The Lyceum

7e. Children Missing in Education (CME)

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out The Lyceum's responsibilities and procedures to respond when a pupil is missing from education or at risk of being so. It applies to all staff, governors, and volunteers, and aligns with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, DfE Children Missing Education statutory guidance (2025), Education Act 1996, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE 2026), and Hackney local authority CME procedures. This policy also reflects the local authority's duties under Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 to identify children of compulsory school age who are not receiving suitable education.

This policy should be read alongside:

• Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

• Working Together to Safeguard Children

• Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and Schools (September 2025)

• School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

2. Definitions and Key Principles

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. Non-standard transition points are any mid-year admissions or removals. Reasonable enquiries include all steps made jointly with the LA to trace a child's whereabouts.

Children who are missing education are at significant risk of underachievement, harm, exploitation, abuse, neglect, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, radicalisation and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training). A child missing education should always be regarded as a potential safeguarding concern and staff should follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures where concerns arise.

3. Children at Increased Risk of Becoming CME

Particular vigilance will be exercised for:

- children subject to Child Protection Plans;
- Children in Need;

- Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children;
- children with SEND;
- children with mental health needs;
- children living in temporary accommodation;
- children known to social care;
- children educated otherwise than at school;
- children moving between local authority areas;
- children leaving education at non-standard transition points.

These groups may be at greater risk of becoming children missing education and should be monitored closely through the school's safeguarding and attendance processes.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role/Person	Responsibilities regarding CME
Headmaster	Ensures that the school's CME procedures are robust, staff are trained, and that liaison with the LA and safeguarding partners is effective
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Oversees all CME cases with possible safeguarding concerns, ensures escalation to social care when necessary, ensures secure transfer of child protection records.
DSL/Administrative Staff	Maintains accurate registers, flags concerns about attendance or prolonged absence, initiates first-day calls, logs all interventions and follow-ups.
All staff	Recognise signs of risk, alert DSL if a child is absent repeatedly without explanation or disappears from roll, cooperate with investigations.
Governors	Oversee policy, ensure adequate resources, receive reports on CME / attendance trends.

5. Recording, Registration and Attendance Monitoring

All pupils must be on the admissions register and attendance recorded twice daily.
Patterns of absence must be monitored. Repeated or unexplained absence must be escalated immediately to the DSL.

6. Admission, Removal and Transitions

The Lyceum must notify the LA within 5 school days of adding or removing a pupil at a non-standard transition point. When removing from roll, only the permitted 15 grounds can be used. The Lyceum must confirm with the destination school and retain duplicate records securely.

Before removing a pupil from the admission register, the school will ensure that all statutory requirements and notification duties have been met, including notifying the local authority where required under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Comprehensive records of actions taken will be retained. [legislation.gov.uk], [gov.uk]

7. Unexplained Absence and Escalation

First-day calls are made for unexplained absences. Where a pupil has been absent for 10 consecutive school days and their whereabouts are unknown despite reasonable enquiries, the school will notify the local authority without delay. Persistent absentees are referred to the Attendance Support Team. Safeguarding concerns are escalated to Children's Social Care.

8. Reasonable Enquiries and Tracking

Schools and LAs must make reasonable enquiries, such as contacting relatives, neighbours, health professionals, or other agencies. All steps must be logged and outcomes documented. Concerns about attendance at Unregistered Educational Settings (UES) must be reported under Hackney's UES protocol.

Where appropriate, the school will work with the local authority to utilise national pupil-tracing systems including School-to-School (S2S) and Get Information About Pupils (GIAP).

Information regarding a potentially missing child will be shared promptly and lawfully with the local authority, children's social care, the police and other relevant safeguarding partners where necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child.

The school will seek to prevent children becoming missing from education through early identification of attendance concerns, robust transition arrangements, effective information sharing and timely intervention.

9. Record Transfer and Safeguarding Files

Safeguarding records must be transferred securely to the receiving school within 5 days. Child protection records will be retained in accordance with the school's Records Retention Schedule and safeguarding requirements.

10. Elective Home Education (EHE)

Parents must provide written notice to withdraw for EHE. Where parents choose Elective Home Education, the school will follow the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and notify the local authority in accordance with statutory requirements.

11. Inter-Authority Cooperation

If a child moves to another LA, Hackney Education and the receiving LA must be informed. Cross-boundary liaison is essential to prevent children becoming CME.

12. Unregistered Educational Settings (UES)

Concerns regarding UES must follow Hackney's CHSCP UES Protocol, escalating to Children's Social Care if risks are identified.

13. Reporting, Monitoring and Review

Termly CME reports are provided to governors. The DSL audits cases, and this policy is reviewed annually or following statutory changes.

The governing body will seek assurance that attendance, admissions, deletion-from-roll procedures and CME arrangements are operating effectively and in accordance with statutory guidance. CME trends and significant cases will be reviewed through safeguarding governance processes where appropriate. Governors will seek assurance that staff receive appropriate safeguarding and attendance training and that CME procedures are implemented consistently.

Reviewed by ST: September 2026

Next review: August 2027