

Education - Attendance

POLICY

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Policy Approver	Jo Dunn, Compliance, Regulation and Quality Director
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Policy Level	Education
Staff groups affected	All Education

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the service's established governance and quality assurance systems. Responsibility for ensuring that the policy remains compliant with legislation and regulatory frameworks sits with the Proprietor Representative and Regional Lead.

A formal review of this policy will be undertaken no later than three years from the date of approval, or sooner if changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, or operational requirements necessitate it.

The Head of Policy will support this process by identifying relevant changes in legislation, regulation, national standards and emerging best practice. The Head of Policy will also incorporate learning from inspections, audits and practice developments into future revisions whilst overseeing all proposed amendments to the universal content to ensure accuracy, consistency and compliance.

Written: April 2026

Author: Benjamin Neasom, Headteacher

Reviewed: April 2026

Next Review: April 2029

Approved by: Rob McConomy



Terminology

Our aim is to use consistent terminology throughout this policy and all supporting documentation as follows:

Term	Definition
'Establishment' or 'Site'	A generic term referring to the school/college owned by CareTech.
Learner	Any child or young person under the age of 18, or young adult over 18 who receives education.
Service Head	The senior person with overall responsibility for the school/college.
Tutor/Teacher	Members of staff who have teaching responsibility for learners at the school/college.
Parent/Carer	Parent or person with parental responsibility.
Regulatory Authority	The independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services (e.g., Ofsted, Estyn, Education Scotland).
Social Worker	The worker allocated to the individual learner; if none is allocated, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.
Placing Authority	The local authority/agency responsible for placing the learner or commissioning the service.
Local Authority	The local authority for the establishment's location.
Staff	All staff working at the location, including employed staff, students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietors.



1. Local School/College Profile

Hidelow Grange School is an Independent School operating within the Branas Isaf Company, a subsidiary of CareTech Community Services Ltd., who are the proprietors.

Hidelow Grange School is an independent specialist SEMH school providing education to boys aged 11 to 18 years with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, who are Looked After Children. The school is registered for up to 20 young people and consists of Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 classes.

The school specifically caters for boys who present with harmful sexual behaviours (HSB) and a range of complex interpersonal, emotional and behavioural issues. For a more detailed description of what the school offers, see the School Statement of Purpose and School Prospectus.

Our Learners:

All young people at Hidelow Grange School have a history of harmful behaviours, including harmful sexualised behaviours (HSB), and social, emotional and mental health needs, often accompanied by a range of additional learning needs.

Most of the pupils have had interrupted histories in education and care. There are a wide variety of attainments on admission. All have fragile self-esteem and demonstrate difficulties with authority and a lack of trust in adults. Many have experienced loss and trauma, leading to attachment difficulties. As a result, many experience difficulties in forming and maintaining appropriate, positive relationships with others and have a limited ability to work cooperatively.

Learners at Hidelow Grange School:

- Are aged 11 to 18
- Are boys only
- Are placed within the residential setting of Branas Isaf (Hidelow House and Burley House)
- Are residents from placing authorities throughout the United Kingdom
- All present a range of harmful behaviours, including harmful sexual behaviours (HSB)
- Most are in receipt of an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- All are Looked After Children

2. Purpose

This policy applies to **Hidelow Grange School** and sets consistent standards and practical steps that can remove barriers early, respond the same day when patterns change, and keep Learners safe. It gives teachers/tutors, senior leaders and colleagues a clear practice framework, and gives Learners and families/carers clarity about expectations and support.



This policy provides assurance that we meet our statutory and regulatory obligations, protect Learners through strong safeguarding, handle data lawfully, and maintain high-quality provision

3. Scope

This organisational policy applies across all education sites, services and functions. It establishes the universal standards and expectations that must be followed consistently throughout the organisation.

Each site implements these standards in accordance with the statutory and regulatory requirements of the nation in which it operates as set out in **Appendix A**.

