**Attendance policy**

**4Life Education**



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| **Approved by:** | Charlotte Young  | **Date:** May 2025  |
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# 1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to our provision attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) statutory guidance on [working together to improve provision attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance), through our whole-provision culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

* Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
* Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
* Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
* Ensuring every pupil has access to the education to which they are entitled
* Acting early to address patterns of absence
* Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend 4Life Education

# 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) statutory guidance on [working together to improve provision attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance) and [provision attendance parental responsibility measures](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern provision attendance:

* Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents)
* Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents)
* Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents)
* [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents)
* [The Provision Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/208/made)
* [The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/regulation/2/made)

It also refers to:

* [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2)
* [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for provisions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-issues-affecting-a-pupils-attendance-guidance-for-schools)

# 3. Roles and responsibilities

**3.1 The director/s**

The director/s is responsible for:

* The implementation of this policy at the provision
* Monitoring provision-level absence data and reporting it directly to referrers
* Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
* Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
* Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where provision transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-provision barriers
* Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil’s needs
* Communicating the provision’s high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels

**3.2 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

* Leading, championing and improving attendance across the provision
* Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
* Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
* Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
* Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
* Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
* Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
* Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
* Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
* Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Charlotte Young and she can be contacted at info@4life-education.co.uk

**3.3 Staff in provision**

Staff are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the provision office and referring body.

Sttaff will also:

* Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the provision system
* Transfer calls from parents/carers to Charlotte Young where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

**3.4 Parents**

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the provision and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

* All natural parents, whether they are married or not
* All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
* Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

* Make sure their child attends every day
* Call the provision to report their child’s absence before 9:00am on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return
* Provide the provision with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
* Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the provision day

**3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

* Attend provision every day, on time

# 4. Recording attendance

**4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each provision day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

* Present
* Attending an approved off-site educational activity
* Absent
* Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

* The original entry
* The amended entry
* The reason for the amendment
* The date on which the amendment was made
* The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

* Whether the absence is authorised or not
* The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
* The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The provision day starts at 9:30am and ends at 2:30pm.

Pupils must arrive in provision by 9:30am on each provision day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9:30am and will be kept open until 9:45am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:00pm and will be kept open until 12:15pm.

**4.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil’s parent must notify the provision of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:100am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the provision staff, who can be contacted via 07538904761 or via email on info@4life-education.co.uk

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the provision has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the provision will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor’s note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the provision is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

**4.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil’s parent notifies the provision in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of provision hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of provision for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil’s parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the provision can authorise.

**4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

* Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
* After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

In some instances, students will be set targets as part of their individual learning plan linking to their punctuality.

**4.5 Following up unexplained absence**

Where any pupil we expect to attend provision does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the provision will:

* Call the pupil’s parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the provision cannot reach any of the pupil’s emergency contacts, the provision may escalate this to the appropriate body.
* Identify whether the absence is approved or not
* Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
* Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the provision will consider involving an education welfare officer
* Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil’s youth offending team officer
* Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
* Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals

**4.6 Reporting to parents**

The provision will regularly inform parents (see definition of ‘parent’, as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child’s attendance and absence levels in termly reports.

# 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

**5.1 Approval for term-time absence**

The director/s will allow pupils to be absent from the provision site for certain educational activities, or to attend other provisions or settings.

The director/s will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 provision attendance regulations](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/208/made#:~:text=11.,an%20%E2%80%9Cauthorised%20person%E2%80%9D).&text=(b)regulated%20employment%20abroad.). These circumstances are:

* Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
* Attending an interview
* Study leave
* A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
* Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the director/s’s discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during provision hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The provision considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

* Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
* Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the provision will seek advice from the parent’s religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
* Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes– this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the provision, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
* If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from provision (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the provision may allow a pupil to be absent from the provision site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

* Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the provision
* Attending another provision at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
* Attending provision arranged by the local authority
* Attending work experience
* If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend provision, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the provision premises are closed

**5.2 Sanctions**

Our provision will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

**Notices to improve**

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the provision may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends provision.

