



Attendance Policy

Policy written:	July 2024
Policy review date:	July 2025
Signed by Director:	<i>E. Barnett</i>

The policy will be reviewed annually as a minimum, unless lessons learnt or new legislation, national or local guidance suggests the need for an earlier date of review.

Policy review dates and changes

Review date	By whom	Summary of changes made	Date ratified by directors	Date implemented

1. Introduction

Young people are entitled to formal education from the age of 5 years, and it is important that they receive this entitlement to benefit their present and future lives, and for the economic and social well-being of society. Students must continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday.

Local authorities are responsible by law for making sure that registered students of compulsory age regularly attend their education. The Government also has a priority in reducing unnecessary absence from education, they expect Schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensure every student has access to full-time or part-time education to which they are entitled;
- Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- Support all students to be punctual to their lessons.

Phoenix ND Education Ltd work with some of the hardest to reach and complex young people across the region, children and young people who are particularly hard to place and for whom traditional avenues of engagement have been exhausted. Some of our children and young people have a history of difficulties with punctuality and attendance and we strive to support each of our students to recognise and appreciate the benefits of attending education.

The Department for Education considers that for all children, 95% attendance is the benchmark for good attendance. Historical attendance figures for our young people before starting at Phoenix ND Education Ltd, show us that some of them have particularly poor attendance and some are school refusers. To enable us to deal with attendance in the most effective way, we analyse information on a personal level so that individual support needs, circumstances and family and home life can all be taken into consideration.

Some of our learners come from difficult environments, are in care, have a learning disability and / or difficulty, mental health support needs or have been involved in the probation system. Most of our learners have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Personalised learning journeys are designed and adapted to meet the needs of our young people, to maximise the chance of successful and effective attendance and punctuality. We do our utmost to support learners to engage in and enjoy their learning journey. Our model of education enables us to provide support for learners to leave their homes for activities, engage in learning at home, or to be educated on site.

It is our responsibility as educators to do all we can to encourage and support regular and frequent attendance. Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend education. We at Phoenix ND Education are committed to ensuring that families understand how important this is. We give high priority to conveying to parents/carers and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance. If there are problems which affect a student's attendance, we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents/carers, students, professionals and social workers to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

2. Aims of this policy

This attendance policy ensures that all staff in our provision are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance. It also informs parents/carers, learners and commissioners of our aims in relation to attendance.

Through this Policy we aim to:

- Improve students' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 95% attendance for all children, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the provision.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and students of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to children on entry to the provision in order to promote good habits.
- Work in partnership with students, parents, staff and the commissioning body so that all students realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which students feel safe, secure and valued and encouraged in students a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and students.
- Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, students, staff and directors on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Supporting students who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at our provision

3. Responsibilities

Parents/Carers

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring their child attends their allocated sessions at Phoenix ND Education regularly - absence should only happen when a child is significantly ill and therefore unfit to attend, or if there is an unavoidable/unforeseen reason or circumstance which is causing a difficulty/period of difficulty.
- Contacting Phoenix ND Education on the first morning of any absence to give us the reason and tell us when your child is likely to return.
- Arranging all non-emergency medical appointments out of normal education hours or during holidays.
- Providing medical evidence for any frequent absence attributed to illness.
- Keeping us updated if their child has any extended period of absence.
- Making sure we always have their current contact numbers; this includes all telephone numbers and emergency contact details.

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- Students will have an agreed timetable for attendance.
- We will follow up unexplained absences by contacting parents/carers and the professionals involved from the first session of absence.
- Parents/carers and professionals will be kept regularly informed of all concerns regarding punctuality and attendance and Phoenix ND Education will include a student's attendance rate on their end of term reports.
- Attendance statistics are monitored by Phoenix ND Education and professionals involved.
- Targets are set annually for overall Phoenix ND Education attendance figures.
- Parents and carers, students and staff will be regularly reminded of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.
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Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence
Genuine illness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital/dental/doctor's appointment • Major religious observances • Visits to prospective new schools • External exams or educational assessments 	Shopping /day trip / visit to a theme park / birthday treat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversleeping due to a late night • Looking after other children / other family members • Appointments for other family members

Parents/Carers, commissioners and students can expect the provision will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere, with a relaxed and informal start to the day to alleviate transition worries. Breakfast items are available to all pupils as and when they are ready
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Provide a sympathetic response to any child or parent's concerns.
- Work with parents and pupils to support issues around sleep patterns and hygiene to promote punctuality and attendance.
- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality.
- Contact parents/commissioner when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of recognition of effort to attend
- Regularly inform the students home school and parents of the % attendance of all pupils
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.
- Meet regularly with local authority officers and the commissioning school to monitor and support attendance and punctuality.
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to commissioners/local authority officers

4. Monitoring

Phoenix ND Education and professionals involved, monitor attendance of the students. This includes:

- Completing the register each morning and reporting attendance to the Local Authority or the home school (if applicable).
- Reporting absence rates and unauthorised absence to the Local Authority and the home school (if applicable).
- Entering into correspondence with parents/carers to discuss absences and offer support to encourage their child to attend.
- Obtaining written evidence of absence from parents/carers where required, for example appointment cards, medical certificate or a letter from the GP.

5. Punctuality

Students arrive at Phoenix ND Education by transport provided by the Local Authority or with their Parent/Carer. If a student does not arrive by their expected time, we will contact their Parent/Carer to identify the reason. If the student has been collected by Local Authority transport on time but has still not arrived, we will contact the transport provider to alert them and gather further information.

6. Missing in Education

In the event that a student is discovered to be missing on site

The following procedure should be followed by staff:

The Provision Manager is notified immediately who will instruct a search of all building and the immediate surrounding area.

Staff will speak to students to identify possible locations for the missing student or for any contact made with other students.

If the student is not located within 10 minutes, contact is to be made with the referring school, parents/carers and the local police providing a clear description of the student including what they are wearing.

If appropriate, a member of staff may search the locality. If they find the student, they must keep the student within their sight but they do not chase the student as they may pose as a flight risk and alert the Provision Manager immediately.

In the event that a student is discovered to be missing during an off-site visit

The same procedure for students missing on site should be followed by staff. However, a member of staff can only leave to conduct a search if appropriate staff/student ratio allow them to do so.

Following an incident whereby a student is discovered to be missing either on site or during an off-site visit, the following is to be completed by staff:

Record the details of the incident including the student involved and the outcome.

Arrange a strategy meeting with the referring school and parents/carers to review the individual risk assessment for the student involved.

Review the procedures put in place to safeguard the student every half term to ensure appropriate control measures are in place and all staff are fully informed.

All students, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Phoenix ND Education Ltd works with students' home schools and parents, to ensure this is achieved through their provision of alternative education and learning.