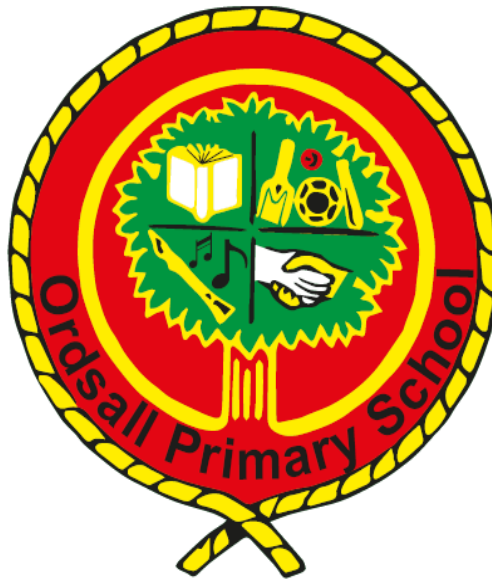




Play, Learn and Grow...Together!

Ordsall Primary School

Children Missing from Education Policy

Date reviewed: September 2026

Reviewed by: Karl Hopkinson (Headteacher) & Rebecca Frost (Deputy Headteacher and DSL)

Approved by: Governing Body

Next review: September 2027

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Statement of intent

All children are entitled to a full-time education, regardless of their circumstances. Unfortunately, children missing from education (CME) risk underachieving, and not being in education, employment or training (NEET) in later life, and it can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including abuse and neglect.

The Local Authority (LA) has a legal duty to identify when there are CME and help them back into education. This policy highlights what our school will do to help the LA with its duty.

The school is committed to promoting excellent attendance through a supportive, child-centred approach. We recognise that identifying barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity, working collaboratively with families and engaging appropriate partner agencies helps prevent children from becoming missing from education and supports positive safeguarding outcomes.

For the purpose of this policy, a **“child missing from education”** is defined as a child of compulsory school age who is not registered at a school, not placed in alternative provision by an LA, and not receiving a suitable education elsewhere. This definition also encompasses children who are receiving an education, but not one that is suitable, including children who are not receiving full-time education suitable to their needs, e.g. age, ability, aptitude, SEND.

This policy does not address pupils who are considered to be absent from education, which is where a registered pupil is not attending regularly, including where they are persistently or severely absent from school. Procedures for addressing instances where pupils are not attending regularly are instead set out in the school's Attendance and Absence Policy.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2016)
- The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005 (as amended in 2018)
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2008 (as amended in 2018)
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended in 2014)
- DfE (2026) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2025) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- NCC (2020) 'Nottinghamshire Children Missing Education Strategy'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Attendance and Absence Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Attendance and Family Support Lead, school office staff and other appropriate staff are responsible for:

- Entering pupils on the admissions register.
- In the event that a pupil fails to attend the school on the agreed or notified date, undertaking reasonable enquiries to establish the reason for this absence, and considering notifying the LA at the earliest opportunity.
- Keeping an accurate and up-to-date admissions register by encouraging parents to inform them of any changes.
- Monitoring pupils' attendance through a daily register.
- Regularly reviewing attendance information and patterns to identify pupils whose attendance may indicate emerging safeguarding concerns or an increased risk of becoming missing from education.
- Working proactively with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies to identify and remove barriers to attendance before a child becomes missing from education.
- Referring to and following the [NCC school attendance guidance flowchart](#).

- Making a referral to the Early Help Unit via an Early Help Assessment Form (EHAF) after day 10 of unauthorised absences when the whereabouts of a pupil is known but the child is not attending and there is no contact or engagement with the school from the pupil's parents/carers.
- Contacting the Children Missing Officer (CMO) no later than day 10 of an unauthorised absence when the whereabouts of a pupil is unknown.
- Liaising with the CMO when it is appropriate to remove a pupil from the school's admission register.
- Arranging full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed-period exclusion.
- Providing information to the LA regarding standard transitions, if requested to do so by the LA.

