

CLEARSPACE LEARNING LTD

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Policy Information	Details
Company Registration	15950890
Policy Owner	Stuart Knox (Director)
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Review Date	October 2027
Approved by	Stuart Knox, Director

1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Our Commitment

Clearspace Learning is committed to maximising learning opportunities for every child in our care. We recognise that excellent attendance is fundamental to educational progress, wellbeing, and successful outcomes.

We understand that the neurodivergent and dual exceptional children we work with may face additional barriers to attendance, including anxiety, sensory sensitivities, medical needs, and previous negative educational experiences. Our approach to attendance is trauma-informed, flexible, and individualised, while maintaining high expectations and clear accountability.

1.2 Purpose

This policy sets out:

- Our expectations for attendance and punctuality
- How we monitor and record attendance
- Our approach to supporting children with attendance difficulties
- Procedures for reporting and responding to absence
- How we work with parents, schools, and local authorities

1.3 Scope

This policy applies to:

- All children and young people accessing Clearspace Learning provision
- Parents and carers of children in our care
- Stuart Knox and any future staff/tutors
- Commissioning schools and local authorities

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDANCE

2.1 Why Attendance Matters

For Children:

- Maximises learning time and educational progress
- Builds routine, structure, and positive habits
- Develops relationships and trust with staff
- Supports emotional regulation and wellbeing
- Prepares for future education, training, or employment

For Neurodivergent Children Specifically:

- Consistency helps manage anxiety and builds security
- Regular attendance establishes safe, predictable routines

- Frequent sessions support relationship-building (essential for trauma-informed practice)
- Attendance reinforces that Clearspace is a "safe space"
- Regular engagement prevents regression in progress

For Parents:

- Provides reliable respite and support
- Demonstrates child's engagement with education
- Evidence of provision for EHCP reviews
- Supports parental work or other commitments

For Schools/LAs:

- Evidence that commissioned provision is being accessed
- Data for monitoring and accountability
- Informs safeguarding and welfare oversight
- Supports reviews and planning

2.2 Our Expectations

We expect:

- Children to attend all scheduled sessions unless there is a valid reason for absence
- Parents/carers to inform us of absence before the session start time
- Punctuality to scheduled session times (recognising some flexibility may be needed)
- Open communication about attendance barriers
- Partnership working to address attendance difficulties

We understand:

- Neurodivergent children may have "bad days" where attendance is genuinely not possible
- Anxiety may prevent attendance on some occasions
- Medical appointments and health needs may affect attendance
- Family circumstances can create barriers
- Previous educational trauma may require gradual reintegration

We commit to:

- Flexible, individualised approaches to supporting attendance
- Working in partnership with families to overcome barriers
- Clear, consistent communication
- Monitoring attendance and intervening early when concerns arise
- Never using punitive approaches that increase anxiety

3. TYPES OF ABSENCE

3.1 Authorised Absence

An absence is authorised when:

Medical Reasons:

- Child is genuinely unwell (illness, injury)
- Medical appointments that cannot be scheduled outside session times
- Mental health difficulties preventing attendance
- COVID-19 or infectious illness requiring isolation

Family Circumstances:

- Bereavement or family emergency
- Religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances (pre-agreed with Stuart Knox)

Educational Reasons:

- Attending mainstream school (for dual-roll students)
- Educational assessments or meetings (EHCP reviews, EP assessments)
- Planned educational visits with mainstream school

Other Valid Reasons:

- Extreme weather making travel unsafe
- Transport failure beyond family's control
- Home circumstances making attendance impossible (e.g., no heating, family crisis)

How to Request Authorised Absence:

- Contact Stuart Knox in advance where possible
- Phone: 07986 622049 or Email: info@clearspacelearning.com
- Provide brief explanation of reason
- Medical evidence may be requested for frequent absence

3.2 Unauthorised Absence

An absence is unauthorised when:

Preventable Circumstances:

- Family chose not to attend without valid reason
- Overslept or forgot session
- Non-essential shopping or appointments that could be rescheduled
- Family holidays during term time (not pre-agreed)
- Child refusing to attend (without underlying anxiety/trauma reason)

No Communication:

- Parent did not inform Clearspace of absence
- No response to first-day contact attempts

Patterns of Absence:

- Repeated Monday absences without medical reason
- Pattern of absence suggesting avoidance rather than genuine need

Note: We recognise that "child refusing to attend" may indicate underlying anxiety, trauma, or other needs. We will always explore the root cause before categorising absence as unauthorised.