# 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Strategies for improving attendance may consist of the following:

* ILP targets set with regular 1:1 meetings
* Home visits
* Rewards in provision such as vouchers for significant improvement
* Reduced timetable

# 7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to provision

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the provision becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil’s needs, the provision will inform the local authority and set an individual plan for the pupil. This is the same for other pupils who may have had periods of absence for various reasons.

# 8. Attendance monitoring

**8.1 Monitoring attendance**

The provision will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the provision and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's provision absence national statistics releases. The underlying provision-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The provision will benchmark its attendance data at whole provision, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the referring body.

**8.2 Analysing attendance**

The provision will:

* Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
* Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
* Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
* Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

**8.3 Using data to improve attendance**

* Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
* Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
* Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

**8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of provision, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of provision. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the provision’s strategy for improving attendance.

The provision will:

* Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
* Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
* Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the provision (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
	+ Discuss attendance and engagement at provision
	+ Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
	+ Explain the help that is available
	+ Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
	+ Review any existing actions or interventions
* Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
* Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the provision will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
* Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

# 9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Charlotte Young.

# 10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

* Child protection and safeguarding policy
* Behaviour policy

### Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE’s [guidance on provision attendance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Definition** | **Scenario** |
| **/** | Present (am) | Pupil is present at morning registration |
| **\** | Present (pm) | Pupil is present at afternoon registration |
| **L** | Late arrival | Pupil arrives late before register has closed |
| **Attending a place other than the provision** |
| **K** | Attending education provision arranged by the local authority | Pupil is attending a place other than a provision at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority |
| **V** | Attending an educational visit or trip | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the provision |
| **P** | Participating in a sporting activity | Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the provision |
| **W** | Attending work experience | Pupil is on an approved work experience placement |
| **B** | Attending any other approved educational activity | Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience |
| **D** | Dual registered | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered |
| **Absent – leave of absence** |
| **C1** | Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad | Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during provision hours, approved by the provision |
| **M** | Medical/dental appointment | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment |
| **J1** | Interview | Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment |
| **S** | Study leave | Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination |
| **X** | Not required to be in provision | Pupil of non-compulsory provision age is not required to attend |
| **C2** | Part-time timetable | Pupil is not in provision due to having a part-time timetable |
| **C** | Exceptional circumstances | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances |
| **Absent – other authorised reasons** |
| **T** | Parent travelling for occupational purposes | Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes |
| **R** | Religious observance | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance |
| **I** | Illness (not medical or dental appointment) | Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health) |
| **E** | Suspended or excluded  | Pupil has been suspended or excluded from provision and no alternative provision has been made |
| **Absent – unable to attend provision because of unavoidable cause** |
| **Q** | Lack of access arrangements | Pupil is unable to attend provision because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at provision |
| **Y1** | Transport not available | Pupil is unable to attend because provision is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available |
| **Y2** | Widespread disruption to travel | Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency |
| **Y3** | Part of provision premises closed | Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open |
| **Y4**  | Whole provision site unexpectedly closed | Every pupil absent as the provision is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather) |
| **Y5** | Criminal justice detention | Pupil is unable to attend as they are:* In police detention
* Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or
* Detained under a sentence of detention
 |
| **Y6** | Public health guidance or law | Pupil’s travel to or attendance at the provision would be prohibited under public health guidance or law |
| **Y7** | Any other unavoidable cause | To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes |
| **Absent – unauthorised absence** |
| **G** | Holiday not granted by the provision | Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the provision |
| **N** | Reason for absence not yet established  | Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes |
| **O** | Absent in other or unknown circumstances | No reason for absence has been established, or the provision isn’t satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence |
| **U** | Arrived in provision after registration closed | Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session |
| **Administrative codes** |
| **Z** | Prospective pupil not on admission register | Pupil has not joined provision yet but has been registered |
| **#** | Planned whole-provision closure | Whole-provision closures that are known and planned in advance, including provision holidays |