

Tutor Doctor Essex Attendance Policy

Policy Owner: Viv Durham – Director and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Approved By: Laura Adams – Designated Safeguarding Lead

Version: 1.3 | Effective Date: July 2026 | Review Date: July 2028

Policy Category: Operational Policy

Applies To: All Tutor Doctor Essex staff, tutors and volunteers

Document Control

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Version History

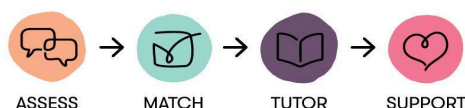
Version	Date	Summary	Author
1.3	July 2026	Governance update and policy alignment	Viv Durham

Related Policies and procedures

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Behaviour Policy
SEND Policy
Online Safety Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Lone Working Policy
Data Protection and Information Governance Policy
Complaints Policy
Staff Code of Conduct
Tutor Code of Conduct
Child Missing in Education Procedure

1.Purpose

This policy outlines how Tutor Doctor Essex promotes attendance, ensures safeguarding, and supports engagement. Attendance is treated as both an educational and safeguarding priority.



2. Legal Framework

Education Act 1996

Children and Families Act 2014

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance (2013)

Working Together to Improve School Attendance (current edition)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Director - each Director has overall responsibility for attendance governance and compliance.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)-The DSL oversees attendance and concerns where safeguarding risks are identified.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)-The DDSL coordinates attendance monitoring and welfare checks.

Tutors - Tutors record attendance, report concerns and follow welfare procedures.

Parents/Carers, Schools and Local Authorities-Parents/carers must report absence promptly. Referrers are informed of attendance concerns where required.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead oversee escalation, welfare checks, and referrals. Parents/carers must ensure attendance and report absence promptly.

Definitions of Absence

For the purposes of this policy:

Authorised Absence

Absence accepted for legitimate reasons such as illness, medical appointments, agreed educational activities or other circumstances agreed by the commissioning Local Authority or school.

Unauthorised Absence

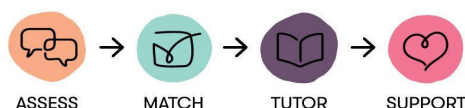
Absence where no acceptable explanation has been provided or where attendance has not been authorised by the relevant commissioner.

Unexplained Absence

Where a learner fails to attend and no reason has been received. All unexplained absences are treated as a potential safeguarding concern until the learner's welfare has been confirmed.

Persistent Lateness

Repeated late arrival to scheduled sessions which disrupts learning or indicates emerging barriers to engagement.



4. Attendance Promotion

Tutor Doctor Essex believes that regular attendance is fundamental to educational progress, wellbeing and safeguarding.

We promote good attendance by:

- building positive relationships with pupils and families;
- creating engaging, personalised learning programmes;
- identifying barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity;
- making reasonable adjustments where appropriate;
- working collaboratively with parents, schools, commissioners and other professionals;
- recognising and encouraging improvements in attendance and engagement.

Where attendance becomes a concern, our approach is supportive and restorative, with escalation used only where necessary to safeguard the pupil or fulfil commissioning requirements.

5. Attendance Expectations and Enforcement

Attendance is expected at all scheduled sessions. Where attendance falls below expectations, Tutor Doctor Essex will take a staged approach:

Initial discussion with parent/carer to identify barriers

Adjustment of provision (timings, format, support strategies)

Formal attendance concerns shared with referring agency

Attendance meetings arranged where required

Escalation to Local Authority where attendance does not improve

Punctuality reflects mutual respect and commitment. While Tutor Doctor Essex recognises challenges in engaging children in alternative provision, consistent communication and gradual encouragement are key.

Persistent lateness will be addressed through:

Recording lateness and reasons for delays.

Including attendance and punctuality in weekly reports to referrers.

Adjusting engagement plans, if necessary, to support timely attendance.

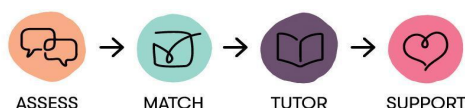
Please refer to the Behaviour Policy for full guidance.

6. Tutor Absence

Tutor consistency is essential for pupil engagement, progress, and safeguarding. Any disruption to provision is treated as a potential safeguarding risk until continuity and appropriate oversight are secured.

