



Children Missing Education Policy

19 October 2026

About This Document

Annual Policy Period	2026 - 2027
Policy Adopted by Governors	7 September 2018
Last Policy Review	19 October 2026
Next Policy Review	September 2027

History

Version	Date	Name	Description
0.1	Sep 2018	René Esterhuizen, Clerk to Trustees	First release. DRAFT
1.0	Sep 2018	School Governors	Approved and adopted.
1.1	Mar 2021	School Governors	Reviewed and approved.
1.2	1 Sep 2021	School Governors	Reviewed and approved.
1.3	5 Sep 2022	School Governors	Reviewed and approved.
1.4	21 Aug 2023	School Governors	Reviewed and approved.
1.5	30 Aug 2023	School Governors	Reviewed and approved.
1.6	13 Sep 2025	René Esterhuizen, Headteacher	Reviewed, dates changed.
1.7	19 Oct 2026	René Esterhuizen, Headteacher	Reviewed, changes made to come in-line with new KCSIE guidelines.

Contents1.....	Policy Statement
4	
2. Statutory Duties	4
3. Overview (Taken from the Statutory Guidance).....	5
4. The School's Responsibilities (Taken from the Statutory Guidance)	5
5. Safeguarding	6
6. Parent's Responsibilities (Taken from the Statutory Guidance).....	6
7. Recording Information in the School's Admission Register	6
8. Sharing Information with the Local Authority	7
9. Children at Particular Risk of Missing Education	7
Annex A: Circumstances in which a Pupil's Name May Be Deleted from the Admission Register	9

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The Vine Christian School regards the safety and security of all children as paramount. Every care is taken to ensure that the statutory duties are fulfilled to the best of our ability.
- 1.2. This policy has been written with regard to Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (September 2025), Working together to improve school attendance (updated July 2026), Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, insofar as their provisions apply to independent schools.
- 1.3. This policy is intended for independent schools in England and applies only to those provisions of the above legislation and guidance that are relevant to independent schools.
- 1.4. The Vine Christian School believes that all children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have.

2. Statutory Duties

- 2.1. The Vine Christian School will maintain accurate admission and attendance registers and make the required returns to the local authority in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Where a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the admission register outside a standard transition point, the school will make the appropriate return to the local authority in accordance with regulation 13. The local authority may also require returns at standard transition points.
- 2.2. When making a deletion return to the local authority, the school will provide the information required by the 2024 Regulations and current DfE guidance, including:
 - i. The full name of the pupil.
 - ii. the pupil's current address
 - iii. the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally lives
 - iv. at least one telephone number by which any parent with whom the pupil normally lives can be contacted in an emergency
 - v. where applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil will live, and the date the pupil will start living there
 - vi. where applicable, the name of the pupil's new school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend; and the reason in regulation 9 under which the pupil's name has been deleted.
- 2.3. For the relevant regulation 9 grounds, including where a pupil has not returned within 10 school days following a leave of absence or has been continuously absent for 20 school days without authorisation, the school and local authority will jointly make reasonable enquiries to establish the pupil's location and circumstances before deletion. The school will continue to participate in those enquiries after making a CME referral.
- 2.4. The school will make a new-pupil return to the local authority within five days when a pupil's name is added to the admission register at a non-standard transition point, providing the information held in the

admission register. The school will also comply with any local requirement to make such returns at standard transition points.

- 2.5. The school will not remove a pupil from the admission register unless a lawful ground in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 is fully met. Where a ground is met, the name must be deleted immediately and must not be deleted retrospectively.

3. Overview (Taken from the Statutory Guidance)

- 3.1. Children missing education (CME) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. This includes children awaiting a school place, children offered a future school place who have not yet started, and children receiving elective home education that has been assessed as unsuitable.
- 3.2. Children who are registered at a school but are persistently or severely absent are not, by definition, CME; however, absence may be a safeguarding warning sign and schools must act promptly to understand and address barriers to attendance. Effective information sharing and joint working between parents, schools and local authorities are critical to identifying and supporting CME.

4. The School's Responsibilities (Taken from the Statutory Guidance)

- 4.1. The School will enter pupils on the admission register on the first day that the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance have agreed or been notified that the pupil will attend. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school will undertake prompt reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and, where appropriate, notify the local authority.
- 4.2. The School will monitor attendance daily and take proactive steps to address poor or irregular attendance to prevent children becoming CME. Attendance returns will be made to the local authority at the intervals agreed with the authority, and the school will work with the child's home local authority where this is different from the local authority in which the school is located.
- 4.3. Where a pupil has not returned within 10 school days following the end of an authorised leave of absence or has been continuously absent for at least 20 school days in circumstances covered by regulation 9, the pupil may only be removed from the admission register when all requirements of the relevant ground are met. This includes joint reasonable enquiries by the school and local authority and, where the pupil is located, agreement that there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again.
- 4.4. As an independent school, the school will follow its own published behaviour, suspension and permanent exclusion procedures and its contractual arrangements with parents/carers, together with applicable duties under the Equality Act 2010. The school will not use informal or unofficial suspensions or off-rolling.

5. Safeguarding

- 5.1. As part of the school's safeguarding duty, the school will investigate unexplained, prolonged or repeated absence promptly. Staff will follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Where there is concern that a child's safety or wellbeing is at risk, action will be taken without delay, including referral to local authority children's social care and, where appropriate, the police. Where statutory intervention is not required, the DSL or Deputy DSL will consider whether support through universal services, community-based Early Help or Family Help is appropriate and will keep the child's situation under review.
- 5.2. All staff should be aware that prolonged or repeated absence and children missing education can be vital warning signs of safeguarding concerns, including abuse, neglect, sexual or criminal exploitation, county lines, mental health needs, substance misuse, radicalisation, female genital mutilation, honour or faith-based abuse and forced marriage. Early action is necessary to identify underlying risk and provide support.

6. Parent's Responsibilities (Taken from the Statutory Guidance)

- 6.1. Parents have a duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive suitable full-time education. If a parent proposes to withdraw a child from school, they will be asked to provide the school with information about how the child will continue to receive suitable education, including the name and address of any new school or, if not yet known, the location where the child will reside.
- 6.2. Where a parent notifies the school in writing that the pupil will no longer attend after a specified day and will receive education otherwise than at school, and the conditions in regulation 9(1)(f) are met, the school must delete the pupil's name after that day and inform the local authority. If the notification does not meet the legal criteria for deletion, the school may notify the local authority so that enquiries can be made. The school will not encourage elective home education as a means of avoiding attendance action, suspension or permanent exclusion, or for the benefit of the school rather than the pupil.
- 6.3. Children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans can be educated at home. The school will work with the local authority and relevant professionals where a parent proposes elective home education, particularly where the child has SEND, a social worker or other vulnerabilities. A pupil registered at a special school under arrangements made by the local authority may only be removed from the register for elective home education with the local authority's consent.

7. Recording Information in the School's Admission Register

- 7.1. It is important that the school's admission register is accurate and kept up to date. The School will regularly encourage parents to inform us promptly of changes to their child's personal details, address and education arrangements. Accurate information supports the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children who may be missing education.

- 7.2. Where a parent notifies the school that a pupil will normally live at another address, whether in addition to or instead of their current address, the school will record the following in the admission register:
- the address
 - the full name of each parent with whom the pupil will normally live; and
 - the date when the pupil will start normally living there.
- 7.3. Where a parent notifies the school that a pupil is registered at another school or will attend a different school, the School will record the information required by the admission register and will take reasonable steps to confirm the onward education arrangements before deletion where necessary:
- the name and address of the new school; and
 - the date when the pupil began or is expected to begin attending that school.

8. Sharing Information with the Local Authority

- 8.1. The school will make the returns required by regulation 13 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 when a pupil is added to or removed from the admission register outside standard transition times and will provide the local authority with the required information. The school will follow any additional local arrangements for standard transition points.
- 8.2. Where the school is notified by a local housing authority that a child has been placed in temporary accommodation, it will consider the child's safeguarding and welfare needs promptly. Such notification does not replace existing safeguarding duties or a referral to local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

9. Children at Particular Risk of Missing Education

- 9.1. Some children may be at greater risk of becoming CME. The school will consider vulnerability, safeguarding and educational needs and will work with the local authority and other agencies as appropriate. Groups identified in current statutory guidance include:
- Pupils at risk of harm/neglect or exploitation.
 - Children of Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller families.
 - Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and children of new migrant families
 - Children who go missing from home or care
 - Children with SEND whose needs are not being adequately supported
 - Children who are suspended or permanently excluded, or otherwise cease to attend a school
 - Children and young people supervised by the youth justice system, children of service personnel, and children in temporary accommodation
 - Children attending unregistered independent schools and home-educated children who are not receiving suitable full-time education.

