



# New Way Tuition

## Attendance Policy

**Written by:** Managing Director, Mandy Ward on 6th January 2025

**To be reviewed:** January 2026

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## Attendance Policy

New Way Tuition was established to provide a high-quality, alternative education provision for children who, for various reasons, are unable to access the mainstream school environment. In line with its commitment to supporting children and young people, New Way Tuition works closely with parents, carers, and other educational services to deliver tailored education that meets the specific needs of each learner.

This policy is written to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and guidance outlined in the **Education Act 1996, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023**, and the **Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (January 2013)**. It reflects New Way Tuition's dedication to fostering attendance, safeguarding, and engagement while supporting the reintegration of learners into mainstream settings where appropriate.

## Recording Attendance

- Tutors must pre-plan all lessons before sessions.
- Tutors are expected to arrive on time. If late, they must inform their Lead Tutor with the reason.
- Attendance must be confirmed in the Attendance WhatsApp group within 15 minutes of the session start.
- Reasons for any absences must also be provided and received from an adult /professional responsible for the student.
- If a pupil is absent for three days, a welfare check at their home is required.
- When conducting a welfare check on day three, the tutor must take the attendance letter to the home, if there is no answer, the letter must be posted through the door. Report this information on the WhatsApp group and to your Lead/Area Learning Manager. Continue to visit the student unannounced each day until a welfare check is carried out where you see the student in person and update your Lead/ Area Learning Manager and report this information on the WhatsApp group each day.
- Do not contact parents/carers regarding a child's health unless directed.
- Assume sessions are on if no contact is made.

## Valid Reasons for Authorised Absence

The following are considered valid reasons for authorised absence:

- **Illness and Medical/Dental Appointments:** Parents/carers should provide notice and, where possible, arrange appointments outside of scheduled sessions.
- **Religious Observance:** Absence for religious observance is authorised only when the day is exclusively set apart by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. Where necessary, New Way Tuition will seek confirmation from the relevant religious body.

### Attendance Expectations

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for a child's educational progress. During local authority term dates, attendance is expected unless absence is unavoidable. Parents and carers must ensure their child's attendance, as required under the **Education Act 1996**. Unauthorised absences may result in referral to the Local Authority.

- **Initial Sessions:** New Way Tuition provides a minimum of two hours per day to establish structure and routines.
- **Ongoing Review:** Session length and frequency will be reviewed and adapted to the child's evolving needs.

### Attendance Recording

- For children not on roll with a school, New Way Tuition will record attendance and maintain records in compliance with **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**.
- If the child remains on roll at a school, attendance will be tracked and reported to the school and other agencies as required.

If attendance becomes a concern, New Way Tuition will provide support to address barriers to attendance and ensure early intervention.

### Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

New Way Tuition adheres to the same criteria as schools for categorising absences:

- **Authorised Absences** include illness, unavoidable medical appointments, or emergencies.
- **Unauthorised Absences** are those not deemed reasonable, such as unauthorised holidays. Persistent unauthorised absences may lead to formal intervention by the Local Authority.

## Absence Procedures

Parents and carers are required to:

- Contact Mandy Ward (safeguarding lead) or the child's tutor by 8:30 am on the first day of absence via telephone (07985686992 or tutor's contact number). Voicemail or text is acceptable if calls cannot be answered.
- Notify New Way Tuition daily for ongoing absences.
- Engage in discussions with New Way Tuition and the referring agency if attendance deteriorates. Persistent absences will be escalated to the Local Authority for formal intervention, including School Attendance Meetings.

## Roles and Responsibilities

New Way Tuition recognises its significant role in promoting attendance through the following responsibilities:

- Sensitivity to the needs of the child and their family, acknowledging individual circumstances.
- Differentiated teaching to suit the child's academic and emotional needs.
- Regular monitoring and reporting on the child's progress to stakeholders.
- Collaboration with external agencies, including attendance at review and safeguarding meetings.
- Encouraging the child's voice and participation in decisions about their education.
- Designing and supporting reintegration programmes into mainstream schools where appropriate.
- Safeguarding responsibilities, including adherence to statutory safeguarding guidance.
- If a student is consistently absent, the lead will arrange a meeting with the parents or guardians to discuss alternative solutions, such as attending lessons online or scheduling at a different time, and work collaboratively to find the most suitable arrangement.

## Factors Influencing Attendance and Engagement

New Way Tuition acknowledges that attendance and engagement are impacted by:

- **Trust and safety:** Building a trusting relationship is critical for creating a safe learning environment.

- **Mental wellbeing:** Regular reviews of attendance and engagement are undertaken to address challenges related to mental health or external factors.
- **Self-esteem:** Strengthening the child's confidence and sense of worth is foundational to promoting educational engagement.

## Welfare Checks for Absence

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all learners, New Way Tuition requires welfare checks to be conducted for any student absent for more than three consecutive days without sufficient explanation. This policy aligns with safeguarding principles and statutory guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children*.