Tutors must provide as much notice as possible of any planned absence

If a tutor is unavailable for 3 consecutive days or more, this must be escalated immediately to their Tutor Doctor Office.



Tutor Doctor Essex will ensure continuity of provision by offering an alternative tutor as soon as possible

The pupil, parent/carer, and referring agency will be informed of any changes..

Tutor Doctor Essex will ensure there are no gaps in supervision or provision that could place the pupil at risk. Welfare checks will be carried out as detailed below.

7. Attendance Procedures

The Non-School Alternative Provision standards set by the DfE states that attendance should be reported within 30 minutes of the session time. In support of the IPES framework Essex County Council's attendance system: Different Class is used.

Parents/carers must report absence by 8:30am and provide updates daily starting on the first day of absence via WhatsApp group.

In the event of no contact and non-attendance, the session is recorded as Absence with no reason given.

Attendance is recorded using the systems required by the commissioning Local Authority, including Different Class where applicable, together with Tutor Doctor Essex internal systems including the CRM and tutor session reports.

8. Safeguarding and Welfare Checks

Unexplained absence is treated as a safeguarding concern and must be raised as such to the Council and School.

Day 1–2: Contact attempts via all available methods.

Day 3: Escalation to Safeguarding Lead and welfare check (see or speak to pupil).

If there is no contact: a home visit is conducted and the attendance letter is delivered.

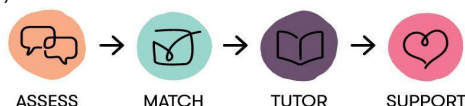
If still unresolved: referral to Children Missing Education, Local Authority or police will be made.

For tutor absence (and if it is not appropriate to draft in a substitute tutor), then the appropriate Tutor Doctor office must conduct an online/in-person Welfare Check on the student every 3 tuition days. Welfare checks will be undertaken in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and recorded using the approved safeguarding recording system.

9. Practical Session Procedures

Home sessions, no answer at door: attempt contact through the preferred method, wait ten minutes, before reporting to the Tutor Doctor office.

Home sessions, student not seen, wait ten minutes, before reporting to the Tutor Doctor office, agree between parent, tutor and Tutor Doctor office on next steps for tuition that day.



Community sessions: attempt contact within 15 minutes and escalate if pupil location is unknown.

10. Monitoring and Intervention

Attendance data is reviewed regularly to identify patterns.

Where concerns arise, targeted intervention will include:

Increased communication with family

Adapted timetable or delivery model

Multi-agency involvement

Review of placement suitability

Attendance trends are analysed regularly to identify emerging patterns, evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and inform service improvement.

11. Documentation

All attendance, contact attempts, welfare checks and actions must be recorded accurately and stored using approved safeguarding recording systems (for example DC Pro or MyConcern), together with Tutor Doctor Essex attendance records and session reports.

12. Policy Review

This policy will normally be reviewed every two years, or sooner where legislative, contractual or organisational changes require.

Signed: L Adams

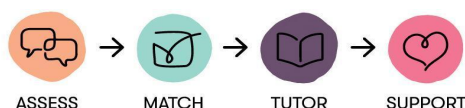
Dated: 22/07/2026

Approved by:

Viv Durham – Director (Policy Owner)

Laura Adams – Designated Safeguarding Lead

On behalf of Tutor Doctor Essex



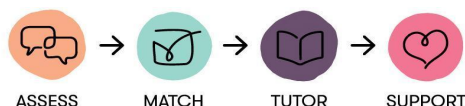
Appendix 1

Essex Council codes most often used - information for staff

/ present am
\ present pm
L Late
I Unwell
M Medical Appointment e.g. dentist, doctors, psychiatrist
O Unauthorised absence (non cooperation)
C Visit to a school e.g. for an exam
School closed e.g. INSET day, school holidays
Y7 Absence through other unavoidable causes e.g. tutor unavailable
G Authorised holiday
N Absent with no reason given

Tutor Doctor CRM absence/presence reasons most often used - Information for tutors

Presence (AM)
Presence (PM)
Illness, not medical or dental
Late (after register closed)
Medical/Dental e.g. dentist, doctor
Non cooperation
Educational visit or trip e.g exam
Family holiday (agreed)
Family holiday (not agreed)



Appendix 2

Attendance Letter

Letter Regarding Unexplained Student Absence

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. I am writing to you as your child, [Student's Name] has been absent from our provision since (Date) for more than three consecutive days. As of today, we have not received any communication from you regarding the reason for these absences.

