



Title	Supporting Attendance Policy
Internal Reference	L4L-GY-054
Written by	Claire Bramley
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Supporting Attendance Policy

1. Aims and attendance principles

Learning4life-GY aims to improve the attendance, engagement and safety of learners who experience barriers to attending school. As an SEND specialist setting, we recognise that barriers may be linked to special educational needs and/or disabilities, mental or physical health, emotionally based barriers to school attendance (EBBSA), previous experiences of education, transport, family circumstances, or safeguarding concerns.

Our approach is therefore supportive, relational, trauma-informed, evidence-informed and individualised. We set high expectations for attendance while recognising that progress must be monitored from each learner's starting point and in the context of their needs, agreed provision, EHCP outcomes and reasonable adjustments. Whole-school percentages are used for governance assurance and pattern analysis, but individual learner progress is not judged solely by comparison with national attendance percentages.

- promoting regular attendance, punctuality and engagement as a safeguarding priority;
- working in partnership with learners, parents, carers, trusted adults, the local authority and wider professionals;
- identifying barriers early and agreeing proportionate support before patterns become entrenched;
- reducing persistent absence and severe absence through targeted support and, only where appropriate and after support has been offered, formal routes;
- ensuring learners access education that is suitable to their age, aptitude, SEND and individual circumstances;
- using attendance data to identify needs, monitor progress from individual baselines and evaluate the impact of interventions.

2. Attendance and punctuality expectations

Learners, parents, carers and trusted adults are expected to work with Learning4life-GY to support the highest attendance that is realistically achievable for the learner, taking into account individual needs and any agreed plan.

Compulsory school age learners should arrive by 9:15am. Post-16 learners should arrive by 10:00am on timetabled days unless an individual timetable or transition plan states otherwise. Registers are taken at 9:20am and 1:15pm.

Parents/carers/trusted adults must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 10:00am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling 01472 240440. Learners aged 18 or over may notify the school themselves, but the school may still contact parents/carers/trusted adults where consent, safeguarding, contractual or support arrangements require this.

Where attendance is affected by SEND, health or anxiety-related barriers, families are expected to engage in discussion so that the school can make reasonable adjustments, agree a support plan and involve appropriate services.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy has been reviewed against the Department for Education statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance, the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the Education Act 1996, the Education Act 2002, the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Equality Act 2010, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and relevant local authority attendance and children missing education procedures.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Parents are responsible for ensuring their child receives that education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

The DfE expects schools to treat improving attendance as everyone's business: schools should expect, monitor, listen and understand, facilitate support, formalise support where needed, and enforce only where support is not engaged with or is unsuccessful and legal intervention is appropriate. Ofsted inspection activity considers whether

leaders have high expectations, understand absence patterns, act early, support vulnerable learners, and evaluate the impact of attendance strategies on pupils' education and safeguarding.

4. Contact details

Principal and Senior Attendance Champion: Claire Bramley, claire@learning4life-gy.co.uk, 01472 240440

Attendance support: Stephanie Thompson, stephanie.thompson@learning4life-gy.co.uk, 01472 240440

Day-to-day absence reporting: Learning4life-GY admin team, 01472 240440

Further pastoral and SEND support: Heidi Stanton-Peprah, SENCO; Kylie Bramley, Strategic Mental Health Lead and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5. Day-to-day attendance management

5.1 Attendance and admission registers

Learning4life-GY will keep an admission register and attendance register for all learners. Registers will be completed accurately using the national attendance and absence codes in Appendix 1. Entries will be preserved for six years. Any amendment will show the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for amendment, the date of amendment and the name of the person making it.

5.2 Unplanned absence and first-day response

1. If a learner is absent without explanation, contact the parent/carer/trusted adult on the first morning of absence to establish the reason and confirm the learner is safe.
2. If contact cannot be made, attempt all emergency contacts and risk assess whether a home visit, safeguarding referral, police welfare check or children missing education action is required.
3. Record the absence code as soon as the reason is known, and no later than five school days after the session.
4. Continue daily contact while absence remains unexplained or while safeguarding risk requires it.

5.3 Illness and medical evidence

Absence due to illness will usually be authorised. Where the school has genuine and reasonable concern about the authenticity or frequency of illness absence, it may request appropriate evidence, such as appointment information, a prescription, communication from a medical professional, or other relevant confirmation. Evidence will not be requested unnecessarily and the school will consider barriers to accessing medical evidence.

5.4 Planned absence and appointments

Medical and dental appointments will be authorised where the school is notified in advance. Learners should attend before and after the appointment wherever possible. Other requests for absence in term time must be made as far in advance as possible and will only be agreed where the Principal considers there are exceptional circumstances.

5.5 Lateness and punctuality

Learners arriving after the register opens but before it closes will be marked late. Learners arriving after the register has closed will be recorded using the appropriate unauthorised late code unless an agreed plan or unavoidable cause applies. Persistent lateness will lead to discussion with the learner and family to understand barriers and agree support.

5.6 Children missing education and safeguarding

Where a learner's whereabouts are unknown, Learning4life-GY will follow North East Lincolnshire children missing education and safeguarding procedures. Actions may include repeated calls, contact with emergency contacts,

consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, home visits, checks with known professionals or acquaintances, and referral to the local authority and/or police where the learner may be at risk.

6. Attendance support pathway

Learning4life-GY will use a staged pathway that prioritises early support, SEND-informed assessment and partnership with families. The pathway may be accelerated where safeguarding risk, severe absence, non-engagement or rapid deterioration requires it.

Stage	Trigger	School response	Expected outcome/evidence
Universal	All learners	Clear expectations, welcoming environment, first-day response, regular attendance information, learner voice and tutor contact.	Attendance and engagement are routinely monitored.
Early help / Stage 1	Emerging concern, pattern of absence/lateness, or attendance falling from individual baseline.	Supportive conversation, ATTEND/EBBSA screening where relevant, check SEND/health barriers, agree quick adjustments and record actions.	Barriers identified and early actions reviewed.
Stage 2 attendance support meeting/contract	Absence persists, becomes persistent/severe, or support needs are complex.	Attendance contract or support plan with learner, family and relevant professionals; reasonable adjustments; referrals; review date; reintegration or transition plan if needed.	Plan is implemented and reviewed for impact.
Formalise support	Support is not working, absence continues, or parents do not engage.	Involve local authority attendance services; consider Notice to Improve, Education Supervision Order, parenting support, Early Help or social care route depending on circumstances.	Formal support is documented and monitored.
Enforcement as last resort	Unauthorised absence meets statutory thresholds and support has not succeeded or engagement is absent.	Request local authority consideration of penalty notice or prosecution in line with the national framework and local code of conduct.	Decision rests with the local authority.

7. Term-time absence, part-time timetables and alternative arrangements

The Principal may grant leave of absence only where exceptional circumstances apply. Each request will be considered individually, taking account of facts, circumstances, evidence, safeguarding and the learner's needs. Family holidays are unlikely to be authorised.

Part-time timetables must be exceptional, time-limited, regularly reviewed, agreed with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the local authority and other professionals. They must not be used to manage behaviour or as a long-

term solution. For learners with SEND or health needs, the plan must set out the intended route back to increased attendance or engagement, support to be provided, review dates and safeguarding arrangements.

Valid authorised absence may include illness, medical/dental appointments, religious observance, occupational travel by Traveller families, public examination study leave where agreed, dual registration, local authority arranged provision, EHCP or health-related arrangements, unavoidable causes, and exceptional circumstances using the correct national code.

8. Legal sanctions and national framework

Legal action is a last resort and will be considered only where appropriate, proportionate and in line with local authority procedures. The local authority decides whether to issue a penalty notice or prosecute.

