

SPM Development Services Ltd

Attendance and Children Missing Education (CME) Policy

Reviewed and Updated: July 2026

Next Review: September 2027, or sooner if statutory guidance changes.

Approved by: Simon Piper-Masha

Purpose

This policy sets out how SPM Development Services Ltd records, monitors and reports attendance. It ensures compliance with statutory guidance, including 'Working together to improve school attendance' (2026) and the Children Missing Education statutory guidance (2025). Attendance is a safeguarding issue. Repeated absence, persistent absence and children missing education may indicate that a child is at increased risk of harm, abuse or exploitation.

Scope

This policy applies to all pupils taught by SPM Development Services Ltd through local authority or school commissioning arrangements, including those with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and those educated outside of school (EOTAS).

Recording Attendance

- Tutors must record attendance at every session using SPM's approved attendance system (e.g. Studybugs where applicable).
- Attendance should normally be recorded **within 30 minutes of the scheduled session start time**, in line with commissioning organisation requirements.
- Reasons for absence should be recorded where known.
- Records must be accurate, factual and completed promptly to support safeguarding and statutory attendance monitoring.

Reporting Absence

- If a learner does not attend a planned session, the tutor must notify Simon Piper-Masha immediately.
- Where required by the commissioning organisation, attendance must also be recorded using the agreed attendance system.
- Any safeguarding concerns linked to absence must be reported to the DSL immediately.
- Repeated absences or patterns of lateness must be reported to the DSL and commissioning authority.

Escalation Procedures

- Repeated absence, persistent absence or children missing education will be escalated by the DSL to the commissioning local authority, in line with Children Missing Education guidance.
- Where a child's whereabouts cannot be established, or there are concerns about safety, the DSL will make a safeguarding referral to the local authority or contact the police if necessary.

Parental Engagement

SPM will work with parents and carers to encourage good attendance, highlight the importance of regular learning, and address barriers to attendance where possible. All discussions with parents/carers about attendance will be recorded.

Commissioning Requirements

SPM will comply with attendance recording and reporting requirements specified by commissioning schools and local authorities. Where different commissioners require different attendance systems or reporting arrangements, tutors must follow the procedures communicated by SPM.

Safeguarding

Attendance concerns may be an indicator of safeguarding risks. All unexplained or unusual patterns of absence must be referred to the DSL in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (2026). Staff should exercise professional curiosity where attendance patterns give rise to safeguarding concerns.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance or commissioning authority requirements change.