4. Local Adaptation Requirement

Some sections in this policy are marked Hidelow Grange School and must be completed by each site to reflect local procedures/processes and nation-specific equivalents (e.g., safeguarding framework; inspection remit; curriculum/quality framework; data-protection contacts; local multi-agency pathways; escalation routes; role titles and responsibilities; and official site URLs/mailboxes/phone numbers)

Local additions must be accurate, current, aligned to national legislation and regulator guidance, and fully consistent with the universal standards in this policy.

Where no local adaptation or local equivalent is required, the universal content remains fully applicable.

5. Legal and Regulatory Context (Universal)

Hidelow Grange School is governed by the statutory duties, safeguarding requirements and inspection arrangements of the nation in which it operates. The universal standards in this policy are implemented in line with the correct national frameworks set out in **Appendices A** which summarise the legal, regulatory and inspection requirements for England.

6. Policy Statement

We expect Learners to be in, **on time, and ready to learn**. We recognise that life happens—so we act quickly, kindly and proportionately to understand the reason, remove barriers, and re-engage Learners. We will:

- act on absence and lateness **the same day** through a simple first-day response;
- use **support before sanction**, escalating only when help has been tried and recorded;
- apply **reasonable adjustments** where appropriate; and
- keep a clear, lawful record of decisions and impact.

Equality and inclusion: We make decisions with due regard to equality and reasonable-adjustments duties (Equality Act 2010). Sites keep a short log of what was considered, what was agreed, and what difference it made.



7. Definitions (Operating)

To keep everyone aligned, we use the following practical definitions:

- **Session:** Any timetabled period of learning (lesson, tutorial, workshop, supervised study or scheduled activity).
- **Present:** The Learner is engaged in the timetabled session (including authorised remote or approved off-site learning).
- **Authorised / Unauthorised absence:** Recorded using the national register code set .
- **Late (before/after register closes):** Recorded using national codes and **site** cut-off times:
 - ✓ **Late (before register closes):**
 - ✓ **Morning: Arriving after 8:50am but before 9:30am - recorded using code 'L'**
 - ✓ **Afternoon: Arriving after 1:00pm but before 1:30pm - recorded using code 'L'**
 - ✓ **Late (after register closes):**
 - ✓ **Morning: Arriving after 9:30am - recorded using code 'U' (counts as unauthorised absence)**
 - ✓ **Afternoon: Arriving after 1:30pm - recorded using code 'U' (counts as unauthorised absence)**
- **Persistent Absence (PA): Attendance at or below 90% over a rolling 12-week period."**
- **Severe Absence (SA): Attendance at or below 50% over a rolling 12-week period.**
- **Reduced/part-time timetable:** A **time-limited**, planned inclusion adjustment, agreed and reviewed .

8. Standards and Expectations

Our culture is deliberately simple: **arrive, engage, communicate early if there's a barrier.** We match that with quick, proportionate support.

8.1 Learners

- Attend every session and arrive on time with the right equipment.
- Tell your Tutor/Teacher or the site contact quickly if a barrier is making attendance difficult.

8.2 Parents/Carers (where applicable)

- Report absence **before** the first session through the site's agreed channel .
- Provide evidence when requested and work with us on any support plan.



8.3 Teachers/tutors and the staff team

- Take an accurate register **every session**.
- Follow the **same-day** first-day response and log actions on the MIS BehaviourWatch
- Escalate emerging patterns early to the Attendance Lead (The Headteacher) and Designated Safeguarding Lead (The Headteacher).

8.4 Attendance Lead

- Oversee daily monitoring, thresholds and escalation; coordinate multi-agency actions.
- Report KPIs and risk to the Headteacher and governance board.

8.5 Headteacher

- Resource, train and oversee attendance practice; review impact termly and present assurance to governance/board.

9. Registration, Coding and First-Day Response

Registers safeguard Learners and inform teaching. We keep the process tight and humane.

9.1 Registers (every session)

- Registers are taken for all timetabled learning, including off-site/work-based/remote where applicable.
- Use the correct national register code set within BehaviourWatch.

