

Beacon Alternative School CIC (and Alternative Provision) Attendance Policy



Date: September 2026
Written by: O'Connell/Field
Review Due by: September 2027

Note: Beacon Alternative Provision operates under Beacon Alternative School CIC, which is not currently a registered school but is working toward future registration. This policy applies to Beacon's premises at 6 Kew Court, Pynes Hill, Exeter, EX2 5AZ, as well as any other approved off-site or community venue on which Beacon AP operates.

1. Introduction

Regular attendance supports engagement, progress, and wellbeing. Beacon recognises that many young people accessing our provision have experienced anxiety, trauma, or difficulties with attendance in previous settings, and takes a flexible, relational approach to re-building attendance rather than a purely punitive one.

Beacon is not a registered school, so the pupil's placing school or local authority remains responsible for the statutory attendance register. This policy sets out how Beacon records attendance, works with commissioners to support it, and responds when a young person is absent.

2. Purpose

- Ensure accurate attendance records are kept for every session
- Share attendance information promptly with placing schools and local authorities
- Respond quickly and appropriately to unexplained absence
- Support young people to re-engage with regular attendance wherever possible
- Use attendance information as part of Beacon's wider safeguarding practice

3. Scope

This policy applies to all young people accessing Beacon provision, and to all staff responsible for recording, reporting, and following up attendance.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Head of Provision

- Overall responsibility for attendance recording, reporting, and review: Fiona Field, 079999 28576; Steven O'Connell, 075655 77041.

Staff

- Record attendance accurately for every session and follow up unexplained absence promptly.

Parents/Carers

- Inform Beacon as early as possible if a young person will not attend a session, and the reason why.

Placing Schools and Local Authorities

- Remain responsible for the young person's statutory attendance record, and work with Beacon to agree how attendance concerns are followed up.

5. Recording Attendance

- Attendance is recorded on Beacon's system, LearnTrek, for every session, whether at 6 Kew Court, off-site, or as part of a home visit.
- Records show whether a young person was present, late, or absent, and whether an absence was authorised.
- Attendance records are kept accurately and securely in line with the Data Protection Policy.

6. Reporting Attendance to Commissioners

- Attendance or absence for each session is reported to the placing school or local authority as soon as possible, ideally within 30 minutes of the start of the session.
- This is supported by LearnTrek: when a member of staff records a young person's attendance, the system automatically sends a notification to the placing school and/or local authority contact recorded for that young person, so reporting does not depend on a separate manual step.

- This supports the placing school in meeting its own statutory attendance duties.

7. Responding to Absence

- Where a young person does not arrive for a session and no reason has been given, staff make contact with the parent/carer on the same day to establish the reason.
- Where there is any safeguarding concern linked to an absence, this is treated in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and escalated to the DSL immediately.
- Where it has been agreed that Beacon leads on following up an absence, this is done in partnership with parents/carers, the placing school, or local authority as appropriate.
- Where a barrier to attendance falls outside Beacon's control, Beacon works with the family, school, and local authority to identify appropriate support.

8. Punctuality

Young people are encouraged and supported to arrive on time. Where late arrival is a pattern, this is discussed sensitively with the young person and their parents/carers, recognising that anxiety, transport, or health needs can all affect punctuality.

9. Attendance Reviews

- Attendance is reviewed with placing schools and local authorities at least every six weeks.
- Where attendance is a concern, Beacon works with the young person, their family, and commissioners to agree additional or different support, in line with the Assessment and Feedback Policy's review process.
- Attendance is also considered as part of any EHCP annual review or placement review.

10. Attendance and Safeguarding

Beacon recognises that a sudden change in attendance, or a pattern of unexplained absence, can be an indicator of wider risk. Staff are alert to this possibility and record and escalate any related concern in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

11. Supporting Attendance

Beacon takes a flexible, relationship-led approach to supporting attendance, recognising that anxiety, health, and SEND needs can all affect a young person's ability to attend consistently. This may include a phased return, adjusted timetable, transport support, or additional pastoral contact, agreed with the young person, their family, and commissioners.

12. Monitoring and Review

- The Head of Provision monitors attendance data across Beacon's provision to identify patterns and inform practice.
- This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes in guidance or practice.

13. Related Policies

- Admissions Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- SEND Policy
- Data Protection Policy