

Pony Partnerships CIC

Attendance Policy – 2025-2026

Name of Organisation: Pony Partnerships CIC

Venue/Address: All venues

Date of Review: 1 September 2025

Date of Next Review: 31 August 2026

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1. Policy Statement

Pony Partnerships CIC is committed to maximising learner engagement by promoting consistent attendance and punctuality at all education, therapy, and enrichment sessions. Attendance is directly linked to safeguarding, wellbeing, and outcomes, and is monitored in accordance with relevant statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education.

As a registered Community Interest Company offering alternative and therapeutic education provision, we recognise that many of our learners may face complex barriers to attendance. We work proactively with families, commissioners, and external agencies to provide flexible, trauma-informed support that promotes safe, sustained engagement.

2. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy complies with the following legislation and guidance:

- *Education Act 1996* – Sections 7 and 444
- *Education and Inspections Act 2006*
- *Children Act 1989* and 2004
- *Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities* (DfE, 2016)
- *School Attendance: Statutory Guidance for Maintained Schools, Academies, and Local Authorities* (DfE, 2016)
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE, 2025)
- *Alternative Provision Voluntary National Standards* (DfE, August 2025)

3. Scope

This policy applies to all learners accessing sessions through:

- Equine Facilitated Learning (EFL)
- Equine Enrichment Programmes
- Neurodivergent Group Sessions
- Nature-Based Therapeutic Education

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- Remote and blended learning packages
- Commissioned Education or Alternative Provision placements

4. Aims

- To promote the value of consistent attendance as part of therapeutic and educational progress
- To monitor attendance robustly and act on emerging patterns
- To identify and address barriers to engagement early and collaboratively
- To ensure safeguarding risks associated with non-attendance are recognised and escalated
- To provide a flexible, supportive model of provision for learners with complex needs

5. Responsibilities

Staff and Facilitators

- Record attendance for each session using agreed formats
- Monitor patterns of absence or lateness and share concerns with the Safeguarding Lead
- Adapt engagement strategies to maximise participation, including for remote or blended sessions
- Support learners and families to re-engage following absence

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Review attendance records weekly for all learners
- Liaise with commissioning organisations, families and external professionals where persistent absence is identified
- Undertake safeguarding checks for unexplained absence, in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
- Escalate concerns regarding Children Missing Education (CME) through appropriate channels

Learners and Families

- Attend sessions regularly and punctually
- Communicate absence as early as possible to staff
- Work in partnership with Pony Partnerships to overcome any barriers to attendance.

6. Recording and Monitoring

- Attendance is recorded for all sessions, including onsite, offsite, and remote provision
- Reasons for absence are logged, and repeated patterns are reviewed
- A learner will be considered to have *persistent absence* if attendance falls below 90%
- In cases of 5 consecutive missed sessions or multiple weeks of reduced attendance, the DSL will initiate a welfare response and inform the referrer

7. Children Missing Education (CME)

In line with statutory guidance, any child believed to be missing from education will be reported to the local authority's CME officer. Pony Partnerships CIC will:

- Make all reasonable efforts to contact families and commissioning agencies
- Escalate safeguarding concerns without delay where a child's welfare is potentially compromised
- Record all actions and communications in the learner's safeguarding file

8. Support and Intervention

We offer flexible pathways to promote attendance, including:

- Adjusted session timings or formats
- Remote sessions where clinically and educationally appropriate
- Family liaison or key worker support
- Multi-agency reviews to reassess suitability of provision

9. Review and Quality Assurance

- Attendance data is reviewed at each internal Quality & Safeguarding meeting

- This policy is reviewed annually or in response to national guidance updates
- Updates will be made in consultation with staff, families, and commissioning stakeholders where appropriate

10. Linked Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Remote Learning Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy