

MY OASIS

Therapeutic Alternative Provision

Children Missing from Education Policy 2026/2027

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Policy Overview

My Oasis Therapeutic Alternative Provision recognises that Children Missing from Education (CME) are at increased risk of significant harm, including abuse, neglect, exploitation, and social isolation. This policy forms part of our wider safeguarding ethos and commitment to the welfare of every young person. Our procedures align with statutory requirements and local authority guidelines to ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in preventing CME.

Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that My Oasis has clear, consistent, and robust procedures in place to identify, monitor, and respond to instances of Children Missing from Education. Early identification and intervention are critical to safeguarding students and ensuring their right to a full-time, suitable, and stable education. Through accurate record-keeping, prompt follow-up of unexplained absences, and close

collaboration with families, mainstream schools, and external agencies, we aim to protect and support every student.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and partner agencies involved in the care and education of students at My Oasis. It also applies to all students of compulsory school age.

Definitions

Children Missing from Education (CME) are defined as children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll and not receiving suitable education in any other way (e.g. elective home education). CME does not include students with agreed absences or those being electively home educated (EHE) under parental rights.

Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is underpinned by the following:

- Education Act 1996.
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- Children Act 2004.
- Children Missing Education (DfE, 2025).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

Identification of At-Risk Young People

Although there are many different circumstances in which a young person may become missing from education, some young people are more vulnerable than others. At My Oasis, we are particularly alert to students who are at greater risk of becoming CME, including:

- Students at risk of harm, neglect, or exploitation.
- Students from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.
- Students from armed forces families.
- Students in care or missing from care.
- Students with involvement in the youth justice system.
- Students from new migrant or transient families.

- Students previously excluded or disengaged from education.

Responsibilities and Procedures

Daily Attendance Monitoring

Although this policy is not a general attendance policy, monitoring daily attendance is central to identifying potential CME. Therefore, we ensure:

- Registers are taken twice daily (AM and PM).
- Attendance is shared with the student's mainstream school each day.
- Where a student is absent without explanation:
 - Parents/Carers are contacted by 9:30 am.
 - If no contact is made, a second attempt is made by 10:00 am.
 - If no explanation is received by 10:00 am, the absence is reported to the Local Authority (LA) and mainstream school.
 - All absences are recorded using DfE-approved codes for consistency.

Unexplained absences for two consecutive days without a valid reason are escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and discussed with the student's mainstream school.

Contact Information Requirements

To enable immediate follow-up of absences, we require:

- At least two up-to-date emergency contact details for each student.
- Parents/Carers to inform staff immediately of any changes.

Missing from Education – When and How We Act

Reporting to the Local Authority

We will notify the LA:

- When a student fails to attend on their agreed start date, and their whereabouts are unknown.
- If a student has 10 days of continuous unauthorised absence, or 20 days of absence overall, with no confirmed placement or safeguarding plan.
- Before removing a student from our roll at a non-standard transition point (e.g. not due to transfer to secondary/post-16 education).
- When a student leaves without a new provision in place.

What we consider a 'Reasonable Enquiry'

In line with the statutory guidance, reasonable enquiries to locate a student may include:

- Direct contact with parents/carers or extended family.
- Home visits (following risk assessment).

- Checks with neighbours or community contacts.
- Liaison with other agencies involved (e.g., social care, youth justice).
- Reviewing LA records and databases.
- Contacting the LA where the young person previously lived (if applicable).

Elective Home Education (EHE)

Parents may choose to home-educate their child under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996. Where this occurs:

- Written confirmation from the parent is required (verbal notifications are followed up immediately).
- The student is removed from our roll only after notification to the LA.
- No reasons for home education are required by law, but we record all relevant communication and confirm the LA has received this information.

Safeguarding Considerations

CME is a safeguarding issue, not just an attendance issue.

Our staff are trained to identify signs of:

- Sexual exploitation.
- Forced marriage.
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
- Radicalisation or travel to conflict zones.
- Neglect or domestic abuse.

Any CME-related concerns will be escalated to the DSL, who will make appropriate referrals to children's services or other safeguarding bodies. CME data and trends are also reported to governors.

If there is an immediate risk of harm, staff must follow My Oasis' Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy without delay.

Dual Registration and Communication with Mainstream Schools

Where students are dually registered, My Oasis:

- Provides daily attendance updates to the mainstream school.
- Notifies the mainstream school of any unexplained absences or safeguarding concerns.
- Works collaboratively to determine welfare needs, attendance strategies, or risk assessments.

Oversight and Review

- The Headteacher and DSL are responsible for ensuring this policy is consistently followed.
- Absence patterns and CME concerns are reviewed weekly by the senior team.
- The policy is reviewed annually, or earlier if required by legislative change or following a serious incident.