If working in Essex, you must make contact with your student on a daily basis and then on the third day of absence you will be required to post an attendance letter through the student's home address.

## Procedure for Welfare Checks

### Initial Contact Attempt

- On the first day of unexplained absence, the parent/carer must notify New Way Tuition by 8:30 am. If no notification is received, the tutor or safeguarding lead will attempt to contact the parent/carer via all available contact methods.
- Follow-up attempts will be made on the second and third days if contact remains unsuccessful.

### Escalation on the Third Day

New Way Tuition prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all students. If a student is absent for three consecutive days without valid explanation or contact, the following welfare check procedures must be initiated to ensure the student's safety.

### Procedure for Welfare Checks

#### Escalation

- **Step 1:** The tutor will escalate the absence to their lead. The lead will then inform the Safeguarding Lead, Mandy Ward, of the unexplained absence.
- The Safeguarding Lead will oversee and support the welfare check process.

#### Initial Welfare Check

- **Step 2:** The tutor must personally attempt a welfare check to confirm the student's safety. This requires:
  - Either seeing the student in person or hearing the student's voice to verify their wellbeing.
  - If direct contact is established, the tutor must document the interaction and report the outcome to the Safeguarding Lead.

### **Home Visit and Attendance Letter**

- **Step 3:** If contact with the student is still not established, the following steps must be taken:
  - A home visit may be conducted by the tutor or an authorised representative. If no one is available at the home, an **attendance letter** must be posted.
  - The letter will instruct the parent/guardian to contact New Way Tuition immediately to explain the absence.
  - A welfare check via phone will be arranged once the parent/guardian responds to the attendance letter.

### **Escalation if No Contact is Made**

If, after the above steps, there is still no contact or confirmation of the student's safety:

- The Safeguarding Lead will escalate the case to external agencies, including:
  - Children Missing Education (CME) services.
  - The Local Authority Safeguarding Team.
  - The police, if there are immediate concerns about the child's safety or welfare.

### **Documentation**

- All actions taken during the welfare check process must be logged in the student's attendance and safeguarding records, including:
  - Attempts to contact the parent/guardian.
  - Details of any welfare check conducted.
  - Copies of attendance letters sent.
  - Any follow-up actions or outcomes.

### **Follow-Up Support**

- Once contact is re-established, New Way Tuition will work with the student, their family, and referring agencies to address the reasons for absence and provide any necessary support.

### **Referral to External Agencies**

- If the student's location or welfare remains unknown after reasonable attempts, New Way Tuition will refer the case to the appropriate external agencies, such as:
  - Children Missing Education (CME) services.
  - The Local Authority Safeguarding Team.
  - The police, if immediate concerns for the child's safety are identified.

### **Documentation and Reporting**

- All contact attempts, welfare checks, and referrals must be documented in the child's attendance and safeguarding record.
- New Way Tuition will notify the referring school or agency of any welfare concerns and actions taken.

### **Follow-Up Support**

- Following a welfare check, the Safeguarding Lead and the Tutor will work with the child, family, and any relevant agencies to address barriers to attendance. This may include adjusting the education plan, offering mental health support, or addressing other underlying challenges.

## **Session-Specific Procedures**

### **Home-Based Sessions**

- Tutors will wait for 10 minutes after the agreed start time.
- If there is no response, tutors will contact the parent/carer and wait locally for a further 15 minutes.
- If no contact is made, the referring agency will be notified.

Unexplained absences exceeding three days will be referred to Children Missing Education and, if necessary, reported to the police.

### **Community Setting-Based Sessions**



- If no contact is made within 15 minutes of the session start time, the tutor will attempt to reach the parent/carer via all provided contact numbers.
- If the child's location remains unknown, a home visit will be conducted.

Unresolved cases will be escalated to the referring agency and reported as per safeguarding procedures. Please refer to the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** for full guidance.

### **Punctuality**

Punctuality reflects mutual respect and commitment. While New Way Tuition recognises challenges in engaging children in alternative provision, consistent communication and gradual encouragement are key. Persistent lateness will be addressed through:

- Recording lateness and reasons for delays.
- Including attendance and punctuality in weekly reports to referrers.
- Adjusting engagement plans, if necessary, to support timely attendance.

Please refer to the **Behaviour Policy** for full guidance.

### **Attendance and the Law**

There is no longer any entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school".

The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** were amended in September 2013. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that education institutes may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

New Way Tuition believes that a leave of absence should not be taken unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the Local Authority, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. We will consult the referring school/agency about any intentions for a leave of absence.

### **Compliance with UK Guidelines**

This policy aligns with:

- **Education Act 1996**
- **Children and Families Act 2014**
- **Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (January 2013)**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018**

It reflects best practices and statutory requirements for Alternative Providers, ensuring that attendance policies are rigorous, supportive, and compliant with UK legislation.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislative changes or organisational needs require it.

**Author:** Mandy Ward

**Date:** 6th January 2026