- A penalty notice may be considered where there are 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10-school-week period.
- The first penalty notice is £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A second penalty notice to the same parent for the same child within three years is £160.
- A maximum of two penalty notices can be issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling three-year period; further cases may proceed to prosecution or another legal route.
- The local authority may also consider other statutory routes, including prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, Education Supervision Orders, parenting contracts or parenting orders.

9. Using attendance data and monitoring SEND progress

Attendance data will be reviewed weekly in pastoral meetings and at least half-termly by the Principal and Senior Attendance Champion. Analysis will include whole-school trends, cohorts, days, sessions, subjects, codes, punctuality, individual learners, persistent absence and severe absence. The purpose is to identify support needs, safeguarding concerns and the impact of interventions.

For SEND learners, attendance improvement will be evaluated using a progress-from-baseline model rather than judging the learner only against national percentages. This means considering:

- starting point on entry and recent trend, including previous setting attendance where known;
- number of sessions attended, punctuality and engagement in lessons or agreed provision;
- progress against the learner's attendance support plan, EHCP outcomes, reintegration plan or transition timetable;
- whether absence is authorised, unauthorised, medical, EBSA-related, SEND-related, safeguarding-related or unexplained;
- frequency and quality of contact with school and participation in agreed learning;
- impact of reasonable adjustments, therapy, pastoral support, transport, family support and multi-agency actions;
- small-step progress, such as attending one additional session per week, arriving on time, staying longer, moving from remote/contact-only engagement to on-site provision, or attending a new subject/space.

Governors will receive termly reports that include whole-school attendance information alongside context-rich SEND progress measures and case-study evidence where appropriate. Reports should avoid presenting national attendance percentages as the sole benchmark for success in an SEND setting.

10. Strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence

10.1 Attendance charter

The Learning4life-GY Attendance Charter sets out our shared commitment that attendance is everyone's responsibility and that learners missing education can be a warning sign of safeguarding need. The charter will be updated to replace a fixed 90% target with an aspirational commitment to regular attendance and measurable progress from each learner's starting point.

10.2 Communication with families

We will communicate respectfully and promptly with families, share attendance information through reviews and reports, and ensure concerns are discussed early. Communications will be supportive and specific, explaining why attendance matters while recognising the learner's circumstances and agreed support.

10.3 EBBSA-aware practice

Learning4life-GY will use the ATTEND framework and the four functions of EBBSA to understand push and pull factors affecting attendance. Staff will look for early signs such as anxiety, changes in behaviour, lateness, missed days, avoidance of particular spaces or subjects, and reduced community engagement. Support will be individualised and may include safe-base arrangements, trusted-adult plans, graded exposure, timetable adjustments, sensory/environmental adjustments, family support, therapeutic input and multi-agency planning.

10.4 Recognition and incentives

Recognition will celebrate improvement, effort and engagement as well as high attendance. For an SEND setting, rewards should avoid disadvantaging learners whose attendance is affected by disability, health or agreed part-time reintegration plans. Examples include improved attendance from baseline, attending a new session, meeting a personal punctuality target, or maintaining engagement during a difficult period.

10.5 Enrichment, bridging and transition

Learning4life-GY will use enrichment activities, breakfast/after-school/holiday opportunities where funded, bridging provision and transition timetables to rebuild belonging, confidence and routines. Plans will be co-produced with learners, families and, where appropriate, the local authority and health or social care professionals.

10.6 Wider support

Where barriers go beyond school, the pastoral team will consider Early Help, Team around the Family, social care, health, mental health, transport, youth support or local authority attendance services. Parents/carers/trusted adults will be informed unless doing so would create a safeguarding risk.

11. Roles and responsibilities

11.1 All staff

- promote a culture of belonging and regular attendance;
- notice and report concerns about absence, lateness, disengagement or welfare;
- record attendance accurately and promptly;
- listen to learners and escalate barriers to the pastoral team;
- implement reasonable adjustments and attendance support actions agreed for learners.

