Next Steps Education Ltd Attendance Statement of Intent and Procedures

Date of Adoption September 2025

Review Due Date September 2026

Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

Introduction

The national average for attendance is 64.7% in alternate provision. Next Steps Education Ltd average attendance is 74.2% (Academic Year 24-25).

Mobility is high with pupils spending varying amounts of time accessing our provision, dependent on their individual needs.

Any provision's education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and the educational provision's staff should work in partnership to make education a success and to ensure that all children have full and equal access to all that our provision has to offer.

As an alternative learning provision, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum attendance and that any barriers that prevent this are identified and removed promptly. As parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive to our educational provision and return home safely.

Next Steps Education Ltd complete a register of attendance for lessons provided by tutors / learning mentors. On each occasion they record whether a student has:

- attended
- did not attend due to illness
- did not attend due to unknown circumstances
- did not attend due to the session being cancelled in advance by the parents or the tutor / learning mentor

The reason for non-attendance is recorded.

Relevant parties (carer/ Local Authority client/ school) are informed of student attendance in line with DfE non-school voluntary standards.

Attendance and Safeguarding Students

Next Steps Education Ltd takes the safeguarding of students very seriously. The attendance of students is expected at booked sessions and reported to the local authority/ school on a regular basis.

Expectations

We expect all students will:

- Attend sessions every day they are expected to do so.
- Attend the session within 20 minutes of the start time, unless informed otherwise by a parent/ carer.

We expect that all parents and carers will:

- Ensure regular provision attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that their child attends the session within 20 minutes of the start time and is prepared for the session.
- Ensure that they contact Next Steps Education Ltd on each day of absence or if known in advance; whenever their child is unable to attend the provision.
- Aim to support their child's attendance through ensuring that sessions take priority.

Examples of where education takes priority and does not take priority are given below:

Education DOES NOT take priority	Education DOES take priority
Genuine illness 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 Oversleeping due to a late night Looking after other children / other family members Appointments for other family members

- Contact Next Steps Education Ltd promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from the provision.
- Notify Next Steps Education Ltd of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- Notify Next Steps Education Ltd immediately of any changes to contact details.

Parents/Carers and students can expect Next Steps Education Ltd will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- Provide a safe learning environment.
- Provide a sympathetic response to any child or parent's concerns.
- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance and monitor individual child's attendance.
- Contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.
- Regularly inform the student's 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 home school to monitor and support school attendance.
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to local authority officers.

We expect that all tutors / mentors will:

- Inform us within 20 minutes if a student has not attended a session without prior knowledge.
- When cancelling a lesson due to non-attendance, record the reason for absence.
- Cancel and charge for a lesson where a reason for absence IS NOT provided 72 hours before.
- Cancel (and NOT charge) for a lesson where a reason for absence IS provided at least 72 hours before.

Punctuality

We understand that arriving at sessions can be tricky. We expect that a student will arrive within 20 minutes of the session start time.

Students leaving during a session

Whenever possible, parents/carers should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of their session times.

Parents/carers are requested to confirm by email or phone call, the reason for any planned absence.

If a pupil leaves the premises without permission, their parents/carers will be contacted. Should the school be unable to make contact with the family, it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the pupils as a missing person.

All students, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Next Steps Education Ltd works with students' schools, families and the local authority to ensure this is achieved through their provision of alternative education and learning.

Attendance procedures

Where a student does not attend a session, the following steps are taken:

- We ask that parents give us as much notice as they are able to, either by email to hello@nextstepseducation.org or by phone to 0330 460 4650
- When a student unexpectedly does not attend, we ask that tutors call the office or use their students' Microsoft Team to securely let us know within 20 minutes of the non-attendance
- The office team will follow up any non-attendance in a timely manner by contacting the parent to confirm the student's whereabouts and contacting the school/ local authority to advise of the non-attendance
- Where a student is repeatedly absent or their absence begins to form a pattern, Next Steps Education Ltd will confer with the commissioner and review provision. Next Steps Education Ltd aspire to offer flexibility of venue, tutor, session times and other variables to support the student with engagement