At Tutor Doctor Essex your child's well-being, safety and academic progress are our top priorities. We recognise that there may be many reasons for a child's absence. However, as an alternative provider of education, we have a duty of care to our students, and it is essential that we are kept informed about their whereabouts and the reasons behind any prolonged absence.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is not only a statutory requirement but also a vital part of ensuring that students achieve their full educational potential. Our attendance policy requires parents or guardians to notify us as soon as possible if their child will be absent, stating the reason and expected duration of the absence. This protocol is in place to ensure both the safety of our students and the smooth running of our educational programmes.

Concerns for Wellbeing and Safety

When a student is absent for more than three days without any explanation, it raises concerns about their wellbeing and safety. Our primary responsibility is to ensure that every student in our care is safe, healthy, and supported. In situations where we are unable to make contact with parents or guardians, we are obliged to follow protocols that may include further attempts to reach you by phone or email, home visits, or, if necessary, involving external agencies who can assist in ensuring the child's welfare.

Next Steps

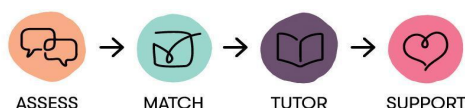
We kindly ask that you contact us as soon as possible to provide an explanation for [Student's Name]'s absence. You can reach us by call, text or Whatsapp on (XXX) or by email at XXXX@tutordocor.co.uk. If there are particular circumstances that we should be aware of, or if you require support during this period, please let us know—our pastoral care team is available and ready to assist your family in any way we can.

Support Available

We understand that families may face a variety of challenges and that unexpected situations can arise. If your child is unwell, please let us know the nature of the illness and the anticipated timeframe for their return to school. If there are personal or family matters impacting your child's attendance, our school counsellors and support staff are here to offer guidance and assistance. All information shared with us will be treated with sensitivity and confidentiality.

Consequences of Continued Unexplained Absence

Please be aware that continued unexplained absence may require Tutor Doctor Essex to take further action, as guided by local education authority protocols. This can include formal letters, meetings with leadership team, or involvement of educational welfare officers. Our aim is always to work collaboratively with families to resolve attendance issues and to ensure the best outcomes for our students.



How You Can Help

- Please contact us immediately to explain your child's absence.
- Keep us informed about any changes in your contact details.
- Notify us in advance, whenever possible, of any planned absences.
- Encourage your child to attend their provision regularly and punctually.

If you have already tried to contact us and believe this letter has reached you in error, please accept our apologies and contact us again so we can update our records accordingly.

Our Commitment to Your Child

At Tutor Doctor Essex we are committed to supporting every student, not only in their academic journey but also in their personal development and wellbeing. We believe that strong partnerships between home and

tuition play an essential role in the success of our students, and we value your cooperation and communication.

If you have any questions, concerns, or if there is anything you feel we should know about your child's situation, please do not hesitate to reach out. Our team is here to listen and to help.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to hearing from you soon and to welcoming [Student's Name] back to lessons at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

XXXXXX

Safeguarding Lead

Tutor Doctor Essex

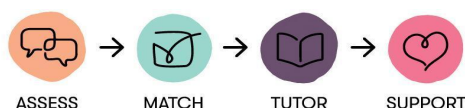
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ladams@tutordocor.co.uk

Appendix: Guidance on School Attendance

- Regular attendance is a legal requirement for all students of compulsory school age.
- If a child is absent due to illness, a note or message from a parent or guardian is required on the child's return or during the absence.
- Absences for reasons other than illness, such as family emergencies, should be communicated to the school as soon as possible.
- Family holidays should be planned outside of term time, as absence for holidays may not be authorised.
- Repeated unexplained absence can lead to involvement from local education authorities and, in rare cases, legal action.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we work together to support your child's learning and development.



Appendix 3– Children Missing Education (CME) Procedure

Purpose

Tutor Doctor Essex is committed to safeguarding all children and young people receiving tuition. Any unexplained absence or loss of contact may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. This procedure sets out the actions to be taken where a pupil repeatedly fails to attend tuition or cannot be contacted.

