



Children Missing in Education Policy

Policy Number:	
Approval date:	
Review date:	

Adopted by the Board of Trustees/Governing Body

Signed Chair of Governors	
Signed Chair of Trustees	
Signed CEO	

The review of this policy will be as and when required in response to national requirements and in light of continuous school based monitoring and evaluation data.

Children Missing in Education (CME) Procedures

Watling Meadows Primary School (WMPS)

1. Introduction

Watling Meadows Primary School is committed to safeguarding all pupils and ensuring every child receives a full-time, suitable education. Children missing from education (CME) are at significant risk of:

- **Harm, exploitation, trafficking or radicalisation**
- **Poor educational outcomes or becoming NEET**
- **Social isolation, neglect or unreported abuse**

This policy reflects national statutory guidance (DfE, 2025) and Warwickshire County Council's CME procedures. [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk)

2. Definition of CME

A child of compulsory school age is considered **CME** when they:

- Are **not registered at any school** and
- Are **not receiving suitable education elsewhere** (EHE, AP, or similar)

This includes children:

- Whose whereabouts are unknown
- Who have ceased attending without explanation
- Who are in the process of applying for a place but are not in education
- Whose EHE provision is deemed unsuitable
[\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk)

It **does not include** pupils who are still on a school roll but are severely or persistently absent (these are attendance cases but not CME). [\[www.co.uk\]](https://www.co.uk)

3. Legal Framework

WMPS must comply with:

- **Section 436A of the Education Act 1996** – duty to identify CME
- **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2024**
- **DfE CME Statutory Guidance (2025)** – duties for schools, trusts and local authorities
- **Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024/25)** – attendance as safeguarding
[\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk)

4. Vulnerable Groups

Children at greater risk of becoming CME include those who:

- Have **SEND** or medical needs (supported by WMPS SEND Policy)
- Are **Looked After / Previously Looked After**
Nurture Grow Aspire

- Have a **social worker** or Early Help involvement
- Are **mobile**, e.g., Gypsy/Roma/Traveller, service families
- Live in temporary accommodation
- Are at risk of exploitation, FGM, trafficking or radicalisation

WMPS must take additional steps to monitor, support and coordinate services for these children.

5. Early Identification and Daily Attendance Checks

WMPS follows the DfE and WCC requirement to:

- Complete **daily registers** and identify unexplained absences
- Contact parents/carers by 9:30am where a pupil is absent (per WCC model procedures)
- Hold *at least two emergency contacts* for every child
- Escalate repeated absences to the DSL and attendance lead
- Record concerns on CPOMS as safeguarding issues where needed (SEND Policy reflects this duty)

6. Reasonable Enquiries Prior to CME Referral

Before referring a child to WCC's CME team, WMPS must carry out all "**reasonable enquiries**" (DfE & WCC requirement). These include:

1. **Phone calls** to all known contacts
2. **Emails and letters** (including recorded delivery)
3. Checking **siblings' schools**
4. Speaking with **neighbours or known contacts** where appropriate
5. A **home visit** (risk-assessed) conducted by school or WCC partners
6. Checking involvement with:
 - SENDCo
 - Social worker
 - Early Help/Family Connect
7. Cross-checking with health, other agencies or previous schools
8. Log all actions on CPOMS

No pupil may be removed from roll until these steps have been completed and recorded.

7. CME Referral to Warwickshire County Council

A referral to WCC CME must be made when:

- A pupil has **10 consecutive days of unauthorised absence** and their whereabouts are unknown, **OR**

- A pupil has **20 days unauthorised absence** and appears to no longer live at their registered address
[\[warwickshire.gov.uk\]](http://warwickshire.gov.uk)

Referral route:

- Complete WCC **CME Referral Form**
- Send securely to **cme@warwickshire.gov.uk**
- For immediate safeguarding concerns, contact **Family Connect (01926 414144)**
[\[warwickshire.gov.uk\]](http://warwickshire.gov.uk)

8. Removal from Roll

WMPS may only remove a pupil from roll using the permitted grounds in the School Attendance Regulations.

Key rules:

- WMPS must notify WCC **within 5 days** of adding or removing a pupil from the roll
- WMPS must not off-roll a child without confirmed onward provision, except in legally defined circumstances
- Where a destination school is not confirmed, the pupil **must remain on roll** until WCC confirm CME processes are complete

9. Children Missing From Early Education (Under 5s)

Where concerns arise regarding nursery or EYFS children:

- A single unexplained absence or pattern of absences must be followed up immediately
- Early Years providers must contact WCC Early Years Safeguarding Team for CMEE support

This aligns with WMPS SEND Policy expectations on transitions and early identification.

10. Multi-Agency Working

As required by both DfE guidance and WCC protocols:

- WMPS works closely with Children's Services, Early Help, SEND, Virtual School, health, police, and other professionals
- Information must be shared lawfully and promptly under safeguarding duties
- CME interventions should align with SEND support plans and safeguarding processes

11. Role of SEND and Inclusion

The WMPS SEND Policy guides how the school:

- Tracks vulnerability and barriers to attendance
- Works in partnership with parents and agencies
- Ensures children with SEND are monitored closely for attendance and safeguarding concerns

Children with SEND should **never** be treated as CME due to unmet needs — provision must be reviewed urgently.

12. Monitoring and Review

WMPS will:

- Review CME incidents termly with the DSL, SENDCo, attendance lead and governors
- Audit enquiries and CME referrals annually
- Ensure staff are trained in CME awareness and attendance duties
- Analyse patterns for vulnerable groups, including SEND and children with social workers

13. Summary Flowchart: WMPS CME Process

Day of absence → Attempt contact with parents → Record on register

Day 1–5 → Repeated contact attempts; CPOMS alerts; DSL notified for concerns

Day 6–10 → Reasonable enquiries begin (calls, letters, home visit, agency checks)

Day 10 → If no contact/unknown whereabouts → **Inform WCC**

Day 20 → CME referral required if still absent & missing

Ongoing → Child remains on roll until WCC confirm CME involvement and destination provision

(This reflects WCC and DfE expectations.)