The governing body is responsible for:

- Where reasonably possible, ensuring the school holds more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

All staff are responsible for:

- Being alert to the potential need to implement early help for a pupil who is frequently missing or goes missing from care or home.
- Being aware of the school's procedures for managing unauthorised absence and children missing from education.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated to the DSL or deputy DSL.

The LA is responsible for:

- Establishing the identities of children in the area who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving education provision otherwise, in line with the LA's duty under the Education Act 1996.
- Providing full-time education for permanently excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a suspension.
- Serving notices on parents to assure the LA that their child is receiving a suitable education, when concerns regarding this are brought to the LA's attention.
- Issuing School Attendance Orders to parents who fail to assure the LA that their child is receiving a suitable education, and the LA believes that the child should attend school.
- Prosecuting parents that do not comply with a School Attendance Order.
- Prosecuting or fining parents of school-registered children who fail to ensure their children attend school regularly.
- Ensuring that children identified as not receiving suitable education are returned to full-time education either at the school or elsewhere.
- Ensuring that the school demonstrates prompt action and effective early intervention procedures to ensure children are safe and receiving suitable education.
- Applying to court for an Education Supervision Order for a CME.

- Ensuring that children who return to full-time education are appropriately supported, taking into account the reasons why they missed education in the first place.
- Arranging suitable provision for pupils with SEN statements or EHC plans where their parent chooses for them to be home educated, and reviewing this annually.
- Liaising and sharing information with other agencies to support children who miss education.
- Sharing the fact that a pupil has a social worker with the school.

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their children, if of compulsory school age, are receiving suitable full-time education.
- Notifying the school in writing where they will be home-schooling their child, in order for the child to be removed from the admissions register.
- Where requested, meeting with the school, LA, and other key professionals to consider whether home education would be in the best interests of their child, particularly where they have SEND, are vulnerable, or have a social worker – ideally, this would be done before a final decision has been made.
- Notifying the school regarding any absences or changes to the pupil's education arrangements.
- Working in partnership with the school to address attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity and engaging with support offered to improve attendance where appropriate.

3. Reasons for children missing education

There are a number of reasons as to why children miss education, including the following:

- Failing to be registered at a school at the age of five
- Failing to make a successful transition
- Exclusion
- Mid-year transfer of school
- Families moving into a new area

Aside from these reasons, if a child is missing from education, particularly repeatedly, this can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, such as the following:

- Abuse and neglect, including child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE), potentially involving county lines
- So-called 'honour-based' abuse, including FGM and forced marriage
- Mental health issues
- Risk of substance abuse
- Risk of travelling to conflict zones

Staff will be aware that early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding relating to CME and to help prevent the risks of a pupil going missing in the future. All staff will be made aware of unauthorised absence procedures and this policy to ensure they know how to respond to possible cases of CME.

The school recognises that repeated absence, persistent absence and severe absence may indicate that a child requires additional support and may increase the risk of becoming missing from education. Attendance concerns will therefore be considered alongside wider safeguarding information to ensure that appropriate action is taken promptly.

4. Children at particular risk of missing education

As there could be many reasons for a child to be missing from education, the school will use its professional judgement on a case-by-case basis. The following list, however, indicates groups of pupils who are most at risk of missing education and the procedures the school will follow in response:

- **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 will be made immediately to children's social care services (CSCS), and the police if appropriate. The LA officers responsible for CME will check whether a referral has been made, and will contact CSCS 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 with a social worker, children in need, those subject to child protection plans and previously looked after children** – these pupils may face additional barriers to education and attendance. The school will work closely with children's social care and other relevant professionals to support regular attendance and reduce the risk of the child becoming missing from education.
- **Pupils from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) families** – when a pupil from a GRT family leaves the school without naming their next destination school, the school will contact the LA. If necessary, the school will consult the CMO for advice on the best strategies to ensure minimal disruption to the 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 pupils.
- **Missing children and runaways** – should the school suspect a child has gone missing or 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** – in this case, 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 who cease to attend school** – where the reason for a pupil who has stopped attending a school is not known, the LA will investigate the situation.
- **Children of migrant families** – the school will remain vigilant to the increased risk of a child missing education if they are part of a new migrant family who may not yet have settled into a fixed address, or may have arrived into an LA area without the authority becoming aware.