9.2 First-day response

- **Check the register by 9:00am and attempt same-day contact if no explanation has been received.**
- **Contact Hidelow House or Burley House Care Home Managers by 9:30am if absence is unexplained:**
- **Hidelow House:** 01886884830
- **Burley House:** 01490 413782
- **School office:** **01588 650 631**
- **Escalate** immediately if contact fails or risk indicators are present
- **Record** actions and outcomes on BehaviourWatch.

9.3 Ongoing absence and return

- After **3 consecutive days** of absence, complete a brief **Return to Learning** check-in: what happened, what support is needed, and what the plan is.
- Confirm any reasonable adjustments, catch-up, and a review date—then monitor impact.

9.4 Absence categories: everyday, PA and SA

- Everyday authorised/unauthorised absence is recorded using national codes
- Persistent Absence (PA) threshold: attendance at or below 90% over a rolling 12-week period.
- Severe Absence (SA) threshold: attendance at or below 50% over a rolling 12-week period.



- When a learner meets PA or SA thresholds, intensified support will start immediately (see Section 11).

10. Lateness (AM/PM) Adapt Locally

Punctuality is about respect for learning and for each other's time. We respond to lateness with calm consistency and a focus on re-engagement.

How we record and respond:

- **Late — before register closes:** Code as late.
- **Late — after register closes:** Code as late after close.
- **Cut-off times:**

Morning (AM):

- ✓ **School day starts: 8:50am**
- ✓ **Register taken: 8:50am - 8:55am**
- ✓ **Late before register closes: Arriving between 8:56am and 9:30am - recorded using code 'L' (late but present)**
- ✓ **Late after register closes: Arriving after 9:30am - recorded using code 'U' (unauthorised absence)**

Afternoon (PM):

- ✓ **Afternoon session starts: 1:00pm**
- ✓ **Register taken: 1:00pm - 1:05pm**
- ✓ **Late before register closes: Arriving between 1:06pm and 1:30pm - recorded using code 'L' (late but present)**
- ✓ **Late after register closes: Arriving after 1:30pm - recorded using code 'U' (unauthorised absence)**

Recording lateness:

- ✓ **All learners arriving late must be signed in at the school office**
- ✓ **Time of arrival and reason for lateness must be recorded in the register on BehaviourWatch**
- ✓ **Care Home staff must provide a reason for lateness**

Follow-up expectation: repeated lateness prompts a supportive conversation, quick home contact (where applicable), and simple actions (e.g., earlier transport routine, start-of-day check-in). Escalation is used only if support does not resolve the pattern.

11. Absence, Persistent Absence (PA) and Severe Absence (SA): Support & Intervention

Our stance is support first, quickly, and proportionately. We match responses to the barrier, not just the percentage.

11.1 Triggers

Everyday absence:

- **Trigger: 2 unexplained absences in a 2-week period OR 3 absences (authorised or unauthorised) in a 4-week period**
- **Response:**



- **Supportive conversation with learner and Care Home Manager**
- **Identify barrier (health, anxiety, relationships, motivation, placement issues)**
- **Simple actions agreed (e.g. key adult check-in, adjusted start time, catch-up support)**
- **Short review date set (2 weeks)**
- **Actions recorded on BehaviourWatch**
- **Persistent Absence (PA):** at/under site PA threshold → pastoral meeting; needs review; reasonable adjustments;
- **Attendance Support Plan** (targets, actions, named leads, review date); consider multi agency team involvement.
- **Severe Absence (SA):** at/under site SA threshold → senior-led case meeting; safeguarding check; time-bound re-engagement package; frequent reviews; consider statutory/legal routes alongside support and in line with national/local processes.