Tutor Doctor Essex recognises that the statutory responsibility for identifying and tracking Children Missing Education rests with the Local Authority. This procedure describes the actions Tutor Doctor Essex will take to safeguard pupils, escalate attendance concerns and support Local Authority processes.

Children who repeatedly miss education may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, county lines involvement or other forms of significant harm.

This procedure should be read alongside the Attendance Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy and Local Authority attendance guidance.

Definition

For the purpose of this procedure, a child may be considered at risk of becoming Children Missing Education (CME) where:

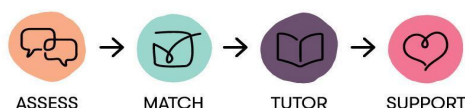
- Their whereabouts become unknown.
- They repeatedly fail to attend agreed tuition without explanation.
- Tutor Doctor Essex is unable to establish contact with the pupil, parent/carers or appropriate professional.
- There are safeguarding concerns linked to the child's non-attendance.

Procedure

Day 1 – First Unexplained Absence

The tutor must:

- Record the absence on the approved attendance system.
- Attempt to contact the parent/carers using the agreed communication method.
- Notify the Tutor Doctor Essex office within 30 minutes of the scheduled session where required.
- Record all contact attempts and outcomes.



Day 2 – Continued Unexplained Absence

The Tutor Doctor Essex office will:

- Make further attempts to contact the parent/carer.
- Liaise with the referring school and/or Local Authority where appropriate.
- Review any known safeguarding concerns or attendance patterns.
- Record all actions taken.

Day 3 – Welfare Check

If contact has still not been established:

Where there is reason to believe a child is at immediate risk of significant harm, this staged procedure will be bypassed, and an immediate safeguarding referral will be made in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) will review the case.
- A welfare check will be arranged where appropriate and safe to do so.
- Relevant professionals, including the referring school, social worker (where allocated), residential care provider (if applicable), and Local Authority will be informed where appropriate.
- The decision and rationale for all actions will be recorded.

Ongoing Loss of Contact

Where the pupil's whereabouts remain unknown or safeguarding concerns increase, the DSL will consider referrals to the appropriate agencies, which may include:

Where the commissioning Local Authority specifies attendance reporting processes or timescales, Tutor Doctor Essex will comply with those contractual requirements.

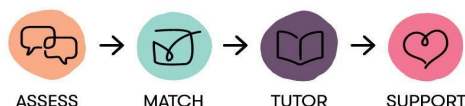
- The commissioning Local Authority.
- The referring school.
- Children's Social Care.
- Children Missing Education Team.
- Emergency Services (where there is an immediate risk of harm).
 - Emergency Duty Team (outside normal office hours where appropriate).

Tutor Doctor Essex will cooperate fully with any multi-agency enquiries.

Looked After Children and Children with Social Workers

Where a pupil is looked after by the Local Authority, lives in residential care, or has an allocated social worker, the allocated social worker and care setting must be informed promptly of unexplained absences or welfare concerns.

Where appropriate, communication will also take place with CAMHS, the Virtual School and other professionals involved in the pupil's care.



Recording

All attendance concerns, contact attempts, welfare checks, safeguarding decisions and referrals must be recorded promptly on the approved attendance and safeguarding recording systems.

Records must be factual, accurate, dated and retained in accordance with the Data Protection and Information Governance Policy.

Staff must maintain professional curiosity where explanations for repeated absence are inconsistent, insufficient or raise safeguarding concerns.

Responsibilities

Tutors

- Record attendance accurately.
- Report unexplained absence immediately.
- Never investigate concerns independently.
- Follow instructions from the Tutor Doctor Essex office and DSL.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Assess safeguarding risk.
- Coordinate welfare checks.
- Make safeguarding referrals where required.
- Liaise with external agencies.

Director

- Provide oversight of attendance monitoring.
- Ensure appropriate governance and quality assurance.
- Review attendance trends and implement service improvements where necessary.

Related Policies

- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Data Protection and Information Governance Policy

Approval

Procedure Owner: Viv Durham – Director and DDSL

Approved By: Laura Adams – Director and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Approval Date: July 2026

Next Review: July 2028

This procedure has been reviewed and approved in accordance with the Tutor Doctor Essex Governance & Policy Style Guide.