5. Induction and training

The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education will be explained to staff during their induction.

All staff will receive annual safeguarding and child protection training, including an update on the various safeguarding concern possibilities that CME could represent, any changes to the early help process and staff members' role in this process.

6. Working with others

Families moving from one LA to another can sometimes lead to a child being lost in the system and consequently missing education. When a child moves, LAs will work with other LAs, regionally or nationally, to ensure this does not happen.

The LA will raise awareness of its procedures with local schools, partners and agencies working with children and families. The school will ensure that staff are familiar with these procedures and when they need to be followed, and will refer to and follow the [NCC school attendance guidance flowchart](#).

The school will work collaboratively with parents/carers, the Local Authority, health services, children's social care and other relevant agencies to identify and remove barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity. Multi-agency working will be used where appropriate to support children whose attendance places them at risk of becoming missing from education.

If a pupil with a social worker is absent from school for an unexplained reason or they are missing from education, the school will inform the pupil's social worker.

The school will ensure information about pupils missing from education is shared promptly and securely with the LA, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and local CME protocols. The school will also respond promptly to any LA request for information to support tracking, reintegration or safeguarding of a pupil identified as missing from education.

7. Safeguarding

The school recognises that CME can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues. Where there are concerns that a pupil missing from education is linked to a safeguarding issue, action will be taken in line with the Child Protection Policy.

Attendance information forms an important part of the school's safeguarding arrangements. Attendance concerns will always be considered alongside other safeguarding information when assessing a child's welfare and determining appropriate intervention.

In line with the Children Act 2004, the school will follow appropriate procedures when carrying out reasonable enquiries, such as the DSL conducting discussions with neighbours, relatives or landlords, to determine whether a child may be at risk of harm.

For the purpose of this policy, "**reasonable enquiries**" are defined as limited, investigative powers that the school may action to determine a child's whereabouts and whether they may be in danger.

The DSL will record that they have completed these procedures and, if necessary, make a referral to children's social care services (SCSC) or the police.

Where the whereabouts and safety of a child is unknown, the school, in conjunction with the LA, may carry out the following actions:

- Make contact with the parent, relatives and neighbours using known contact details
- Check local databases
- Check data transfer systems
- Follow local information sharing arrangements, and make 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 school 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 make enquiries with neighbours or relatives, if appropriate

Please note: This list is not exhaustive – the school and LA will use their judgement towards what reasonable enquiries are appropriate, once all the facts of the case have been taken into account.

8. Admissions register

The school will ensure that the admissions register is kept up-to-date at all times, and will encourage parents, via communications such as emails and newsletters, to notify the school of any changes as they occur.

The school will ensure that admission and attendance records are maintained accurately and reviewed regularly to support the identification of pupils who may be at risk of becoming missing from education.

Pupils will be recorded on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the school, or the day that the school has been notified, as the date that the pupil will attend the school. Once a pupil has been recorded on the admissions register, the school will notify the LA within five days, and will supply the LA with all of the details contained on the admissions register for the new pupil.

Where a parent notifies the school that their child will live at another address, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:

- The full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live
- The new address
- The date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address

Where a parent notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school, or will be attending a different school in future, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:

- The name of the new school
- The date when the pupil first attended, or is due to attend, that school

Parents are able to elect to educate their children at home, and will subsequently withdraw them from school. This can happen at any time, unless the pupil is subject to a School Attendance Order. If a

parent notifies the school that their child will be educated at home, the pupil will be deleted from the school's admission register and the school will inform the LA.

