

Attendance Policy & Procedures

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ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy and procedures, the following definitions apply:
Parent – (from Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) Includes all biological

parents (whether they are married or not), any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person, and any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e. lives with and looks after the child).

Compulsory school age – A child or young person is of compulsory school age from the term commencing on or after their fifth birthday until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach sixteen and applies to the parents of all children all who are registered at any state provided educational setting including academies.

Absence – No engagement with any part of the planned Nudge session for whatever reason.

Authorised absence – Non-engagement with a Nudge session where parents have explained that their child is unable to attend for example:

- Their child is too unwell to attend.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during the session time.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the commissioner has granted permission to not attend sessions. When periods of illness are regular or repeated, Nudge will ensure that the commissioner is aware and will work in conjunction with the commissioner to support attendance.

Unauthorised absence – Any absence that is not agreed and/or where the reason given is not exceptional. For example:

- Parents/carers keep their children away from a planned session unnecessarily or without reason.
- The young person is not at home or on-site when the Practitioner arrives for the session or refuses entry.
- The young person is unable to engage with any part of the session at that moment.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.

Persistent absenteeism – In terms of education attendance this relates to a young person who is absent for 10% of the time, over a whole year.

Commissioner - This is any person or body who pays for our services. This

could be an individual, local authority, school, Children's Services, Youth Offending Team or any other organisation that is responsible for the education and/or wellbeing of a young person. Absence Codes - Where appropriate Nudge will mirror the national attendance codes (see Appendix 1).

1.2 Introduction

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 (legislation.gov.uk) states that: "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:- (a) to age, ability, and aptitude, and (b) to any special educational needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

This means that it is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by regular attendance at a school or by education other than at a school. Nudge will work in a variety of ways to best support the young person and the family to meet this requirement. Whilst we are not an educational setting or school, we will work towards the young person reaching a point where they may be able to re-enter an appropriate setting or follow an EOTAS (Education Other Than At School) package. When receiving a referral from a commissioner, Nudge will agree on a number of sessions that will be delivered each week by our Practitioners. These may form part of a wider educational package for the young person. It is the responsibility of the commissioner to monitor the overall attendance, if provision is blended. Nudge will record attendance at our sessions only. DfE guidance Working together to improve school attendance is aimed at schools and local authorities and provides clear evidence linking regular attendance at an educational setting to improvements in a child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances as well as reducing their exposure to harms like crime or violence.

The statistics tell us that children who attend education regularly are more likely to:

- Build a firm and secure knowledge and understanding across all curriculum subjects.
- Ensure they consistently meet and build upon expectations for their age or developmental stage.
- Develop good habits and important life skills.

- Maintain friendships.
- Gain better qualifications.
- Have access to a wider range of opportunities when they leave education.

At Nudge we understand that improving attendance is everyone's business. Barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates; and they are often specific to individual young people and families. We will put in place bespoke interventions in order to help overcome any barriers. Some young people find it harder than others to attend school, or another educational setting. Therefore, at all stages of improving attendance we are committed to working with young people and parents to remove any barriers by building strong and trusting relationships and

working together to put the right support in place. Nudge will work in conjunction with parents and commissioners to promote positive health and wellbeing of the young person so that they are able to access appropriate educational attendance. This Policy seeks to explain how. We understand that school settings will be working within the boundaries of relevant legislation, and statutory and non-statutory guidance, and we will support them with this during the time that we are commissioned to work with the young person. Legislation relating to attendance is listed below and includes, but is not limited to:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) which sets out the fundamental right and freedoms that everyone is entitled to, and the UN Convention on the rights of the child
- The Education (young people Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- Statutory guidance on School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures
- Statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education
- Non-statutory guidance Behaviour in schools: advice for Head teachers and school staff
- Non-statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance
- Non-statutory guidance Supporting young people with medical conditions at school

This Policy and procedures should be read alongside other Nudge Policies and procedures as follows:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures
- Trauma informed Practice Policy and procedures
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Code of Conduct for Practitioners
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

All Policies can be found [here](#).

1.3 Aims

By writing and implementing this Policy and the procedures that support it, we aim to:

- Ensure the safeguarding, child protection and welfare of all young people
- Improve a young person's achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance
- Create an ethos in which good engagement is recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by all
- Raise awareness among parents, carers, and young people of the importance of good attendance
- Work in partnership with all stakeholders so that all young people realise their potential
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which young people feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in young people a sense of their own responsibility
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties
- Provide effective strategies for early intervention to ensure young people are not deprived of opportunities through non-attendance or lateness

2. PROCEDURES

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, requires us to work collaboratively with commissioners, families

and the young person. We will achieve this in the following ways.

