, CME does not include children who are: registered at a school but persistently or severely absent; receiving EHE that is assessed as suitable; or awaiting a school place while otherwise in receipt of education. These children remain subject to the school's separate attendance and safeguarding arrangements, but school personnel should remain alert to any child whose circumstances change and who may become at risk of becoming CME.

Principles

We believe 'all children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children missing education (CME) are at significant risk of underachieving, having poorer health outcomes, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later on in life.' (Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and Schools (DfE), September 2025)

We understand that there could be many reasons for a child to be missing from education, and the LA will make a judgement on a case-by-case basis. The following list indicates pupils who are most at risk of missing education:

Pupils at risk of harm or neglect

Where this is suspected, local child protection procedures will be followed; however, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made immediately to children's social care (and the police if appropriate) as per the academy's safeguarding procedures. The LA officers responsible for CME will check a referral has been made, and will contact children's social care if this is not the case. Should there be a reason to suspect a crime has been committed or the child's safety is at risk, the LA will contact the police.

Children of gypsy, roma and traveller (GRT) families

When a GRT student leaves the school without naming their next destination school, the school will contact the LA. If necessary, the academy will consult the Attendance and Prosecution Service for advice on the best strategies to ensure minimal disruption to the GRT pupil's education.

Children of service personnel

The school will contact the Ministry of Defence Children's Education Advisory Service for advice to ensure continuity of education for these children.

Missing children/runaways

Should the school suspect a child has gone missing/run away, an appropriate staff member will consult the DfE for advice on missing children.

Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice System

LA youth offending teams are responsible for supervising children (aged 8 to 18). Where a young person is registered at the school prior to custody, the school will keep the place open for their return.

Children in temporary accommodation or awaiting a school place

Where a child is placed in temporary accommodation, or is awaiting allocation of a school place, the school and LA will work together to ensure the child has access to suitable education without unnecessary delay, in line with current DfE guidance.

Children who cease to attend Overstone Park School

Where the reason for a child who has stopped attending is not known, the school will make reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and destination, and the LA will investigate the situation.

We have a duty to monitor pupils' attendance through daily registration and to inform the local authority of pupils who are regularly absent from school. The local authority must have in place 'robust procedures and policies' to enable them to meet their duty in relation to CME.

We have a duty to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. We are aware that there are extremist groups within our country who wish to radicalise vulnerable children and to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. Periodic risk assessments are undertaken to assess the risk of pupils being drawn into terrorism. School personnel must be aware of the increased risk of online radicalisation, and alert to changes in pupils' behaviour. Any concerns will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

We are aware that under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we have the duty to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This duty is known as the Prevent duty and we believe it is essential that school personnel are able to identify those who may be vulnerable to radicalisation or being influenced by extremist views, and then to know what to do when they are identified.

We provide a safe environment where we promote pupils' welfare. Within this environment we work hard to build pupils' resilience to radicalisation and extremism by promoting fundamental British values and helping everyone to understand the risks associated with terrorism. We want pupils to develop their knowledge and skills in order to challenge extremist views.

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and express their views.

As a school community we are committed to promoting equality. An equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements connected with this policy.

Aims

- To ensure all children are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.
- To monitor pupils' attendance through daily registration and to inform the local authority of pupils who are regularly absent from school.
- To safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and individuals.
- To identify, protect and support those who might be vulnerable to being radicalised or influenced by extremist views.
- To be vigilant against all forms of radicalisation and extremism.
- To share good practice within the school and with other schools.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and statutory guidance connected to this policy, including the September 2025 update to the Children Missing Education statutory guidance.

- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Principal and Senior Leadership Team

The Principal and the Senior Leadership Team will:

- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- monitor pupil attendance;
- have in place initiatives to improve poor pupil attendance;
- in the interests of pupil safeguarding, investigate any unexplained absences;
- make reasonable enquiries, working with the local authority, to establish a pupil's whereabouts where this is unknown;
- inform the local authority of pupils who are regularly absent from school, pupils who have missed 10 days of school or more without permission, irregular attendance patterns, and if a pupil is to be deleted from the admission register in certain circumstances;
- arrange full-time education for excluded pupils;
- ascertain the name of the receiving school when parents remove their child to attend a school in another area, and contact that school to confirm registration;
- transfer pupil information to the receiving school when parents register their child;
- contact the local authority when a pupil leaves this school without clear indication of a receiving school;
- share information with the local authority and other agencies, including through national tracking systems such as the Group Information Advice Portal (GIAP) and School to School (S2S), to help trace children missing education;
- give particular consideration to pupils at heightened risk of becoming CME at key transition points, such as the move from Year 6 to Year 7;
- ensure good practice is shared throughout the school;
- work closely with the link governor and First Day Contact Supervisor;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by speaking with pupils, school personnel, parents and governors;
- annually report on the success and development of this policy.

Role of the Local Authority

The Local Authority will:

- have in place robust procedures and policies;
- ensure children's welfare and safety;

- have in place a named person that schools can make referrals to;
- undertake regular reviews in order to evaluate their policies and procedures;
- contact other local authorities to ensure that children who change areas do not get lost in the system;
- serve notice on parents to establish if their child is receiving suitable education;
- issue School Attendance Orders on parents who fail to satisfy the Local Authority that their child is receiving suitable education;
- prosecute parents who do not comply with a School Attendance Order, or who fail to send their child to school regularly;
- apply to court for an Education Supervision Order for a child;
- provide full-time education for excluded pupils;
- trace children known to be missing education by having close links with the Department for Work and Pensions, the relevant immigration authorities, and HMRC.

Role of Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- complying with this policy;
- ensuring their children of compulsory school age are receiving efficient full-time education, whether at school or at home;
- ensuring that their children are punctual and understand the importance of good attendance;
- informing the school on the first day of absence;
- informing the school of any changes to their contact details;
- collecting their children on time;
- taking part in periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- not taking holidays in term time;
- supporting the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school.

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- comply with and implement this policy;
- set an example of punctuality and good attendance;
- ensure that registers are taken at the appropriate times and are accurate and up to date;
- be responsible for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality by monitoring class and individual attendance patterns;
- inform the school office of any concerns about attendance or suspected truancy;
- emphasise the importance of punctuality and good attendance with pupils and parents;
- discuss individual pupil attendance at parent-teacher consultations.

Role of the First Day Contact Supervisor

The First Day Contact Supervisor is responsible for:

- contacting parents if they have not reported their child's absence by 10.00 a.m.;
- sending a letter if no contact is made;
- continuing to contact the parents throughout the day until contact is made;
- contacting the key worker if a child is on the child protection register and no reason has been given for the child's absence;
- informing the Principal of trends in absence.

Where the Whereabouts and Safety of a Child is Unknown

The school, in conjunction with the LA, may carry out the following actions as part of making reasonable enquiries:

- make contact with the parent/carer, relatives and neighbours using known contact details;
- check local databases and data transfer systems such as School to School (S2S) and the Group Information Advice Portal (GIAP);
- follow local information sharing arrangements, making enquiries via other local databases and agencies where possible;
- check with UK Visas and Immigration and/or the Border Force;
- 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 academy is located;
- check with the Ministry of Defence Children's Education Advisory Service in the case of children of service personnel;

conduct home visits via an appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessments, and making enquiries with neighbours or relatives, if appropriate. NB. This list is not exhaustive — the school and LA will use their judgement as to what reasonable enquiries are appropriate, once all the facts of the case have been taken into account.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- School Handbook/Prospectus;
- School website;
- Staff Handbook;
- Meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops;
- School events;
- Meetings with school personnel;
- Written communications with home such as weekly newsletters and end of half term newsletters;
- Annual report to parents;

- Information displays in the main school entrance;
- Text messages and email;
- The school's official social media channels;
- Pin boards and the school blog.

Training

All school personnel:

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion;
- receive training on induction which specifically covers all aspects of this policy, attendance and truancy, exclusion, equal opportunities and inclusion;
- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information, including any changes arising from updates to statutory guidance;
- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010, as it is fair, does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil, and helps to promote equality at this school.

Principal:	Mrs M F Brown	Date :	September 2026
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