



Venture
Learning

Attendance Policy

Venture Learning

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Introduction

This policy is set out in accordance with the expectations for schools laid out in the DfE guidance *Working together to improve school attendance August 2024*:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and,
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

It is acknowledged that as an alternative provision, Venture Learning will only be responsible for the attendance of the pupil to the agreed number of sessions as contracted by the pupil's commissioning school or local authority. The responsibility for ensuring any additional sessions to meet the requirements of a full-time education will remain with the contracting school.

This policy, in conjunction with the Home School Agreement, lays out the expectations for students and parents to promote regular attendance, as well as Venture Learning's procedures for monitoring attendance and addressing absence.



Key Staff and Contacts

Provision Based Contacts

Name	Role
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1. Rationale

At Venture Learning, we aim to change young people's perceptions of education. We can achieve this vision for our students most effectively when they maintain high levels of attendance.

We recognise that our students will have missed learning opportunities and may have spent time out of education before they arrive with us. Statistics across educational provisions show that regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically. We are committed to ensuring that our students have access to the education they need to bridge the gaps in their learning and prepare them for their next steps. It is vital that our young people attend every session, on time, to take full advantage of the educational opportunities we offer.

Regular attenders find the routines, relationships and expectations of education easier to cope with. The attendance of our young people underpins the work we do to improve their engagement with education. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve 100% attendance for every student. The routines young people develop around attendance and punctuality at Venture Learning will promote their success beyond their time with us: whether reintegrating into a mainstream school or pursuing further education to support the achievement of their goals.

Staff and parents share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent attendance and punctuality for all. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

2. Commissioning Schools.

Students' attendance is ultimately the responsibility of the school at which the child is registered. Venture Learning may be used as a part-time provider and referring schools may choose to source additional providers to meet a child's requisite hours of education. The school is overseeing the child's whole educational package and will be required to collate their attendance data and address significant issues.

Venture Learning will support schools by promoting students' regular attendance to its sessions and communicating a child's attendance or absence promptly to the referring school.

3. Aims and Objectives.

- To continue to raise levels of achievement and participation by maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- To keep an accurate and up to date record of attendance.
- To inform parents/carers of punctuality and attendance issues.
- To identify the causes of non-attendance and act upon them.
- To ensure all staff understand their roles in the monitoring and recording of attendance.
- To maintain and improve attendance throughout the school through rewarding and target setting.
- To monitor and evaluate the processes on a regular basis.
- To give clear information on expected levels of attendance.



Section 3: Attendance Legislation

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the parent is responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special needs the child may have. This can be regular attendance at school or by education otherwise.

If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at school, then the parent is guilty of an offence under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996.

Compulsory school age is defined as beginning from age five. A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday in June in the school year that they reach sixteen.

Venture Learning will support the issue of a penalty notice under section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act which may be considered by our commissioners in cases where a student is absent from the school and the absence is unauthorised.

4. Reporting Student Absence

All parents should report their child absent on the first day and all subsequent days by contacting Ms Waddington at Venture Learning, before the start of the school day, on: **07554195884** or by emailing: **gemma.waddington@venturelearning.co.uk**

A reason for absence should be given along with an indication of the anticipated length of absence. Where possible, medical evidence should be provided.

Absences in excess of 3 days, where no contact has been received from parents will generate a communication from the school with potentially a follow up home visit.

5. First Day Call

This school operates a "first day call" system. This will mean that all parents can expect to be contacted on the first day of any absence if the school has not been previously informed, via telephone, text message or email.

Where contact has been attempted but no reply is received and absence continues, further action will be taken, including:

- A home visit.
- Following of the "10 day" protocol.

6. Term-time Holidays and other requests for Leave of Absence

High attainment is reliant on good attendance. Term-time holidays will have a significant impact on achievement and progress, and, therefore, our position is to support our commissioning schools not to authorise any, other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Each commissioning schools have their own individual policies with regards



to term time holidays and the decision to approve the absence in ultimately theirs. The fundamental principles that schools define exceptional are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. By unavoidable, it means an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) 2006 regulations clarify that schools may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Schools should determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. In these circumstances, an application must be made in writing 4 weeks prior to the leave of absence, with appropriate evidence, to the Head teacher of Venture Learning and the Head teacher of the commissioning school in advance of booking the intended holiday. The Head teacher will respond with a decision in writing within one working week. You may be issued with a fixed penalty notice for a holiday taken during term time, without the head teacher's permission.

7. The 10 Day Rule

Students who have failed to attend school for 10 days will have been subject to the following agreed protocol:

1. Attendance Officer will inform the commissioners at start of the process.
2. Attendance Officer will liaise with external agencies, (where appropriate) with student details, nature of the problem and evidence of school contact.
3. The Attendance Officer will attempt to contact the student, making a home visit where necessary.
4. If a child has a continued period of unexplained absence, we will complete a home visit within 10 days for all students. If the matter remains unresolved at this point, we will support the commissioners with referring the case to the local authority children missing education team and relevant support agencies within 10 days from the first day of absence. This referral may be done earlier if safeguarding concerns are identified.
5. For a student who is subject to a child protection plan we will notify children's social care if there is an unexplained absence of after 3 days of absence and will undertake a home visit by day 5.
6. Students will be reported as "child missing from education" and further welfare services will become involved as required on a case-by-case basis.

8. Punctuality

Venture Learning opens to students each day at 9.15am and students are expected to arrive on site no later than 9.45am to be ready for the start of period 1. If a student arrives after 9.45am, they will be marked as late. If a student arrives after registers close, without a reasonable explanation, the U code will be issued, which will count as an unauthorised absence.

9. What will we do when attendance is a concern?

Even when there are legitimate reasons for absences it is important that school and home work together to improve attendance. When attendance drops below 96% the Attendance Officer will contact parents and carers and offer them support in helping secure good attendance for their child. If a student's attendance continues to be a concern, then the Attendance Officer may conduct home visits or involve support from other agencies,



including the Local Authority who may pursue fixed penalties and court action should attendance not improve.

10. Recording Attendance

A named member of the team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate all work relating to the promotion of regular attendance and will ensure the attendance policy is consistently applied. This person will also ensure that attendance is recorded accurately; that attendance issues are identified at an early stage; and that appropriate support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

We will record statutory roll call attendance twice daily. The AM roll call attendance will be recorded when the student arrives in school or once the register closes, 30 minutes after a student's designated start time. The PM roll call attendance is recorded within the 10 minutes of the first afternoon lesson. Attendance information is recorded securely and communicates to the commissioning schools.

11. Persistent Absence

If absence is frequent or continuous, the attendance leader will liaise with the student's commissioning school attendance officer and will discuss with parents/carers the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a student's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the student's school.

In cases of potential persistent absence and persistent absence (deemed as that below 96%) the following actions may be taken:

- Staff to discuss absence with Attendance Officer.
- Request notes for unauthorised absences-update commissioning school daily.
- Talk with parents and students regarding attendance levels dropping.
- School staff to have weekly check ins.
- School to complete home visit.
- School to consider Early Help assessment to highlight barriers to learning and offer support.
- School to develop an attendance plan with parent at a parent meeting – second letter to be sent.



Venture Learning will support commissioners with the following:

- Trigger first attendance letter for students falling within 94-96% attendance category and phone call home.
- At 90% - letter to parents advising them that EWS will be informed of their child's attendance.
- Letter to parent/s informing them that a referral has been made to EWS.
- Attendance Panel Meetings.
- EWS procedure begins

12. Working with Parents and Students

Our priority is to work in partnership with home to secure good attendance. We will only be successful when school and parents/carers work well together.

We expect the following from all our students:

- Go to bed on time to ensure a good night's sleep.
- Have a good morning routine that allows you to leave the house on time.
- Arrive on time.
- That you attend school regularly.
- Build your resilience, you can attend with a headache, period pains, stomach-ache.
- Speak to school staff if something prevents you from attending regularly.
- Ask for support at the earliest opportunity.
- Let your parent/carer or school staff know if you are being bullied.
- Let your parent/carer or school staff know if you are feeling anxious about something.
- Not ask your parent/carer for a day off.
- If you are moving schools, continue to attend your current school until you start at your new school.

We expect the following from parents

- To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- To ensure that they contact the school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever their child is unable to attend.
- To provide written evidence explaining any absence.
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check that they have done their homework.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect your child's performance or attendance at school.

13. Roles and Responsibilities of Staff.

All Staff will:

- Ensure that all students are registered accurately and report any late arrivals to the Attendance Officer.
- Promote and reward good attendance with students at all appropriate opportunities
- Liaise with the Attendance Officer on matters of attendance and punctuality



- Communicate any concerns that may account for a student's absence
- Support pupils who have been absent to engage with their learning once they are back in school.

The Attendance Officer will:

- Make first day contact (phone call or text message) with parents/carers to ascertain a reason for absence.
- Record AM roll call daily, including student attendance, and any reasons for absence or lateness.
- Update the register of any reason for absence received later in the day
- Communicate with parents/carers regularly regarding the importance of their child attending school daily.
- Continue to attempt to make contact with parents/carers if the school has not received a response by 9:45.
- Organise home visits if students are persistently absent days without a valid reason, or if a parent has not replied to daily communication.
- Identify patterns of absence amongst students and share with SLT and or the DSL if the student is in the care of the local authority or subject to CIN or CP plans.
- Identify students that reach 'attendance trigger points' and send formal notification letters to parents/carers regarding the impact of poor attendance.

SLT will:

- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of attendance processes at the school.
- Meet with students and families where attendance is a significant concern.

Head Teacher will:

- Meet regularly with key Attendance personnel to ensure the school is working effectively to improve the attendance of all students.

14. Rewards Strategies

There are a number of rewards put in place to positively encourage outstanding attendance. These may include but are not limited to:

- Students receive Golden Tickets each week for good and outstanding attendance.
- Termly 100% positive attendance certificates sent home and celebrated in school.
- Short term rewards.
- Praise phone call.
- Praise letter for improved attendance.

15. Operation of the Policy

Venture Learning is committed to working collaboratively with parents and students to promote good attendance. The Home School Agreement contains details of how we will together and clearly lays out our expectations for regular attendance from students and what parents/carers will need to do to ensure their child achieves this.

To help us all focus on this Venture Learning will:

- Regularly update information on all matters related to attendance on our website
- Report to parents/carers on students' attendance and punctuality rate and how this relates to their attainment during progress and review meetings



- Ensure that students are made aware of their own attendance and punctuality rate
- Celebrate and reward good or improving attendance
- Set attendance targets and share these with students and parents, keeping them informed of progress towards meeting these.

16. Types of Absence

Students are expected to attend Venture Learning for every agreed session, unless there is an exceptional reason for their absence.

There are two main categories of absence:

- **Authorised absence:** Venture Learning has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for the absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.
- **Unauthorised absence:** Venture Learning has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school after a parent's request. This includes:
 - Parents giving their children permission to miss sessions unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
 - Truancy for all or part of a session
 - Absences which have not been explained

An authorised absence can be changed to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated with parents/carers.

The decision as to whether an absence is authorised will ultimately rest with the school at which the child is on roll. Venture Learning will liaise with the school to ensure that both agencies have all the relevant information about a student's attendance.

17. Lateness

Students who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Ongoing and repeated lateness can lead to unauthorised absences which will affect the student's overall attendance.

Parents/carers of students who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If the problem persists Venture Learning will call a meeting with the young person's school and parents/carers to discuss the problem and agree an improvement plan.

18. Legal Action for Non-attendance

Parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

Attendance to agreed sessions with Venture Learning will be recorded as 'educated off-site' at the student's school. However, non-attendance of Venture Learning sessions will have the same legal ramifications as non-attendance of school.



The school at which the child is registered will be responsible for taking legal action for non-attendance. Venture Learning will support this process by communicating attendance data with the schools promptly and accurately.

Parents/carers should consult the school's attendance policy for details of the legal measures for tackling non-attendance if they are concerned that they are at risk of prosecution.

Section 3: Useful information

National Guidance

Guidance for schools and local authorities from the DfE to help maintain high levels of school attendance: [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)

Guidance on parental responsibility and school's role in enforcing this:

[Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/summary-table-of-responsibilities-for-school-attendance)

Statutory guidance for identifying children missing education:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

Local Guidance

Nottinghamshire County Council's advice for parents:

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/school-discipline-and-exclusions/attendance-absence-truancy>

Nottingham City Council's advice for parents: [School Attendance - Nottingham City Council](https://www.nottinghamcitycouncil.gov.uk/education/school-attendance)

Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board's guidance for children missing education:

http://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com/p_ch_miss_care_home_ed.html?printMe.x=0&printMe.y=0#agency_roles

