Attendance Policy

Steffi Hesketh Tutoring – online one-to-one and group tutoring

Document control	**Details**
Document	Attendance Policy
Organisation	Steffi Hesketh Tutoring (sole trader), online-only tutoring, based in Southampton, Hampshire
Business address	32 Inver Way, Southampton, SO19 1SF
Policy owner	Steffi Hesketh-Spells, Owner and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Deputy DSL	Shim Amin, contactable via the business email (steffihesketht utoring@gmail.com). If neither the DSL nor the Deputy DSL can be reached, follow the alternative route in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (contact children's social care, the police or the LADO directly).
Contact	steffihesketht utoring@gmail.com, 07802 828910
Version	1.0
Effective date	November 2026
Review date	November 2027, or sooner after a serious incident, a change in law or guidance, or a change to the Hampshire contract
Applies to	Steffi Hesketh-Spells, all self-employed tutors, cover tutors and anyone else working for or on behalf of the business
Contract	Hampshire County Council SEND Alternative Provision Register Agreement CS25116 and Tutoring Call-Off Contract CS25116A

Document control	Details
Approved by	Steffi Hesketh-Spells. Signature: Steffi Hesketh-Spells, Owner and Designated Safeguarding Lead. Date approved: 9 November 2026

1. Purpose

Good attendance is essential for progress, especially for children and young people in alternative provision, many of whom have SEND, anxiety or a history of missed education. This policy explains:

- how we encourage attendance;
- how we record it;
- what we do when a pupil does not attend or does not arrive;
- when we tell parents, carers and Hampshire County Council ("the Council").

Missing education can also be a safeguarding warning sign, so this policy should be read with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. That policy adopts the principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) as good practice.

2. Scope

This policy covers all online tuition. Where Council-referred pupils have different requirements, these are marked **(Council)**. For a Council placement, the Individual Service Contract (ISC), the Call-Off Contract and any instructions from the pupil's SEN case officer come first. Private-family cancellation and payment rules in our Parent and Carer Terms do not apply to Council placements.

3. Our approach

- We treat attendance as a shared goal with the pupil, family, school (if any) and the Council.
- We look for the reasons behind non-attendance, such as anxiety, emotionally based school avoidance, health needs, sensory overload, technology or family circumstances. We do not assume a pupil "won't" attend.
- We make reasonable adjustments to help pupils attend. Examples include shorter sessions, a camera-off start, chat-only participation, a familiar tutor, a predictable routine, visual timetables, reminder messages and building up time gradually.
- We do not use punitive approaches for SEND-related non-attendance.

4. Session times **(Council)**

Council sessions are delivered during Hampshire school term time and within working hours (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) unless the ISC says otherwise. The agreed timetable, start date and weekly hours are recorded in the pupil plan and the owner tracker.

5. Recording attendance

After every session the tutor completes the session record promptly, within the timescales set by the business and the Council. The record shows:

- **Attendance code:** attended / late / left early / authorised absence (for example illness or medical appointment) / unauthorised absence / Failed Session / Missed Session / cancelled by the Council;
- the actual minutes delivered;
- the reason for any absence, if known;
- who was contacted and when;
- a brief note of engagement and any concern.

Records must show the actual time spent with the pupil. The Council may check these records against invoices (Call-Off Schedule 3, paragraph 1.1.8).

6. If a pupil does not arrive

First 10 minutes:

1. The tutor waits in the online room.
2. The tutor sends a reminder through the agreed channel (the parent or carer, or the pupil where agreed).

By 10 minutes after the start: if there is still no contact, the tutor telephones the parent or carer on the number in the pupil plan.

By 20 minutes after the start: if the pupil still has not joined and no reason is known, the tutor tells Steffi. The tutor stays available until the end of the planned session where reasonable.

Same day:

1. Steffi or the tutor contacts the parent or carer to find out why the pupil was absent and to check the pupil is safe.

2. If the pupil's whereabouts or safety is unknown, or there is any welfare concern, the DSL follows the Safeguarding Policy. This may include contacting the Council, the pupil's school and, where needed, Hampshire Children's Services or the police.

These timings are our standard for Council pupils. The pupil's risk and access check may set shorter timings, for example for a pupil at risk of exploitation or going missing.

7. Telling the Council **(Council)**

Situation	**What we do**	**Timescale**
The pupil does not attend, or the session cannot take place because the pupil is unwell (a "Failed Session")	Tell the SEN case officer and the Council via the agreed secure route with the Council, then show it on the invoice with the date, time and reason	Within 24 hours of the planned session (Call-Off Schedule 3, paragraph 1.2.2)
Pupil absence of any kind for a Council-referred pupil	Tell the SEN case officer	Within 24 hours
We cancel a session (for example tutor illness)	Tell the family and the Council, and offer a rearranged session where the ISC allows. If less than 24 hours' notice is given, it is a "Missed Session" and is not charged (Schedule 3, paragraph 1.3).	As early as possible and ideally more than 24 hours before the session
Pupil sickness absence	Record as authorised. The Council pays only for sessions in the first three days of a sickness absence (Schedule 3, paragraph 1.2).	Within 24 hours
Two consecutive unexplained absences, or a pattern of absence	Steffi contacts the family and the SEN case officer to agree a plan	Within 24 hours of the second absence
A pupil's unauthorised absence goes above 15%	Report individually to the Council and agree actions. The Council specifications	As soon as identified

Situation	What we do	Timescale
	aim for overall unauthorised absence below 10%. We also follow any attendance thresholds set by the Council.	
The pupil is not using all the hours, or needs more	Tell the Council so the ISC can be varied (Schedule 3, paragraph 1.6.1)	As soon as reasonably practicable
The pupil leaves education, moves out of area, or the placement looks likely to break down	Tell the Council (Schedule 3, paragraph 1.4; Call-Off clause 7.3)	As soon as we become aware
Welfare concern, child missing, or child missing education	Follow the Safeguarding Policy and telephone the DSL. The DSL refers to Children's Services or the police where needed and tells the Council.	Immediately

Council contact: the Council's contract manager, via the agreed secure route with the Council. The SEN case officer for each pupil is recorded in the pupil plan.

8. Improving attendance

If attendance falls below the level agreed in the pupil plan, or drops noticeably over a half-term, Steffi will:

- talk with the pupil (using their preferred communication method) and the parent or carer about barriers;
- review adjustments, timing, session length, tutor match and technology;
- agree a short attendance support plan with clear steps and a review date, shared with the Council;
- involve the pupil's school, SENCo, or health or other professionals where appropriate and agreed.

9. Late arrival, leaving early and technical problems

- **Late arrival or leaving early:** the actual minutes are recorded. Repeated lateness is discussed with the family.

- **Technical problems:** if a tutor-side problem prevents a substantial part of the session, the time is rearranged or not charged. If a pupil-side problem stops the session, the tutor tries the backup method in the risk and access check and records what happened. Repeated problems lead to a review (see the Online Tuition Policy and the Business Continuity Plan).

10. Monitoring and reporting

- Steffi checks attendance records weekly. She looks for missing records, patterns, and pupils approaching the 15% unauthorised absence level.
- Termly attendance is reported to the Council in the termly monitoring return, using the definitions the Council confirms.
- Attendance information is kept securely in line with the Privacy Notice.

11. Related policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy (including Lone Working)
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and SEND Policy
- Accessible Communication Policy
- Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan
- Complaints Policy
- 01 Pupil Plan, 04 Risk and Access, AP Pupil Tracker