



**Stanchester**  
Academy

**Child Missing from Education  
Policy  
2024 - 2026**

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### **1. Our Vision**

*Stanchester Academy is a community built on the values of mutual respect and ambition for everyone.* This vision underpins this policy and is reflected in the decisions we have made regarding this policy.

### **2. Statement of intent**

All children are entitled to a full-time education, regardless of their circumstances. Unfortunately, children missing education (CME) risk underachieving, being victims of abuse, and not being in education, employment or training (NEET) in later life.

This policy complies with the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- DfE 'Working together to safeguard children' 2023
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education' 2024
- DfE 'Children missing education' 2016

### **3. Definition**

For the purpose of this policy, a CME is defined as a child or young person of compulsory academy age who is not attending school, not placed in alternative provision by an LA, and who is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere. This definition also includes children who are receiving an education, but one that is not suitable; this could include children who are not receiving full-time education suitable to their needs, e.g. age, ability, aptitude, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

### **4. Why Children Miss Education**

The most common reasons for children missing education include the following:

- Failing to be registered at a academy/college/school at the age of five
- Failing to make a successful transition
- Exclusion
- Mid-year transfer of education provision

- Families moving into a new area

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Parental responsibility**

Parents have a duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are receiving an efficient full-time education. Parents adhere to this duty by enrolling their child at a school. However, some parents may electively home educate their child (EHE). Section 576, Education Act 1996, defines a parent as:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not,
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person,
- any person who has care of a child (having care of a child or young person means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person, irrespective of their relationship).

### **Stanchester Academy duties**

All schools, including independent providers, have statutory safeguarding responsibilities (sections 157 & 175 of the Education Act 2002) and must investigate any unexplained absences. If a child fails to attend school, staff must try to establish the family's whereabouts before making a CME referral.

Stanchester should:

- use all known contact telephone numbers to attempt to speak with the parent/carer or other family member,
- speak to siblings, known relatives, friends within the same school,
- speak with school staff of known siblings at other schools,
- home visit(s) to attempt to ascertain if the family are in the home
- discuss with the Education Engagement Service (EES) for South Somerset, to agree whether the matter is CME or a school attendance issue.

## **6. Working with others**

A record should be kept of any attempt made to locate a child. If having done all of the above the school has been unable to establish the pupils whereabouts a CME referral and registration certificate should be completed

[Notify us of a Child Missing from Education \(CME\) - Somerset Council](#)

In Somerset it is expected a CME referral is made if there are 10 days continuous unexplained absences and the matter is not deemed to be a school attendance issue. If all attempts by school are completed within 10 days, the Education Engagement Service (EES) will accept the CME referral earlier.

Any partner agency or service involved with children has a duty to notify the Local Authority of any child or family who are missing from education via email to [missingchildren@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:missingchildren@somerset.gov.uk)

The CME team will respond to every CME referral or enquiry received and will work in partnership with key stakeholders in Somerset.