

Attendance Policy

Empowering Futures Academy Ltd

(Alternative Provision)

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| Policy Name | Attendance Policy |
| Site | Birmingham |
| Version | 1.0 |
| Approved By | Director / DSL |
| Date Reviewed & Confirmed | 18 January 2026 |
| Next Review Due | January 2027 |

1. Policy Statement

Empowering Futures Academy Ltd (“Empowering Futures”) is committed to promoting high levels of attendance, engagement, and safeguarding across all Alternative Provision programmes. We recognise that learners accessing alternative provision often face complex barriers to attendance, including SEND, SEMH needs, trauma, anxiety, medical conditions, school refusal, and previous disengagement from education.

Attendance at Empowering Futures is managed through a **supportive, trauma-informed, and safeguarding-led approach**, ensuring compliance with statutory guidance and Local Authority commissioning requirements. Regular attendance is essential to safeguard learners, support progress, and enable positive outcomes.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All learners of compulsory school age
- Learners commissioned by Local Authorities
- Learners referred by schools under Alternative Provision arrangements •

Learners attending full-time, part-time, phased, or blended programmes

This policy applies across all Empowering Futures delivery sites, including:

- **WEETC – Coventry**
- **Evolve Centre – Birmingham**
- **Argyle House – Coventry**

3. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy aligns with and is informed by the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- **Education Act 1996**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**
- **Department for Education School Attendance Guidance**
- **Local Authority Alternative Provision commissioning and safeguarding requirements**
- **Equality Act 2010**

Attendance is recognised as a **key safeguarding indicator**. Patterns of persistent absence, irregular attendance, or unexplained non-attendance are treated as potential safeguarding concerns and managed in line with **KCSIE 2025** and local safeguarding procedures.

4. Attendance Expectations

4.1 Learners

- Learners are expected to attend all sessions agreed within their placement plan or personalised timetable.
- Attendance expectations are **individualised**, proportionate, and reflective of each learner's needs, risks, and readiness to engage.

4.2 Parents and Carers

- Parents/carers are responsible for supporting attendance and punctuality. ●

Any absence must be reported **before the start of the session or day**. ● Clear communication is required to enable safeguarding checks to take place.

4.3 Referring Schools and Local Authorities

- The referring school or Local Authority retains statutory responsibility for attendance where applicable.
- Empowering Futures provides accurate attendance data, monitoring, and timely communication.

5. Recording and Monitoring Attendance

- Attendance is recorded **daily for every learner and session**.
- Registers are completed promptly and accurately by staff.
- Attendance records clearly identify:
 - Present
 - Authorised absence
 - Unauthorised absence
 - Late arrival
 - Medical or wellbeing-related absence
 - Approved off-site activity

Attendance records are securely stored and shared with commissioning bodies in line with data-sharing agreements and GDPR requirements.

6. Reporting Absence

6.1 Authorised Absence

Authorised absence may include:

- Illness or medical appointments
- Mental health or emotional wellbeing needs
- Approved therapeutic or external provision
- Exceptional circumstances agreed in advance

Where appropriate, supporting evidence may be requested.

6.2 Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence includes:

- No explanation provided
- Absence without valid reason
- Failure to attend agreed provision

Unauthorised absence is escalated in line with safeguarding procedures.

7. First-Day Absence and Safeguarding Response

Where a learner does not attend and no explanation has been received: 1.

Parents/carers are contacted on the same day

2. The absence is logged and monitored
3. The referring school or Local Authority is notified where required

If contact cannot be made, or there are safeguarding concerns, the matter is escalated immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in line with **KCSIE 2025**.

8. Local Authority Escalation Procedures

8.1 Coventry (CAP Framework and Other Referrals)

For learners commissioned via **Coventry**:

- Attendance concerns are shared with the referring school and/or CAP team •

Persistent or unexplained absence is recorded as a safeguarding concern

- Escalation follows Coventry safeguarding procedures, including Early Help or MASH referrals where appropriate
- Attendance concerns are reviewed within placement reviews and progress reports

8.2 Birmingham Referrals

For learners commissioned via **Birmingham**:

- Attendance data and concerns are shared promptly with the referring school or commissioning officer
- Persistent absence is escalated through Birmingham safeguarding pathways
- Referrals are made to Birmingham Children's Services or MASH where non-attendance presents a safeguarding risk

8.3 Walsall Referrals

For learners commissioned via **Walsall**:

- Attendance concerns are shared with the referring school or Local Authority officer
- Escalation follows Walsall safeguarding and Early Help pathways
- Safeguarding referrals are made where attendance patterns indicate potential risk

9. Persistent Absence and Support Planning

Where attendance falls below agreed expectations:

- Barriers to attendance are explored with the learner and family
- Support strategies are implemented (e.g. phased timetables, mentoring, wellbeing support, alternative delivery models)
- Attendance review meetings are held with schools and/or Local Authorities
- Actions and outcomes are documented and reviewed

Empowering Futures does not issue fines or pursue legal enforcement but supports statutory partners in fulfilling their legal responsibilities.

10. Part-Time and Phased Timetables

- Reduced or part-time timetables are used **only where necessary** and in the learner's best interests.
- All arrangements are:
 - Agreed with the referring school or Local Authority
 - Clearly documented
 - Time-limited and regularly reviewed

The aim is always to support increased engagement where appropriate.

11. SEND, Medical Needs, and Reasonable Adjustments

- Attendance expectations are adapted for learners with SEND, EHCPs, or medical needs.

- Reasonable adjustments are made in line with the **Equality Act 2010**. •

Attendance is considered alongside emotional regulation, wellbeing, and safety.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Rhean White – Director

- Oversees attendance as a safeguarding indicator
- Leads escalation, safeguarding referrals, and liaison with Local Authorities
- Ensures compliance with **KCSIE 2025** and safeguarding legislation

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Rena Sparks

- Supports the DSL in monitoring attendance
- Acts in the DSL's absence
- Assists with safeguarding and attendance escalation

Provision Leadership

- Monitor attendance data and trends
- Ensure systems are robust and compliant
- Liaise with schools and Local Authorities

Staff and Tutors

- Complete registers accurately and promptly
- Report attendance concerns immediately

- Support engagement through positive relationships

13. Information Sharing

Attendance information is shared with:

- Referring schools
- Local Authorities (Coventry, Birmingham, Walsall)
- Safeguarding partners where required

All information sharing complies with GDPR and data protection legislation.

14. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Statutory guidance changes
- Local Authority commissioning requirements are updated •

Attendance or safeguarding incidents highlight the need for review

15. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy