

Attendance and Engagement Policy

Document control	Detail
Policy title	Attendance and Engagement Policy
Version	3.1
Status	Approved for use
Policy owner	Hannah Lewis
Approved by	Nathan Warr
Applies to	Directors, employees, tutors, associate tutors, subcontractors, volunteers and any person working on behalf of PACE Education Pathways
Date approved	21/08/2026
Next review date	12 months from approval, or earlier where a review trigger applies
Review trigger	Earlier review required if statutory guidance changes, the service model changes, or a serious incident, complaint, audit finding or safeguarding concern identifies a need for review.
Linked documents	Attendance Register and Missed Session Log; Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Data Protection and UK GDPR Policy; Incident Reporting Policy; Safeguarding Concern Form; Lone Working and Home Visit Policy; Transport and Travel Policy; Student Review; Student Progress Review and Commissioner Report; Learning Roadmap; Pupil Risk Assessment; Staff Supervision and Case Review Policy.

Governance note

Attendance and engagement records form part of PACE safeguarding oversight. Where non-attendance, refusal to engage, unexplained absence or missed contact creates concern for a young person's welfare, the matter must be escalated in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and recorded using the relevant attendance and safeguarding systems.

1. Purpose

PACE records attendance and engagement for every agreed session. Accurate records help commissioners understand whether provision is being delivered, whether pupils are engaging, and whether absence may indicate safeguarding, welfare or suitability concerns.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all PACE sessions, including in-person, online, school-based, home-based and community-based provision.

3. Principles

- Attendance is a safeguarding issue as well as an education measure.
- Missed sessions must be recorded and reported promptly.
- Persistent non-attendance or non-engagement should trigger review, not simply repeat invoicing or continuation without challenge.
- Attendance records must be accurate, timely and capable of being shared with commissioners.

4. Attendance categories

Code	Meaning	Use
P	Present	Pupil attended and engaged for the planned session or agreed adjusted session.
L	Late	Pupil attended late; record minutes late and impact.
A	Absent - reason known	Parent/carer/commissioner gave a reason.
U	Absent - reason unknown	No reason known at time of session.
C	Cancelled by commissioner/parent	Session cancelled in line with agreed arrangement.
S	Stopped early	Session ended early due to pupil need, behaviour, safety or agreed adjustment.
N	Not safe to deliver	Session could not take place because location or circumstances were unsafe.

5. Recording expectations

- Attendance must be recorded on DC Pro within 20 minutes of the scheduled session start time, or as soon as reasonably practicable where a genuine operational, safeguarding or safety reason prevents immediate recording.
- The record should include date, start and finish time, location, staff member, attendance code, brief engagement comment and any follow-up required.
- Where a pupil attends but does not meaningfully engage, this should be recorded as an engagement concern rather than hidden within a simple present mark.
-

5.1 DC Pro and MyConcern recording

Engagement concerns may include non-verbal refusal, distress, repeated avoidance, inability to access work, significant withdrawal, dysregulation, unsafe behaviour, or any pattern suggesting that the current provision may need review.

The 20-minute recording expectation is intended to support safeguarding, commissioner assurance and accurate real-time oversight. It does not override immediate safety action. If a pupil is missing, unsafe, distressed or a safeguarding concern is present, staff must take the necessary safety and safeguarding action first, then complete the DC Pro/MyConcern records as soon as reasonably practicable.

6. Missed session process

If a pupil is absent without a known reason, staff should follow the agreed contact and escalation process. The level of urgency should reflect the pupil risk assessment, age, vulnerability, history of missing episodes, safeguarding concerns and commissioner requirements.

1. Attempt agreed contact with parent/carer or responsible adult where appropriate.
2. Notify the DSL if absence is unexplained or concerning.
3. Notify the commissioner/school according to agreed timescales, normally the same day.
4. Record actions taken and responses received.
5. Escalate immediately if there is reason to believe the child may be at risk of harm.

7. Engagement monitoring

Engagement should be reviewed as part of progress reporting. Signs of concern may include repeated refusal, anxiety, distress, dysregulation, withdrawal, avoidance, unsafe behaviour, reduced communication, or inability to access the planned learning. Engagement concerns must be recorded on MyConcern as soon as reasonably practicable. Where the concern also indicates possible safeguarding risk, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy must be followed and the DSL informed.

8. Reporting to commissioners

Commissioners should receive attendance information in the agreed format and frequency. Where provision is funded by a local authority or school, missed sessions, repeated cancellation, safeguarding concerns and significant engagement issues should not be held back until a routine progress report.

9. Safeguarding escalation

Absence may indicate neglect, exploitation, domestic abuse, mental health crisis, missing episode, family breakdown or other welfare concerns. Staff must report patterns or concerning absence to the DSL. The DSL will decide whether to contact the commissioner, school safeguarding lead, children social care or emergency services.

10. Data protection

Attendance records on DC Pro and engagement records on MyConcern are pupil records and must be stored securely, shared only where lawful and relevant, and retained in line with the Data Protection and UK GDPR Policy. Staff must not create duplicate informal systems unless authorised by the Education Lead or Governance Lead.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and after any attendance-related safeguarding concern, commissioner audit or serious incident.

Appendix A - Missed session record fields

- Pupil name
- Date and time

- Planned location/session type
- Attendance code
- Known reason, if any
- Contacts attempted
- Commissioner notified
- DSL notified
- Safeguarding action required
- Follow-up action and owner

DC Pro record completed within 20 minutes: Yes / No / Not reasonably practicable

If not completed within 20 minutes, reason for delay

MyConcern engagement concern required: Yes / No

MyConcern reference number or confirmation of entry

Staff acknowledgement

I confirm that I have read and understood the Attendance and Engagement Policy. I understand my responsibilities and agree to follow the policy and associated procedures. I will raise any questions, concerns, gaps in understanding or changes in suitability with the policy owner without delay.

Name	
Role	
Signature	
Date	

12. Monitoring and assurance

The Education Lead / DSL and Governance Lead will review attendance, unexplained absence, repeated cancellation, engagement concerns and commissioner escalation at appropriate intervals. Patterns that indicate safeguarding, suitability, service quality or placement risk must trigger review of the pupil plan, risk assessment or commissioned arrangements.