11.2 Governors/Scrutiny Panel

- promote the importance of attendance across policies and ethos;
- ensure leaders fulfil statutory duties;

- review and challenge attendance data, including contextual SEND progress measures;
- monitor the impact of attendance strategies and the use of formal/legal routes;
- ensure staff receive appropriate training;
- hold the Principal and Senior Attendance Champion to account.

Link governor for attendance: Chair of Governors, Claire Etheridge.

11.3 Principal and Senior Attendance Champion

- lead implementation of this policy and the Attendance Charter;
- monitor attendance data and report to governors;
- ensure attendance is considered alongside safeguarding, SEND and wellbeing;
- support staff to monitor individual learners and evaluate interventions;
- decide when to request local authority support or legal consideration.

11.4 SENCO, pastoral and safeguarding leads

- identify SEND, EBBSA, health and safeguarding barriers;
- coordinate ATTEND/EBBSA assessment and support plans;
- ensure reasonable adjustments are considered and reviewed;
- liaise with external professionals and the local authority;
- ensure children missing education procedures are followed when required.

12. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if DfE guidance, legislation, local authority procedures or school context changes. It will be approved by the board of governors at each review.

Linked policies: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Positive Behaviour Policy; Admissions Policy; SEND Policy; Supporting Learners with Medical Conditions Policy; Equality Information and Objectives; Complaints Policy.

Appendix 1: National attendance and absence codes

Category	Code	Use
Present	/ and \	Present at morning/afternoon session
Late	L	Arrived before register closed
Late after close	U	Arrived after register closed
LA provision	K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
Visit/trip	V	Educational visit or trip
Sport	P	Participating in approved sporting activity
Work experience	W	Approved work experience
Other approved activity	B	Approved educational activity off site
Regulated performance	C1	Leave for regulated performance or regulated employment abroad
Medical/dental	M	Medical or dental appointment
Interview	J1	Interview for employment or admission to another educational institution
Study leave	S	Study leave for public examinations
Non-compulsory age	X	Not required to attend
Part-time timetable	C2	Compulsory school age learner on agreed temporary part-time timetable
Dual registration	D	Dual registered at another school
Exceptional circumstances	C	Leave for exceptional circumstances
Traveller occupational	T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
Religious observance	R	Religious observance
Illness	I	Illness, not medical/dental appointment
Suspension/exclusion	E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Access arrangements	Q	Unable to attend because access arrangements not made
Transport unavailable	Y1	Transport normally provided not available
Travel disruption	Y2	Widespread disruption to travel
Part closure	Y3	Part of school premises closed
Whole closure	Y4	Whole school unexpectedly closed
Criminal detention	Y5	In criminal detention
Public health	Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Other unavoidable cause	Y7	Any other unavoidable cause
Holiday not granted	G	Holiday not granted by school
Reason not yet established	N	Reason not yet established, must be amended within five school days
Other/unknown unauthorised	O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
Prospective pupil	Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
Planned closure	#	Planned whole school closure

Appendix 2: Attendance letters

Template letters should be retained but updated so that they: refer to support first; include individual baseline/progress where helpful; avoid relying only on whole-school or national percentages; refer to the Notice to Improve stage before penalty notice where required by the local authority; and distinguish authorised, unauthorised, medical and SEND/EBBSA-related absence. Letters should be checked against the local authority code of conduct before use.

Stage 1 – Supporting Good School Attendance

This letter can be used as an initial communication to parents when concerns about attendance are first spotted.

Dear **Parent Name**

Supporting Good School Attendance

Pupil Name (DOB)

I am writing to you in relation to your **pupil name**'s attendance, which is currently **0.0** per cent. They have been absent for **0** sessions,

- **0** of these absences are marked as authorised
- **0** of these absences are marked as unauthorised absences.

We work with pupils and parents to understand and overcome barriers to attendance and would welcome a conversation with you so we can begin to identify how we can support **pupil name** as fully as possible.

Absence from school impacts significantly on children's academic progress and wellbeing, and we know that absence from school is often a sign that additional support may be needed.