9. Removing a pupil from the admissions register

The school will liaise with the LA when considering removing a pupil from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parent and are being educated outside the school system, e.g. home-schooled.
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the school.
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order, and the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.
- Have died.
- Have been registered at another school where it is not indicated this should be the case.
- Are registered at more than one school, but have failed to attend the school and the proprietor of any other schools concerned have consented to the deletion.
- Have been granted authorised leave but have failed to attend school within 10 school days after the period of authorised absence ended, and:
 - There is reason to believe the pupil is not unable to attend school.
 - The LA and school are unable to determine the pupil's whereabouts after making joint reasonable enquiries.
- Have been continuously absent from school for a period of at least 20 school days, and:
 - The absence was not authorised.
 - There is reason to believe the pupil is not unable to attend school.
 - The LA and school are unable to determine the pupil's whereabouts after making joint reasonable enquiries.
- Have been admitted to receive nursery education and since completion have not transferred to Reception, or a higher class, at the school.

The school will notify the LA that a pupil is to be removed from the admissions register as soon as any of the above criteria are met, and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is actually removed.

If a pupil's name is to be removed from the admissions register, the school will provide the LA with the following information:

- The full name of the pupil
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives
- At least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives
- The full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable
- The name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date, if applicable
- The grounds for removal from the admissions register under Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended), as outlined in this policy.

Where the name of a pupil with a social worker is to be removed from the admissions register, the school will inform the pupil's social worker.

10. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the DSL and the headteacher.