- The Commissioner - will, upon referral, discuss the attendance requirements and reporting procedures for their organisation.
- Practitioners - report attendance of a young person at sessions to the assigned Education Intervention Coordinator (EIC) upon arrival.
- The EIC - will report only non-attendance by default. If requested, the EIC can report attendance (both absence and presence) to the commissioner on the day of a session. The EIC will send a summary of attendance to the commissioner on a weekly basis in the form of a report which also contains updates on the content of the sessions and levels of engagement.
- The Assistant Regional Lead - will carry out Quality Visits throughout the academic year. Where engagement or attendance is low, priority visits will take place. The Assistant Regional Lead can also provide mentoring and support with re-engagement strategies if attendance is low.
- The Regional Designated Safeguarding Leads (RDSL) - will inform the commissioner where a young person misses three consecutive sessions. They will also request support from the Assistant Regional Leads so that re-engagement strategies can be explored.
- The Regional Lead - will monitor overall regional attendance and intervene if necessary. The Regional Lead or EIC will also attend any meetings with commissioners if required.
- The Senior Leadership Team - will monitor and review the attendance policy and procedures as required or at least every year to ensure that procedures are up to date

and that the policy remains relevant.

- The Board of Directors - will evaluate the effectiveness of attendance strategies and work closely with the Senior Leadership Team and Service Leads to maintain good attendance.

2.1.1 Local Authority Access and Inclusion Officer Some Local Authorities provide an Access/Inclusion/Attendance Officer whose job it is to:

- Enforce the law regarding attendance at educational settings.
- Support educational provisions' response to attendance through regular meetings, monitoring of individual young people's attendance, and

support with specific attendance, access, or inclusion issues as they arise.

If required, we will work in conjunction with such officers and report attendance to them if directed by the commissioner. If we are requested to report using DfE attendance codes then we will use those stated in appendix 1 of this policy. 2.1.2 Attendance and Safeguarding At Nudge we are aware that low attendance can be a sign of underlying safeguarding concerns. To ensure that any concerns are recorded and acted upon quickly, our attendance reporting is closely monitored by our Regional Designated Safeguarding Leads (RDSLs), EICs and the National DSL. Please refer to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for details of our processes. If a concern is raised around attendance specifically then the following process is followed:

- Practitioners will report non-attendance to their EIC immediately and also follow this up with notes in the daily log. These will be monitored over time and persistent non-attendance will be picked up by the EIC and Regional Lead.
- Daily log concerns, including attendance, can easily be escalated, at first verbally and then followed up by using an additional form on the daily log.
- When reported verbally the EIC will be able to act immediately if this is required.
- The EIC and RDSL will act upon any concerns raised that do not require immediate action within 48 hours.
- The commissioner (and any other necessary services) will be made aware of any concerns.

2.2 Attendance Expectations

2.2.1 What to expect from Nudge Nudge will:

- Encourage attendance by planning an engaging and individualised programme that will enthuse the young person to attend. We will start by basing this around their current interests. As a trusting relationship evolves we will introduce more challenge

to assist them in meeting targets. The young person's timetable will endeavour to meet the required hours as requested by the commissioner whilst being adapted to the young person's current needs.

- We will monitor levels of engagement and quickly alter the intervention to ensure consistent attendance.
- Develop and maintain a whole organisation culture that promotes the benefits of attendance, attainment and wider wellbeing.
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them. In doing so, we will take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of our provision as a place of safety and support.
- Where appropriate, challenge parent's attitudes to attendance. For example, if a session was cancelled by the parent for any reason that was either not listed in the list of authorised absences, or there was reason to believe that this was being misused.
- Build strong relationships with foster carers, Social Workers and the relevant Local Authority Virtual Headteacher in relation to looked-after children.
- Work with parents of young people with medical conditions or special education needs and disabilities to ensure that the barriers to attendance they face are minimised, providing additional support where necessary, to help them access interventions.
- Where we see a sudden, unexplained change to attendance patterns, we will raise this as a safeguarding concern to our commissioners and relevant front door services.

2.2.2 What Nudge requests from parents and carers Parental responsibilities for attendance include:

- Contact the assigned EIC if the young person is unable to attend a session for reasons that would be authorised.
- Support Practitioners by encouraging your young person to be ready for the planned session when the Practitioner arrives.
- Communicate any concerns with the Practitioner when they arrive for the session.
- Communicate any concerns over attendance to the EIC before sessions. This would include any concerns they have with regard to the young person voicing feelings that would lead to non-engagement. This communication will be essential in the modification of the intervention to ensure attendance.