You can reach me by calling the school on **phone number** to arrange a convenient time to talk.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

Stage 2 – Attendance Support Meeting

Use this letter where initial attempts to improve attendance have not been successful and a more structured approach is needed. Schools should consider forming an attendance support plan early to ensure parents are engaged in a structured, more formal approach to improving attendance.

Dear **Parent Name**

Invitation to an Attendance Support Meeting

Pupil name (DOB)

We are concerned that **pupil name** continues to be absent too frequently, as their attendance is now **0.0** per cent.

Each absence is recorded on your child's register, which current shows they have **0** authorised and **0** unauthorised absences.

Regular absence from school is often a sign that additional support is needed, and we would like to ensure that this is put in place to support **pupil name**'s improved attendance.

You are invited to attend an Attendance Support Meeting on **long date** at **time**.

Attendance support plans allow us to work together to identify and understand barriers to attendance and agree a plan to overcome them.

We are keen to work collaboratively with you to improve **pupil name**'s attendance and I would welcome you contacting me on **phone number**.

Please be aware, however, that unauthorised absences or non-engagement with this process may result in you being issued with a Notice to Improve or a request for support from the Local Authority being made.

I look forward to meeting you soon.

Yours sincerely

Stage 3 – Final Warning

Use this letter where attempts to improve attendance have not been successful and Formal support is now required. This will be following attempts to contact/meet with family, and where a Notice to Improve and/or Attendance Support Plan has not been successful in improving school attendance.

Dear **Parent Name**

School Attendance Concerns – Notification of request for formal attendance support from the Education Welfare Service

Pupil Name (DOB)

I am writing to you in relation to ongoing, significant concerns about **pupil name**'s attendance, which is currently **0.0** per cent.

Each absence is recorded on your child's register, which currently shows they have **0** authorised and **0** unauthorised absences.

We have attempted to engage with you through:

[Delete/edit as appropriate, consider adding any other key offers of support]

1. Attendance discussion on **long date**
2. Attendance meeting on **long date**
3. Notice to Improve, issued on **long date**
4. Attendance support plan, commenced on **long date**

Despite the above support being offered, we have not been successful in improving **pupil name**'s attendance, therefore, a request is now being made to the Education Welfare Service for Formal Attendance Support.

The Education Welfare Service will work with us to support and promote good school attendance but may consider legal action against you if **pupil name**'s attendance does not improve and further unauthorised absences occur.

While low school attendance is often a sign that additional support is needed, parents are required by law to ensure their child attends school regularly. Failing to do so is an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Legal action is always a last resort in relation to poor school attendance and may be prevented by us working together to improve attendance and ensure the right support is in place for **pupil name**.

Yours sincerely

Enc. Registration Certificate

Appendix 3: Revised Attendance Charter

- Every day at Learning4life-GY matters.
- Attendance is everyone's responsibility and missing education can be a safeguarding warning sign.
- We have high expectations for all learners and recognise progress from each learner's starting point.
- We will not judge SEND learners only against national attendance percentages; we will monitor individual progress, engagement and the impact of support.
- We will work with learners, parents/carers/trusted adults and professionals to understand and reduce barriers.
- We will use data to target support quickly and evaluate whether interventions are working.
- We will remain professionally curious about any indicator that a learner may need support to attend.
- We will celebrate improved attendance, punctuality, engagement and belonging.
- We will use formal or legal routes only where appropriate, proportionate and in line with local authority procedures.
- We want all learners to thrive in school and in their wider lives.

Appendix 4: Sources considered in this review

- Department for Education: Working together to improve school attendance (statutory guidance, effective from August 2024).
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- Department for Education: Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance.
- Department for Education: Children missing education guidance.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and school inspection handbook, including expectations for leaders to understand absence, act on patterns and support vulnerable pupils.
- Equality Act 2010 and SEND Code of Practice principles for reasonable adjustments and suitable education.