11.2 What we do to support better attendance

We keep a short list of active strategies and choose deliberately—one Learner, one plan:

- **Teaching & learning:** curriculum adaptation; sequencing tweaks; supported study; accessible resources; catch-up content structure.
- **Pastoral & practical:** key-adult check-ins; start-of-day club; uniform/kit support; travel planning; breakfast provision.
- **Academic support:** catch-up clinics; small-group support; reasonable assessment flexibility within policy.
- **Health & wellbeing:** counselling referral; nurse/health liaison; anxiety-aware arrivals; safe-space starts.
- **Inclusion-specific:** reasonable adjustments; assistive technology; phased reintegration (time-limited)
- **Family partnership:** structured home communication; Early Help/family support referral; practical problem-solving .
- **Multi-agency:** coordinated plan where thresholds are met .
- **Evidence rule:** each strategy has a start date, responsible person, review date, and a short impact note (attendance %, punctuality, and learning progress).

12. Sick and Unwell Learners

We balance two things: protecting health and minimising learning loss. If a Learner is unwell, we keep them—and others—safe; when they are well enough, we help them return with confidence.

12.1 Reporting illness

- Care Home staff (Hidelow House or Burley House) report illness ****before 8:50am**** (start of school day)
- Contact school office by telephone: 01886 8830820.
- Provide: learner's name, nature of illness, expected duration
- For extended or recurrent illness (3+ days), medical evidence may be requested (prescription label, GP appointment card, medical letter)



12.2 Becoming unwell on site

- If a learner becomes unwell during the school day:
- Learner reports to ****school office**** or tells their teacher
- First aid is provided by trained first aider
- Care Home Manager contacted immediately to arrange collection if needed
- Register updated with appropriate code (code 'I' if sent home due to illness)
- Outcome recorded on BehaviourWatch

12.3 Contagious conditions and return

- We follow national/public-health advice on exclusion/return periods .
- On return, Tutors/Teachers arrange catch-up; where needed, a short, time-limited reintegration plan is agreed and reviewed .

12.4 Long-term or serious health needs

- We coordinate with health professionals and the multi-agency team to agree reasonable adjustments, consider remote learning (where appropriate), and manage exam access arrangements .
- Plans are reviewed regularly and always centre the Learner's voice.

13. Safeguarding

Unexplained absence, repeated lateness, sudden drops in attendance, illness patterns, or inability to contact home are treated as potential safeguarding indicators. Sites take same-day action, escalate risk promptly through internal and external routes as required, and keep accurate, auditable records. Information is shared on a need-to-know basis in line with data-protection requirements. Vulnerable learners (all students) receive heightened oversight, with termly reporting to senior leaders.

See our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for the full pathway.

By 9:30am

Contact channels used:

Hidelow House Care Home Manager: 01490 413782

Burley House Care Home Manager: 01490 413782

School office: 01886884830

Internal escalation to DSL/deputies:

DSL: Benjamin Neasom (Headteacher) – benjamin.neasom@caretech-uk.com / 01886 884832

Deputy DSL: Juliet Smith (Deputy Headteacher) – juliet.smith@caretech-uk.com / 01886 884832

Senior on-call/out-of-hours route:

Kate Jones (Head of Service, Branas) – kate.jones@branas.co.uk / 01490 413782

Rob McConomy (Regional Lead, CareTech)

– rob.mcconomy@cambiagroup.com

CareTech Whistleblowing Hotline (24/7): 0800 086 9128

External referral route:

Daytime: Herefordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – 01432 260800 (office hours: Monday-Thursday 8:45am-5:15pm, Friday 8:45am-4:45pm) – mash@herefordshire.gov.uk



Out-of-hours: Emergency Duty Team – 01432 383340

Police (emergency): 999

Police (non-emergency): 101

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer):

Carol Ifill – 01432 261739 – LADO@herefordshire.gov.uk

System of record and roles with access:

BehaviourWatch (attendance register) – access: all teaching staff, Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Admin staff

CPOMS (safeguarding system) – access: DSL, Deputy DSL, SLT (need-to-know basis)

Privacy notice and retention references:

Privacy notice published on school website

Data retention schedule: attendance data retained for 7 years after pupil leaves

See Data Protection Policy for full details

Vulnerable cohorts under heightened oversight:

All learners (all are Looked After Children)

Learners with attendance below 90% (PA)

Learners with attendance below 50% (SA)

Learners with Child Protection Plans

Learners with Child in Need Plans

Learners at risk of exploitation (CSE, CCE, county lines)

Learners with mental health concerns

Learners in transition (new admissions, placement moves)

Learners displaying harmful sexual behaviours (HSB)

Governance reporting:

Who: Rob McConomy (Regional Lead) and Kate Jones (Head of Service, Branas)

How often: Termly (end of each term)

Content: Overall attendance %, PA/SA rates, vulnerable cohort analysis, safeguarding referrals arising from attendance concerns, impact of interventions

14. Inclusion, Reasonable Adjustments and Support

Attendance support reflects individual need. We apply a graduated approach and consider, where appropriate, implementing reasonable adjustments. Adjustments are reviewed regularly to ensure they are working.

15. FE and Post-16 Provisions

In post-16, attendance is recorded per session/module. Off-site/placement attendance is captured via the agreed mechanism. For apprenticeships/industry placements, providers and employers follow agreed absence-reporting timelines. If bursary or financial support is attendance-linked, sites publish criteria and appeals.

Note: Due to our current cohort Hidelow Grange School does not currently offer post-16 provision beyond Key Stage 4. This section is included for future reference should the school expand its provision.



16. Data, Reporting and Privacy

We value accuracy and proportionality. Sites keep clean registers, contact logs, escalation records and outcomes. Attendance data is processed lawfully and transparently; privacy notices and retention schedules are published. Any statutory returns and local authority submissions are completed to timetable.

See our Records Management Policy for the full pathway.

17. Monitoring, KPIs and Assurance

Leaders review attendance at least termly (and more frequently if risk indicates). We track:

- overall attendance % and trend;
- Persistent Absence rate ;
- Severe Absence rate ;
- unauthorised absence %;
- punctuality (late before/after register closes);
- subgroup analysis (e.g., **SEND/ALN/ASN** *Adapt Locally*, disadvantage, care-experienced, young carers, EAL, medical needs);
- timeliness and impact of interventions; and
- safeguarding referrals arising from attendance.

Findings inform our improvement plan and governance/board reporting. Inspection conversations focus on culture, systems and impact; this section provides the evidence trail.

18. Roles and Responsibilities (Summary)

Everyone has a part to play; clarity prevents drift.

Learners — Attend; be on time; engage with agreed support.

Parents/Carers (where applicable) — Report absence promptly; provide evidence when requested.

Teachers/tutors — Take registers; act on first-day response; escalate patterns; implement support; record actions.

Attendance Lead — Run daily operations, thresholds and analytics; coordinate multi-agency help; report KPIs.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Benjamin J. Neasom) - Ensure attendance concerns link with safeguarding promptly.

Headteacher — Resource and oversee strategy; ensure compliance; present termly assurance to governance/board.

Governance/Board — Scrutinise performance and equity; hold leaders to account for delivery.

19. Training and Communication

We set everyone up for success. Induction covers register accuracy, first-day response, escalation and inclusion adjustments. Annual refreshers are provided; specialist training for Attendance Leads and pastoral teams is scheduled. Sites publish attendance expectations and contact routes clearly for Learners and families.



20. Related Policies

- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Behaviour, Relationships
- Anti-Bullying
- Inclusion
- Accessibility Plan / Strategy
- Curriculum & Teaching and Learning
- Assessment & Feedback
- Data Protection (GDPR) & Information Governance
- Educational Visits
- Risk Assessment and Risk Care Management
- Complaints
- Records Management
- Admissions Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Supporting Learners in Education - Guide for Support Staff

Equality Impact Statement

This policy has been developed to promote equality, safeguard individual's rights, and ensure fair and inclusive practice across all services. The potential impact of the policy on children, young people, young adults, families, and staff with protected characteristics has been considered in line with the Equality Act 2010.

