



St Marys ALW

Children Missing in Education Policy

Date written: July 2026

Approved by Governors: September 2026

Date of next review: September 2027

Review cycle: Annually, or sooner if changes to legislation, statutory guidance, or local safeguarding procedures require it.

Responsible officer: Laura Concannon, Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

St Mary's Catholic Primary School recognises that children who are missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being vulnerable to harm, exploitation, radicalisation, abuse, neglect, child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, forced marriage, and poor outcomes in later life.

The school is committed to promoting excellent attendance and ensuring that all children receive a suitable full-time education. Laura Concannon, Headteacher, has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance and children missing education procedures within the school.

To reduce the risk of children missing education, we:

- Monitor attendance daily and follow up unexplained absences on the first day of absence.*
- Work closely with parents/carers to identify and address any barriers to attendance at an early stage.*
- Maintain accurate admission and attendance registers in line with statutory requirements.*
- Identify patterns of poor attendance and take appropriate action where concerns arise.*
- Record attendance concerns and safeguarding information on CPOMS where appropriate.*
- Work with external agencies, including the Education Inclusion Partnership, Early Help services, Children's Social Care, and MASH, where attendance concerns may indicate a safeguarding issue.*
- Notify the Local Authority when a pupil is removed from roll or when required under Children Missing Education guidance.*
- Make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of any child who has stopped attending school unexpectedly.*
- Follow local authority procedures for tracking children who have gone missing from education.*

Where a child is believed to be missing education, the school will follow the guidance provided by West Northamptonshire Council's Tracking Children (and their Families) Who Have Gone Missing from Education procedures and work in partnership with the Local Authority to locate the child and ensure they are receiving an appropriate education.

Any concerns that a child may be at risk of harm because they are missing education will be treated as a safeguarding matter and referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), with referrals made to MASH and other agencies as appropriate.

Further information can be found in the Local Authority guidance:

West Northamptonshire Council – Tracking Children (and their Families) Who Have Gone Missing from Education

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/attendance-and-behaviour-support-schools/tracking-children-and-their-families-who-have-gone-missing>

Removal from Roll and Children Missing Education

St Mary's Catholic Primary School will comply with the requirements of the **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024** and all associated Department for Education and Local Authority guidance when considering the removal of a pupil from roll.

The school recognises that removing a pupil from roll unlawfully may place a child at significant risk. Therefore, any decision to remove a pupil's name from the admissions register will be made only when the relevant legal grounds have been fully met and following consultation with the Local Authority where required.

Laura Concannon, Headteacher, is responsible for overseeing attendance, children missing education procedures, and ensuring compliance with pupil registration regulations.

The school will:

- Ensure all reasonable enquiries are completed before considering the removal of a pupil from roll.
- Work closely with West Northamptonshire Council and other relevant agencies when a pupil's whereabouts are unknown.
- Follow statutory requirements regarding notification to the Local Authority when a pupil is removed from roll.
- Maintain accurate records of all correspondence, enquiries, attendance concerns, and actions taken.
- Record relevant safeguarding concerns on CPOMS and make referrals to MASH where appropriate.

Grounds H and I – Important Considerations

The school recognises that removal from roll under:

- **Ground H** – failure to return following an authorised leave of absence; and
- **Ground I** – continuous absence of 20 school days or more,

cannot be used where there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of illness or another unavoidable cause.

This includes:

- Physical health conditions.
- Mental health difficulties.
- Situations where a diagnosis is still being sought.
- Other authorised circumstances that prevent attendance.

Where a child's location and circumstances are known, Grounds H and I will not be used:

- If the school and/or Local Authority could reasonably support the child to return to school.
- If the school has reasonable grounds to believe the pupil is too unwell to attend.
- If attendance enforcement measures could reasonably be pursued.
- If suitable alternative support or provision may enable the pupil to engage in education.

In such circumstances, the school will seek appropriate support and intervention rather than deleting the child from roll.

Working with the Local Authority

Where a pupil's whereabouts and circumstances are known, the school will engage with West Northamptonshire Council before any removal under Grounds H or I is considered.

The school understands that:

- The Local Authority and school must reach a shared judgement that there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will return.
- Joint reasonable enquiries must have been completed.
- The school's duty to engage with the Local Authority cannot be bypassed.
- Removal from roll will not proceed unless the legal requirements have been satisfied.

Pupils Registered at Special Schools

Where a pupil of compulsory school age is registered at a special school under arrangements made by the Local Authority, St Mary's will comply with Regulation 9(2) of the 2024 Regulations.

The school understands that the pupil's name must not be removed from roll unless:

- The deletion falls within the specific circumstances permitted by the regulations;
- The Local Authority provides consent; or
- The Secretary of State directs that deletion may proceed.

West Northamptonshire Children Missing Education Guidance

The school follows the procedures set out by West Northamptonshire Council for tracking and supporting children who may be missing education and will work collaboratively with the Local Authority to ensure children remain safe and receive their entitlement to education.

Any concerns that a child may be missing education and at risk of harm will be treated as a safeguarding concern and referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), with referrals made to MASH and other agencies as appropriate.

Related Policies:

- Attendance Policy

- *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy*
- *Admissions Policy*
- *Behaviour Policy*
- *Children Missing Education Procedures*
- *Online Safety Policy*
- *SEND Policy and Information Report*