

# Children Missing in Education



**Version:**

**Ratified by the Governing Body: 16<sup>th</sup> Oct 2025**

**Signed by the Governing Body: 16<sup>th</sup> Oct 2025**

**To be reviewed (bi-annually):**

**Sept 2027**

# Uffculme School Children Missing Education (CME) Policy

## 1. Policy Statement

Uffculme School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils, including those with autism, by ensuring that every child receives a full-time, appropriate education. This policy outlines our approach to identifying, supporting, and re-engaging children who are missing education, in line with statutory guidance and Devon County Council procedures.

## 2. Definition of Children Missing Education

Children Missing Education (CME) are defined as children of compulsory school age who are not registered at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise (e.g. elective home education or alternative provision). This includes children who:

- Fail to start school at the appropriate age.
- Are removed from school without formal notification or transition.
- Are excluded and not placed in alternative provision.
- Have prolonged absences without explanation.

## 3. Context for Autism-Specific Provision

Children with autism may be particularly vulnerable to missing education due to:

- Sensory or communication challenges.
- Anxiety or mental health difficulties.
- Inappropriate or inaccessible learning environments.
- Delays in securing appropriate placements or transitions.

Uffculme School recognises these risks and takes proactive steps to support attendance and engagement.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

School Leadership

- Ensure robust attendance monitoring systems are in place.
- Designate a CME Lead (typically the DSL or Attendance Officer).
- Ensure staff are trained to identify early signs of disengagement, especially in autistic pupils.

Staff

- Record attendance accurately and promptly.

- Report concerns about prolonged or unexplained absences to the CME Lead
- Work collaboratively with families to understand barriers to attendance.

#### Parents and Carers

- Ensure their child attends school regularly.
- Inform the school of any planned absences or changes in circumstances.
- Engage with support offered to address attendance issues.

### **5. Procedures for Identifying CME**

- Daily attendance registers are monitored for patterns of absence.
- If a pupil is absent for more than 10 consecutive school days without explanation, the CME Lead initiates enquiries.
- If the child's whereabouts remain unknown, the school will notify the Local Authority and complete a CME referral.

### **6. Safeguarding Considerations**

Children missing education are at increased risk of:

- Exploitation or harm.
- Becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).
- Mental health deterioration.

All CME cases are treated as potential safeguarding concerns and managed in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education and the school's safeguarding policy.

### **7. Support and Re-engagement**

Uffculme School will:

- Offer tailored reintegration plans for autistic pupils returning after prolonged absence.
- Work with families and external agencies to address barriers to attendance.
- Consider reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

### **8. Monitoring and Review**

- This policy will be reviewed bi-annually or in response to changes in statutory guidance.
- CME data will be monitored termly by the Senior Leadership Team and reported to governors.