No negative impacts have been identified. Staff must apply this policy with sensitivity to individual need and make reasonable adjustments to ensure equitable access, safety, wellbeing, and participation for every individual. Any emerging risks of differential impact should be reported and addressed through ongoing review and quality assurance

Appendices

Appendix A – Legal and Regulatory Framework in England

Appendix B – Register Codes in use at Hidelow Grange School



Appendix A — England

Legislation, guidance and regulatory frameworks underpinning attendance in England

Working together to improve school attendance (2024) — DfE statutory guidance

- **Means:** Statutory guidance for sites (including FE sites where relevant) setting roles, processes, thresholds and legal routes to improve attendance.
- **Requires:** A clear policy, accurate registers, same-day follow-up, analysis of persistent/severe absence, targeted support with LA partnership, and proportionate legal intervention; inspectors expect evidence of impact.
- **Our stance:** We run a whole-site attendance system with support-first escalation and auditable records.
- **Implementation example:** Live dashboard tracking PA/SA with first-day response logs and case reviews to governance.
- **Links:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (2025)

- **Means:** Statutory safeguarding guidance for sites (including FE sites where relevant) setting out the duties to safeguard and promote welfare.
- **Requires:** Same-day response to unexplained absence, immediate escalation of concerns to children's services, accurate record-keeping, and clear DSL oversight. Attendance patterns (including absence and missing-from-education) must be treated as potential safeguarding indicators.
- **Our stance:** We treat absence patterns as safeguarding triggers and ensure attendance–safeguarding pathways are integrated and auditable.
- **Implementation example:** DSL reviews daily absence report; high-risk cases escalated to children's services with logs stored on the safeguarding system.
- **Links:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Education Inspection Framework (EIF) (2025) — Ofsted

- **Means:** Framework for inspection of sites (including FE sites); evaluates behaviour/attitudes, personal development, leadership/management with attendance as a core indicator.
- **Requires:** Culture and systems that secure high attendance, effective follow-up and leaders' oversight of vulnerable groups; evidence must show **notice** → **action** → **difference**.
- **Our stance:** We align attendance KPIs to EIF evaluation areas and maintain a concise inspection evidence pack.



- **Implementation example:** Termly board report summarising trends, cohorts at risk, actions taken and impact.
- **Links:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework/education-inspection-framework-for-use-from-november-2025>

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (2014) — England

- **Means:** Legal standards for independent sites covering welfare/health/safety (Part 3), information (Part 6) and leadership/management (Part 8) relevant to attendance arrangements.
- **Requires:** Robust attendance systems, transparent information for families/authorities, and effective proprietor oversight.
- **Our stance:** Independent Schools map attendance controls to Parts 3/6/8 and assure compliance termly.
- **Implementation example:** ISS compliance log with evidence links (policy, register audits, communications, escalation records).
- **Links:** <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/3283>

APPENDIX B: REGISTER CODES:

The following national attendance codes are used at Hidelow Grange School:

Register Code	Description
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late (before registers closed) marked as present
I	Authorised absence due to illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)
M	Authorised absence due to medical/dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance
S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence (not applicable at HGS)
H	Authorised absence due to agreed family holiday (rarely authorized at HGS)
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made



Register Code	Description
C	Authorised absence as pupil is absent due to other authorised circumstances
B	Approved education activity as pupil being educated off site (NOT dual registration)
D	Dual registered (at another establishment) NOT counted in possible attendances
J	Approved education activity as pupil is attending interview
P	Approved education activity as pupil is attending an approved sporting activity
V	Approved education activity as pupil is away on an educational visit or trip
W	Approved education activity as pupil is attending work experience
G	Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
U	Unauthorised absence as pupil arrived after registers closed
O	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description
N	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided
X	Non compulsory school age absence not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned whole or partial school closure NOT counted in possible attendances

Note: Codes D, X, Y, Z and # do not count as absences for attendance percentage calculations.