- 9.2. Full details are set out in Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (September 2025).
- 9.3. KCSIE 2026 also highlights the impact that caring responsibilities and involvement with children's social care can have on attendance. Where relevant, the school will work with the local authority and other professionals, to support attendance and reduce safeguarding risk.

Annex A: Circumstances in which a Pupil's Name May Be Deleted from the Admission Register

The circumstances in which a pupil's name may or must be deleted from the admission register are prescribed by regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The school must ensure every requirement of the relevant ground is met before deletion. Where a ground is met, the name must be deleted immediately and must not be deleted retrospectively

Ground A -The pupil is registered at another school

The pupil's name may be deleted when the pupil is registered at another school in accordance with regulation 9(1)(a). The school should confirm the new registration and make the required deletion return to the local authority.

Ground B - The pupil has not continued at the school following completion of nursery education

This ground applies where a pupil has completed nursery education at the school and does not continue into reception or a higher class at the school, in accordance with regulation 9(1)(b).

Ground C - The pupil is also registered at one or more other schools and the other school(s) have agreed the deletion

This ground applies to dual-registered pupils where the conditions in regulation 9(1)(c) are met, including consent from the proprietor of each other school at which the pupil is registered.

Ground D - A School Attendance Order has been changed to name another school

Where a School Attendance Order that previously named this school is amended to name another school, the pupil's name must be deleted in accordance with regulation 9(1)(d).

Ground E - A School Attendance Order naming the school has been revoked

Where a School Attendance Order naming this school is revoked because suitable education otherwise than at school has been arranged, the pupil's name must be deleted in accordance with regulation 9(1)(e).

Ground F - The parent has given written notice that the pupil will be educated otherwise than at school

Where the parent has notified the school in writing that the pupil will cease to attend after a specified day and will receive education otherwise than at school, the name must be deleted after that day if the conditions in regulation 9(1)(f) are met. This does not apply where a School Attendance Order naming the school remains in force. Additional restrictions apply to pupils registered at special schools under local-authority arrangements.

Ground G - The pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school

Where the pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school, the school has no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend again, and the pupil is not a boarder, the name must be deleted in accordance with regulation 9(1)(g). A new school place does not have to have been secured before this ground can apply.

Ground H - The pupil has not returned following a leave of absence

This ground may apply where the pupil has not attended within the 10 school days immediately after the end of a period of leave, the school has no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil cannot attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause, and the school and local authority have jointly made reasonable enquiries to establish the pupil's location and circumstances.

Ground I - The pupil has been continuously absent for at least 20 school days

This ground may apply where the statutory conditions in regulation 9(1)(i) are met, including that the absence falls within the relevant attendance-code circumstances, there is no reasonable ground to believe the pupil cannot attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause, and the school and local authority have jointly made reasonable enquiries.

Ground J - The pupil is detained under a sentence of detention

The pupil's name may be deleted where the pupil is detained under a sentence of detention and the school has no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend after release, in accordance with regulation 9(1)(j).

Ground K - The pupil has died

The pupil's name must be deleted when the school has reliable confirmation of the pupil's death, in accordance with regulation 9(1)(k), and the required return must be made to the local authority.

Ground L - The pupil will be over compulsory school age by the next time the school meets

This ground applies where the pupil will be over compulsory school age by the next time the school meets and the conditions in regulation 9(1)(l) are met, including that the school has no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend again or the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for transfer to the school's sixth form.

Ground N - The pupil has ceased to be a pupil at an independent school

Where a pupil has ceased to be a pupil at this independent school, the pupil's name must be deleted from the admission register in accordance with regulation 9(1)(n). The school will ensure that the pupil has genuinely ceased to be a pupil under its published policies and contractual arrangements before relying on this ground.

Ground O - The pupil has been permanently excluded from the school

Where a pupil has been permanently excluded from this independent school, the pupil's name must be deleted from the admission register in accordance with regulation 9(1)(o). The school will follow its own published behaviour and disciplinary procedures and contractual arrangements with parents before treating the permanent exclusion as final.

OFF-ROLLING

The school will not remove a pupil from the admission register, prevent normal attendance or encourage elective home education for the benefit of the school rather than the pupil. Off-rolling is unacceptable, even where a parent or carer agrees to the removal.