3.3 Medical Absence

For children with chronic health conditions or frequent medical absence:

- Individual Attendance Plan may be created
- Flexibility built into schedule
- Home learning provided during medical absence where appropriate
- Regular review with parents and commissioning school
- Medical evidence may be requested

3.4 Persistent Absence

A child is considered a persistent absentee when attendance falls below 90% over a sustained period.

Our Response:

- Early intervention meeting with parents
- Identify barriers to attendance
- Create Attendance Support Plan
- Involve commissioning school's Attendance Officer/EWO
- Consider Early Help assessment if family circumstances affecting attendance
- Escalate to commissioning LA if no improvement

4. RECORDING ATTENDANCE

4.1 Attendance Registers

Clearspace Learning maintains accurate attendance records for every session.

What We Record:

- Date of session
- Child's name

- Present (P) / Absent (A)
- If absent: Authorised (AA) or Unauthorised (UA)
- Reason for absence
- Late arrival (L) with minutes late
- Time of attendance (start and end times)

Format:

- Electronic attendance register (secure, encrypted)
- Backed up weekly
- Retained until the child's 25th birthday, in line with the Data Protection and Privacy Policy

4.2 Coding System

We use the following attendance codes (aligned with DfE guidance):

Code	Meaning	Description
P	Present	Child attended session
L	Late	Arrived after scheduled start time (counted as present)
I	Illness	Absent due to illness (authorised)
M	Medical	Medical appointment (authorised)
C	Other authorised	Other authorised circumstances (e.g., family emergency, religious observance)
E	Excluded	Temporarily suspended from provision (extremely rare)
H	Family holiday	Authorised family holiday
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Family holiday not agreed, or days in excess of those agreed (unauthorised)
N	No reason yet given	No reason yet given for absence; follow up and recode once the reason is known
O	Unauthorised absence	Other unauthorised absence
X	Not required	Student not expected (e.g., scheduled break)
#	Planned closure	Clearspace Learning closed (bank holidays, training days)

4.3 Punctuality

Expected Arrival:

- Children should arrive within 10 minutes of scheduled start time
- Flexibility understood for anxiety, traffic, transport issues

Recording Late Arrival:

- Arrivals 1-10 minutes late: Recorded as Present (P) with note
- Arrivals 11-30 minutes late: Recorded as Late (L)
- Arrivals 30+ minutes late: Recorded as Late (L), discussed with parent

Persistent Lateness:

- If child late 3+ times in a month, attendance meeting with parent
- Explore barriers (morning anxiety, transport, family routines)
- Create plan to improve punctuality
- Recognise that for some neurodivergent children, rigid timing increases anxiety

Our Flexible Approach:

- We understand sensory overload, anxiety, and executive function challenges
- We recognise some children cannot cope with rigid schedules
- We may adjust session times to match child's rhythms
- However, consistent punctuality is encouraged for building routine

5. REPORTING ABSENCE

5.1 Parent Responsibilities

Before a Session:

If your child cannot attend, please contact Stuart Knox:

- Phone: 07986 622049 (call or text)
- Email: info@clearspacelearning.com
- When: Before the session start time (or as soon as possible)

What to Tell Us:

- Child's name
- Reason for absence
- Expected duration (one session, multiple days, unsure)
- Any support needed

For Planned Absence:

- Give as much notice as possible
- Discuss rescheduling options if appropriate

5.2 First-Day Contact

If a child is absent and we have not been informed:

Within 30 minutes of session start:

- Stuart Knox will contact parent/carer by phone
- If no answer, text message sent
- If no response, email sent
- If no contact by end of session, commissioning school informed

Purpose:

- Confirm child's safety and wellbeing
- Understand reason for absence
- Offer support if needed
- Maintain communication