- Provide us with accurate and up-to-date contact details and update us as soon as possible if those details change.
- Try to make health, doctor, dentist, hospital etc. appointments outside of planned session times.

2.2.3 What Nudge requests from young people Nudge expects that the young people we work with will:

- Attend every session and strive for 100% attendance. Every session counts!
- Be ready for the session when the Practitioner arrives.
- Let the Practitioner or parents know if there is anything about the sessions that may cause non-attendance so that changes can be made.

3. LEAVES OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Nudge will follow the processes laid out in the commissioning body's attendance protocols and report accordingly. Any authorisation for such an absence will be decided by the commissioner and communicated to Nudge with at least 2 weeks notice. Any sessions missed may be charged for.

4. REVIEW

As reasons for non-engagement can evolve quickly, we will review and update our Attendance Policy & Procedures as necessary.

This policy has been signed off by the Nudge Education Directorate. Director of Partnerships & Services 5 Dec 2025

5. APPENDIXES

Appendix 1 - DfE School Attendance Codes

NEO Online Addendum — DRAFT

Status: This NEO online addendum is newly drafted and pending review by the policy owner (Director of Operations) and Designated Safeguarding Lead

before it goes live. The canonical Nudge Education Attendance Policy above continues to apply.

Scope of this addendum

This addendum sets out the additional attendance provisions specific to **Nudge Education Online (NEO)**, the fully online alternative provision for learners aged 11–18 operated by Nudge Education Ltd. It is read alongside the canonical Attendance Policy & Procedures.

Online attendance — what counts as present

For NEO online learners, attendance is recorded against scheduled live lessons, tutorial sessions, and pastoral check-ins. A learner is recorded as present where they:

- Join the scheduled session within the configured grace period (default: 5 minutes after start).
- Remain logged in for the duration of the session, or for an agreed adjusted duration where reasonable adjustments apply.
- Participate sufficiently for the qualified teacher or practitioner to confirm engagement — this may be by camera-on attendance, sustained activity in chat, completion of in-session tasks, or another adjusted form recorded in the learner's individual support plan.

Camera-on attendance is encouraged and remains the default expectation.

Cameras-off is not by itself a reason to mark a learner absent, particularly where camera-off is a reasonable adjustment, a regulation strategy for an EBSNA-affected learner, or where the learner's home environment makes camera-on unsuitable. Where attendance is recorded with camera off, the qualified teacher or practitioner notes the engagement evidence in the session log.

Lateness, partial attendance, and adjusted patterns

- **Late** — joined after the grace period but within the first 30% of session time.
- **Partial** — present for less than 70% of session time.
- **Reasonable adjustment** — agreed reduced attendance pattern recorded in the learner's individual support plan; counts as full attendance against

the adjusted plan.

The named practitioner reviews the learner's attendance pattern weekly. Where a pattern of lateness or partial attendance emerges, the practitioner contacts the family within 48 hours.

EBSNA-aware approach to non-attendance

NEO is commissioned for many learners experiencing **Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA)**. The attendance approach is therefore needs-led rather than punitive:

- A missed session triggers a same-day welfare check by the practitioner — primarily to confirm the learner is safe and to understand barriers — not to issue a sanction.
- Three or more consecutive missed sessions trigger a safeguarding review by the DSL alongside the practitioner.
- Patterns suggesting risk of disengagement or risk of becoming **missing from education** are escalated to the DSL and to the commissioning Local Authority where the learner's placement is LA-commissioned.
- Where a learner has an EHCP, attendance concerns are also shared with the SENDCo and reflected in EHCP reviews.

Reporting to commissioners

Attendance reports for NEO learners are provided to commissioners on the cadence agreed in the individual placement contract — typically weekly during a stabilisation period, then fortnightly. Reports include:

- Sessions scheduled, attended, late, partial, and missed.
- Engagement narrative for the period.
- Any safeguarding flags, EBSNA patterns, or recommended changes to the support plan.
- Adjustments to the agreed attendance pattern, where reasonable adjustments apply.

Children missing from education

NEO maintains a same-day reporting protocol for learners who become uncontactable. The practitioner attempts contact through agreed channels; if

unsuccessful, escalation to the DSL is automatic, and to the commissioning Local Authority where statutory thresholds are met.

Related NEO policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Trauma-Informed Practice Policy

Document control

Field	Value
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