NCC school attendance guidance flowchart

GUIDANCE FOR HEAD TEACHERS AND BUSINESS MANAGERS WHERE CHILDREN ARE AT RISK OF MISSING EDUCATION

Child / young person is on roll but not attending	Child moving out of county	Family indicate they are moving abroad	School Allocations intake or in-year admissions rounds
School/Academy to attempt to make contact with parent/carers no later than day 3, best practice day 1. Follow your internal school attendance procedures. Days 0-10, School/Academy should continue to make efforts to engage the family; recording their contact: telephone conversations, texts, e-mails, letters, home visits. Liaising with professionals who may be involved. School/Academy should consider what action to take if attendance is 10% unauthorised. Whereabouts confirmed to be known but not attending education or engaging with School/Academy. Whereabouts unknown evidencing reasonable efforts to locate/make contact with the family.	Request from the family their new address and details of new School/Academy. If obtained please share with: admissions.ed@nottscc.gov.uk Hopefully the new school will make contact with you, if not, make contact with them to confirm on roll. If without a new school within 10 days, a referral should be made to: Children Missing Officer (CMO) providing the families new address, contact details and a summary of efforts made by school to engage the family. Child is of statutory school age but not applied or on roll of a School/Academy Direct referral to: Children Missing Education (CMO) Providing child's name / DOB / address and details of parent / carers.	School must request and record details of the new family address and school. You can't remove from roll without this. If obtained please share with: admissions.ed@nottscc.gov.uk http://www.languageshop.org/ (translation support) If school does not receive the above a referral should be made to: Children Missing Officer (CMO) Looked After Children (LAC) If a LAC is moving placement and no longer attending, school should liaise with the Virtual School and the child's Social Worker. DO NOT remove from roll. Independent / Residential Schools The same procedures should be followed as those in School's / Academies Gypsy/Roma/Traveller If a Traveller family indicate they are to travel for work purposes School/Academy should request details of where they will be travelling and when they aim to return. If they do not return within 4 weeks of the expected return date please follow attendance procedures.	If allocated and there is not an acceptance/agreed start date best practice is for school to make attempts to engage (telephone, text, e-mail, welcome letter, home visit (where appropriate)). If a child/young person has been allocated a place at your school/academy and they do not arrive you must inform the CMO within 10 days evidencing efforts to engage. If an application to transfer school during the year (outside of the normal intake process), the leaving school should keep them on roll until it has been confirmed by the new school that they have arrived and have been taken on roll. Places must be taken up by the start of the next half term after the place has been allocated. For places allocated in the summer term 2018, the place must be taken up before the end of the summer term. For children admitted through first admissions round please refer to your summer term guidance. A child should be placed on roll at the point of acceptance by parent or arriving on the first day. If allocated children do not arrive PLEASE FOLLOW UP, DO NOT ASSUME they will have gone elsewhere or remained at their previous School/Academy!! Own admission authorities must inform the admissions team of any enquiry/application and outcome. This helps identify any vulnerable child requiring a place and avoids a child being out of education for an undue length of time. All academies must notify the local authority via admissions.ed@nottscc.gov.uk within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register.
Child and family meet the threshold for Early Help through the Family Service (level 3 Pathway to Provision). Make a referral to the Early Help Unit via an EHAF evidencing the actions you have taken. Absence meets the threshold for enforcement action as outlined in the Nottinghamshire Code of Conduct, make a referral to the Early Help Unit via an EHAF <u>Child stays on roll.</u>	Referral is made to: Children Missing Officer (CMO) No later than day 10 when there is no explanation for absence and above checks have been completed. Details of how to refer are on page 2, please clearly state any safeguarding concerns you may have. DO NOT remove from your roll until CMO has completed initial checks and confirmed that they can be removed.		
Parent/Carers indicate they wish to Home Educate (EHE) Request must be made in writing, following a conversation between school and parent/carer's, with a copy of the letter placed in the pupil file and a copy of the letter forwarded securely to EHE. School/Academy to return the EHE 1A and 1B forms to the EHE Administrator. Remove the learner from your roll. DO NOT remove from the roll if stated without confirmation from the LA. School file to be sent to EHE at County Hall via secure mail.	Child permanently excluded LA to be notified on the day of exclusion via e-mail. The LA will respond and continue to work with you through the process. DO NOT remove from your roll until advised. Truancy – School/Academy to inform parent/carers that their child/young person is not in school. School/Academy risk assess before considering a Police response. (prior checks to be completed and evidenced upon calling the police, unless immediate risk evident). Please be mindful of missing and hidden missing where young people's whereabouts are not known to parent/carers. This can be discussed with the CMO.		Family indicate they are returning home for family, cultural or health reasons School/Academy need to consider the circumstances of the absence in deciding which code to use. Parents should provide school with a return date. If the family do not return on this date attendance procedures should be followed.
Child not in full receipt of education (25hrs) Information should be shared with the Fair Access Team. Levels of provision will be closely monitored and scrutinised.			Health Related Education If a child has been out of school for 15 days or more due to illness please liaise with the School Nurse and then a referral can be made to: Health Related Education Team (please contact the Health Related Education Team to discuss a request for their involvement)
SAFEGUARDING - Every child should be accounted for, their whereabouts should be known or a referral made to the appropriate service. Please be mindful that the MASH is for level 4 safeguarding concerns with children believed to be <u>at risk of or actual harm</u>. The Early Help Unit will support with early intervention/attendance. It is important that concerns are risk assessed by school. All referrals should indicate the level of concern and previous actions taken. A referral made to the correct service will help for support to be in place in a timely fashion. If unsure please seek guidance prior to referring.			
Useful links: http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/schoolsportal/local-authority/attendance (Nottinghamshire Schools Portal) http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/childrens-social-care/nottinghamshire-childrens-trust/pathway-to-provision (P2P) http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/109754/factsheet-summer-born-final-2.pdf (Summer Born) https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf (CME) http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/childrens-social-care/nottinghamshire-childrens-trust/pathway-to-provision/early-help-assessment-form (EHAF)			
GUIDANCE FOR REMOVING A CHILD FROM THE SCHOOL ROLL PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE A CHILD FROM YOUR ROLL UNLESS YOU HAVE RECORDED AND SHARED THE FOLLOWING WITH THE LA: - the full name of the pupil, - the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, - at least one telephone number of the parent, - the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and <u>the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (see Annex A).</u> This will need to be clearly recorded when updating your systems as you will need to inform the LA. All other deletions breach statutory guidance			