Safeguarding:

- If unable to contact parent and concerned about child's welfare, we will follow safeguarding procedures (Safeguarding Policy: What To Do If You Have A Concern)
- Commissioning school and/or local authority contacted immediately

6. MONITORING ATTENDANCE

6.1 Attendance Tracking

Weekly:

- Attendance percentages calculated for each child
- Patterns of absence reviewed
- Concerns identified

Monthly:

- Attendance reports generated
- Shared with commissioning schools (as set out in our contract and Privacy Policy)
- Persistent absentees identified

Termly:

- Comprehensive attendance analysis

- Trends and patterns reviewed
- Attendance data included in progress reports

6.2 Attendance Targets

Standard Target: 95%+ attendance

Attendance Thresholds:

- 95%+ = Excellent attendance (fewer than 2 absences per 10 sessions)
- 90-94% = Good attendance (monitoring continues)
- 85-89% = Concerning attendance (early intervention)
- Below 85% = Serious concern (urgent intervention, LA involvement)

Recognition:

- We recognise neurodivergent children may have complex needs affecting attendance
- Targets are individualised where appropriate
- Medical absence discounted from targets where chronic condition evidenced

6.3 Reporting

To Parents:

- Attendance updates provided informally at sessions
- Formal attendance data in termly progress reports
- Concerns raised immediately

To Schools/LAs:

- Attendance data shared monthly (or as commissioned)
- Persistent absence reported immediately
- Safeguarding concerns escalated as per procedures

7. SUPPORTING ATTENDANCE

7.1 Overcoming Barriers

We recognise many barriers to attendance for neurodivergent children:

Anxiety and Trauma:

- Previous negative school experiences
- Fear of failure or judgment
- Social anxiety
- Separation anxiety

Sensory and Regulation Needs:

- Sensory overload
- Difficulty with transitions
- Executive function challenges (getting ready, time management)

Family Circumstances:

- Parental mental health or physical health
- Financial constraints (transport costs)
- Caring responsibilities
- Chaotic home environments

Medical and Mental Health:

- Chronic illness or disability
- Mental health conditions
- Sleep difficulties
- Medication side effects

7.2 Our Approach to Supporting Attendance

Relationship-Based:

- Build trust and safety in relationship with Stuart
- Child knows they are valued and sessions are tailored to them

- "Connection before correction" - never punitive

Flexible and Creative:

- Adjust session times to suit child's needs
- Shorten sessions if stamina is an issue (building up gradually)
- Change locations if environment is barrier
- Provide transport support where possible

Communication:

- Regular check-ins with parents
- Honest discussions about barriers
- Joint problem-solving
- Celebrate attendance successes

Multi-Agency Working:

- Liaise with school, CAMHS, social care, etc.
- Coordinate support across services
- Attend TAC meetings or CIN/CP conferences

7.3 Attendance Support Plans

For children with attendance below 90%, we create an Attendance Support Plan including:

Assessment:

- What are the barriers to attendance?
- What has been tried before?
- What does the child say?
- What do parents need?

Strategies:

- Specific actions to improve attendance
- Who is responsible for each action
- Timescales
- Review dates

Support:

- What Clearspace will do
- What parents will do
- What school/LA will do
- External services involved

Monitoring:

- How often reviewed (weekly initially)
- Success criteria
- Escalation if no improvement

8. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION (CME)

8.1 Definition

A child is considered missing from education when:

- Their whereabouts are unknown
- They are not attending any educational provision
- They have not been seen for extended period

8.2 Our Responsibilities

As an alternative provision, we have a duty to inform the commissioning school/LA if:

- A child stops attending and we cannot make contact with parents
- A child is absent for 10+ consecutive school days without explanation
- A parent notifies us they are removing the child from education
- We have serious concerns about a child's whereabouts or welfare

8.3 Procedures

If Unable to Contact Family:

After 3 days of unexplained absence:

1. Multiple contact attempts (phone, text, email)
2. Contact commissioning school
3. Request welfare check via school

After 10 days of unexplained absence:

1. Formal notification to commissioning LA Children Missing Education Officer
2. Safeguarding referral if welfare concerns
3. Request home visit via appropriate services

If Parents Remove Child:

- Ask for confirmation in writing
- Inform commissioning school/LA immediately
- Offer transition support

9. LEAVE OF ABSENCE / HOLIDAYS

9.1 Term-Time Holidays

We recognise that for some families, term-time holidays are necessary due to:

- Parental work patterns
- Cost of holidays
- Family circumstances

Our Approach:

- Requests for holiday absence should be made in advance (minimum 2 weeks' notice)
- Director (Stuart Knox) will consider each request individually
- Factors: child's attendance record, timing, duration, family circumstances
- Usually authorised for up to 10 days per year if attendance otherwise good

How to Request:

- Email Stuart Knox: info@clearspacelearning.com
- Include dates, reason, any relevant context
- Decision communicated within 5 working days

9.2 Extended Leave

For extended leave (religious pilgrimage, family emergency abroad, etc.):

- Discuss with Stuart Knox as soon as possible
- Usually authorised with evidence/explanation
- Home learning may be provided
- Reintegration plan on return

10. ATTENDANCE AND SAFEGUARDING

10.1 Safeguarding Links

Poor attendance can be an indicator of:

- Neglect or abuse
- Child sexual or criminal exploitation
- Mental health difficulties
- Domestic abuse in the home
- Parental substance misuse or mental health
- Child being at risk of FGM, forced marriage, or "honour-based" abuse

10.2 When Attendance is a Safeguarding Concern

We will make a safeguarding referral if:

- Attendance drops suddenly without explanation and parents not engaging
- Child discloses they are kept home for inappropriate reasons
- We suspect child is being harmed or is at risk
- Pattern of absence raises concern (e.g., after weekends)
- Child missing and we cannot contact family

Follow: the "What To Do If You Have A Concern" section of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

11. WORKING WITH SCHOOLS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

11.1 Information Sharing

Under our contract with the commissioning school or local authority (or on safeguarding grounds), we share:

- Attendance data monthly (or as commissioned)
- Attendance concerns immediately
- Persistent absence updates
- CME notifications as legally required

11.2 Dual-Roll Students

For children on dual-roll (part-time Clearspace, part-time mainstream):

- We record attendance for our sessions only
- School records attendance for their sessions
- We share data to provide complete attendance picture
- Joint attendance meetings if concerns across both provisions

11.3 Education Welfare Officers

For persistent absence:

- We work with school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO)
- Provide attendance data and evidence of intervention
- Participate in attendance panel meetings
- Support legal proceedings if necessary (extremely rare)

12. OUR PROVISION CONTEXT

12.1 Mobile and Flexible Provision

Clearspace Learning operates differently from traditional school settings:

Mobile Locations:

- Sessions in students' homes, community venues, or mobile learning hub
- Location flexibility can support attendance (removing travel barriers)
- Sessions brought to the child where needed

One-to-One Provision:

- Highly personalised, meaning fewer generic barriers
- Sessions adapted to child's needs in the moment
- Flexibility to respond to child's state on the day

Part-Time Packages:

- Most children attend 2-10 hours per week
- Attendance percentages calculated on scheduled sessions only
- Flexibility in scheduling to suit family needs

12.2 Building Attendance Gradually

For children returning to education after absence:

Gradual Reintegration:

- May start with 1 hour per week, building to target
- Attendance targets adjusted during reintegration phase
- Success celebrated at every stage
- No pressure or punishment for slow progress

Trauma-Informed Approach:

- We understand that attending any educational provision may feel scary
- We never use attendance as a weapon or punishment
- We build the relationship first - attendance follows

13. SCHEDULED CLOSURES

13.1 When Clearspace is Closed

We are closed on:

- Bank holidays and public holidays
- Christmas break (usually 2 weeks)
- Staff training days (notified in advance)

Notice:

- Closures communicated to families minimum 4 weeks in advance
- Emergency closures (e.g., illness) communicated as soon as possible

13.2 Recording Closures

When Clearspace is closed:

- Sessions marked as "#" (planned closure) in register
- Does not affect attendance percentages
- Families are not charged (if fee-paying)

14. EXTREME WEATHER AND EMERGENCIES

14.1 Adverse Weather

In extreme weather (snow, flooding, dangerous conditions):

Decision Process:

- Stuart Knox assesses whether sessions can safely go ahead
- Considers: travel safety, venue safety, heating/facilities
- Decision made by 7:30am on day of session
- Families notified immediately by text and email

If Sessions Cancelled:

- Recorded as "#" (planned closure)
- Not counted as absence
- Make-up sessions offered where possible

If Family Cannot Travel:

- Recorded as authorised absence (C)
- No penalty for prioritising safety

14.2 Illness or Emergency Affecting Clearspace

If Stuart Knox is unwell or facing emergency:

- Families notified as soon as possible
- Sessions rescheduled
- Recorded as planned closure "#"

15. REWARDS AND RECOGNITION

15.1 Celebrating Attendance

We recognise and celebrate good attendance:

For Children:

- Verbal praise and recognition in sessions
- Progress acknowledgment in reports
- Certificates for excellent attendance (95%+)
- Understanding that for some neurodivergent children, attendance IS the achievement

For Families:

- Thank you for supporting attendance
- Recognition of effort in overcoming barriers
- Positive feedback in reports

15.2 Our Philosophy

We believe:

- Attendance is built through relationship and safety, not punishment
- Every child wants to learn and engage - barriers exist
- Our job is to remove barriers, not punish children
- For neurodivergent children, attending ANY provision may be a major achievement

We do NOT:

- Use punitive approaches
- Fine families (we are not a school)
- Use attendance to threaten or coerce
- Judge families struggling with attendance

16. COMPLAINTS

If you have concerns about how we have handled attendance matters:

Informal:

- Speak with Stuart Knox directly: 07986 622049

Formal:

- Follow our Complaints Policy
- Contact: info@clearspacelearning.com
- Written response within 20 working days

Escalation:

- Contact commissioning school or LA
- Contact Ofsted if concerns not resolved

17. MONITORING AND REVIEW

17.1 Policy Review

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually (October 2027)
- Updated in response to changes in legislation or guidance
- Shared with parents, schools, and commissioning LAs
- Published on website

17.2 Data Protection

All attendance data is held in accordance with:

- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- Our Data Protection and Privacy Policy
- Retained until the child's 25th birthday, in line with the Data Protection and Privacy Policy

18. RELATED POLICIES

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy

19. KEY CONTACTS

Clearspace Learning:

- Stuart Knox (Director): 07986 622049
- Email: info@clearspacelearning.com

To Report Absence:

- Phone: 07986 622049 (call or text)
- Email: info@clearspacelearning.com

If Safeguarding Concern:

- Follow procedures in Safeguarding Policy
- Contact local authority MASH immediately

POLICY APPROVAL

This Attendance and Punctuality Policy has been reviewed and approved by:

Stuart Knox

Director, Clearspace Learning Ltd

Date: November 2025 (updated October 2026)

Next Review Date: October 2027

Company Registration: 15950890

Contact: info@clearspacelearning.com | 07986 622049

Website: www.clearspacelearning.com

APPENDIX A: ATTENDANCE FLOWCHART

Child Absent from Session:

Has parent contacted Clearspace?

YES → Record reason → Authorised or Unauthorised? → Update register → If persistent absence, arrange meeting

NO → First-day contact (phone, text, email) → Parent responds? → YES → Record reason → Continue as above

↓ NO (after 30 mins)

→ Contact commissioning school → Safeguarding concern? → YES → Follow safeguarding procedures

↓ NO

→ Continue attempts to contact → After 3 days, escalate to school → After 10 days, CME procedures

APPENDIX B: ATTENDANCE SUPPORT PLAN TEMPLATE

Child Name: _____

Date: _____

Current Attendance: _____ %

Target Attendance: _____ %

Barriers Identified:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Strategies to Improve Attendance:

Action	Who	By When	Review
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Review Date: _____

Signatures:

- Parent: _____
- Stuart Knox: _____
- School representative (if involved): _____