



CROW ORCHARD

Primary School and Nursery

Child Missing in Education Policy

Policy Lead	Miss J Hollings HT
Attendance Lead	Mrs R Jacobsen Office Manager
Agreed by Governing Body	September 2025
Next review	September 2028 or sooner if legislation changes

'We learn with love, grow with purpose and stand strong through every challenge'. At Crow Orchard, we want every child to feel known, safe, valued and inspired. We are a *family* that supports and nurtures each other, celebrates learning and believes that every child can thrive.

This policy is underpinned by our core values of **Love, Growth, and Strength**, which guide every aspect of our practice:



1. Purpose

This policy sets out how Crow Orchard Primary School identifies, prevents and responds to children missing education (CME). It ensures pupils of compulsory school age are attending regularly and receiving a suitable education, and that safeguarding concerns linked to non-attendance are addressed promptly.

This policy is in line with:

- Department for Education statutory guidance on *Children Missing Education*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
- Lancashire County Council CME and attendance procedures

2. Definition of Children Missing Education

A child missing education is a child of compulsory school age who:

- Is not registered at a school, and
- Is not receiving a suitable education otherwise, and
- Whose whereabouts or educational provision cannot be established.

Children missing education are at increased risk of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. CME is therefore treated as a **safeguarding concern**.

3. Attendance expectations and thresholds

At Crow Orchard Primary School, **good attendance is defined as 95%+**.

Attendance is closely monitored and categorised as follows:

- **95%+** – Good attendance
- **Below 95%** – Cause for concern; early support and monitoring required
- **Below 90%** – Persistent absence; intensive intervention and safeguarding consideration

A child falling below 95% attendance may be at increased risk of becoming missing education if concerns are not addressed early.

4. Aims

The school aims to:

- Maintain high levels of attendance (95%+) for all pupils
- Identify early signs of attendance decline
- Intervene promptly when attendance falls below expected levels
- Prevent pupils from becoming missing education
- Safeguard children whose absence may indicate risk

5. Roles and responsibilities

- **Governing Body**
 - Monitor attendance and CME data through reports from the Headteacher.
 - Ensure effective systems are in place to identify pupils at risk of CME.
- **Headteacher**
 - Ensure this policy is implemented consistently.
 - Ensure attendance thresholds are applied fairly and robustly.
 - Liaise with Lancashire County Council when CME concerns arise.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**
 - Oversee CME cases as safeguarding matters.
 - Ensure referrals to Children's Social Care or the Local Authority are made when appropriate.
 - Maintain accurate records of actions taken.
- **Attendance Lead / Admin Staff**
 - Monitor daily attendance and identify pupils whose attendance falls below 95%.
 - Carry out first-day response procedures.
 - Escalate concerns promptly to senior leaders and the DSL.
- **All Staff**
 - Be alert to patterns of absence and changes in behaviour.
 - Report concerns immediately to the DSL or senior leader.

6. Preventing children missing education

The school will take proactive steps to prevent CME, including:

- Robust admission and transition procedures
- Daily monitoring of attendance
- Clear communication of attendance expectations (95%+)
- Early intervention when attendance drops below 95%
- Targeted support for families where attendance concerns arise

7. Attendance monitoring and response

- **Daily monitoring**
 - Attendance is recorded twice daily.
 - Parents are expected to notify the school on the first day of absence.
- **First-day response**
 - If a pupil is absent without explanation, the school will contact parents/carers on the first day.
 - Multiple contact attempts will be made using all known contact details.
 - Where contact cannot be established, concerns will be escalated to the DSL.
- **Attendance falling below 95%**

When attendance drops below **95%**, the school will:

- Monitor attendance closely
- Contact parents to discuss concerns

- Offer early support and guidance
- Agree actions to improve attendance
- **Persistent absence (below 90%)**

When attendance falls below **90%**, the school will:

- Treat the situation as a serious concern
- Involve senior leaders and the DSL
- Consider safeguarding risks
- Work with external agencies as appropriate
- Consider referral to the Local Authority Attendance/CME services

8. Pupils at higher risk of CME

The school recognises that certain pupils may be more vulnerable to missing education, including:

- Pupils with attendance below 95%
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils known to Children's Social Care
- Pupils from transient families
- Pupils with EAL
- Looked After and previously looked after children

These pupils will be monitored closely and supported proactively.

9. When a child is believed to be missing education

A pupil may be considered missing education when:

- They have stopped attending school,
- Attendance has significantly declined,
- The school is unable to establish contact with parents/carers, and
- The pupil's whereabouts or education provision cannot be confirmed.

In such cases the school will:

- Continue attempts to contact parents and emergency contacts
- Carry out home visits where appropriate and safe
- Consult with the DSL to assess safeguarding risk
- Refer the child to Lancashire County Council CME team without delay
- Make safeguarding referrals if required

10. Removal from roll

Pupils will only be removed from the school roll in line with statutory regulations.

The school will:

- Notify Lancashire County Council as required
- Never remove a pupil from roll due to poor attendance alone
- Ensure CME procedures are followed before removal
- Retain pupils on roll until appropriate checks are completed

11. Elective Home Education (EHE)

Where parents indicate an intention to home educate:

- The school will notify Lancashire County Council immediately
- The pupil will remain on roll until advised by the Local Authority
- Safeguarding concerns will be considered before any removal from roll

12. Safeguarding

- CME is treated as a safeguarding issue.
- Concerns about a child's welfare will be referred immediately to the DSL.
- Where there is risk of harm, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care.
- All actions will be recorded accurately and securely.

13. Monitoring and review

- Attendance data, including pupils below 95%, will be reviewed regularly.
- Patterns and trends will inform early intervention strategies.
- This policy will be reviewed annually and shared with staff and governors.