

## May Blossom Farm CIC

### Alternative Provision

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# Child Missing Education Policy

Approved by:	Gill Press
Last reviewed on:	01/09/2025
Next review due by:	31/08/2026
Head of Alternative Provision	Gill Press
Deputy Head of Alternative Provision	Hannah Priest
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Gill Press
Deputy DSL (DDSL)	Hannah Priest
Designated Safeguarding Trustee	Russell Breyer

This policy was ratified in Sept 2025 and will be reviewed in September 2026

## **Policy Statement**

At MBF, we recognise that children missing education (CME) is a safeguarding risk. As an alternative provision, we have a duty to monitor attendance closely and act swiftly when children do not attend as planned.

All children are entitled to a full-time education. Children missing education are at increased risk of:

- underachievement,
- becoming victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and
- disengagement from education, employment, or training (NEET).

Our approach prioritises safeguarding and ensures immediate communication with the commissioning school and, where relevant, the Local Authority (especially if the child is open to Social Care).

## **Scope and Purpose**

This policy ensures:

- All MBF staff understand their responsibility to identify and respond when a child is missing from education.
- Consistent procedures are in place for responding to non-attendance.
- Compliance with statutory guidance, including *Children Missing Education (DfE 2016)*, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)*, and relevant Education Acts.

## **Definition**

- A Child Missing Education (CME): A child of compulsory school age not receiving suitable education either at school or otherwise.
- At MBF, CME specifically refers to pupils expected at our provision who fail to attend as planned.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **MBF**

- Maintain accurate attendance registers, updated daily.
- Record and monitor attendance rigorously.
- If a child does not attend as planned, the DSL will:
  1. Attempt immediate contact with parents/carers.
  2. Notify the commissioning school on the same day.
  3. If the child is open to Social Care, notify the allocated social worker or the Local Authority without delay.

- Keep written records of all contact attempts and outcomes.
- Escalate to the Local Authority if the child remains missing and safeguarding concerns are identified.

### **Staff**

- Be alert to patterns of absence that may indicate safeguarding risks.
- Report all unexplained absences to the DSL immediately.

### **Schools (Commissioning Schools)**

- Remain the primary holder of statutory safeguarding duties, including referrals to CME teams.
- Liaise with MBF regarding attendance and follow-up actions.

### **Parents/Carers**

- Ensure their child attends MBF as arranged.
- Inform MBF and the school of any absence or change of circumstances.
- Provide up-to-date contact details.

### **Procedures When a Child Does Not Attend**

Day 1 of absence (unexplained):

- Contact parents/carers immediately.
- Notify the commissioning school the same day.

If the child is under Social Care:

- Notify the allocated social worker and/or duty team immediately.

Ongoing absence:

- Continue reasonable enquiries (calls, emails, contacting emergency numbers).
- Record all attempts.
- Update the school daily until resolved.

Escalation:

- If there are safeguarding concerns, make a referral to Children's Social Care or contact the police as appropriate.
- The DSL will liaise with the school and LA CME team if a child remains missing.

### **Safeguarding and Training**

- All staff will receive annual safeguarding training, including CME risks.
- DSL will update procedures in line with statutory changes and local safeguarding partnership guidance.

### **Monitoring and Review**

- Attendance data will be monitored weekly by the DSL.
- Policy reviewed annually or sooner if statutory guidance changes.