

Attendance Policy (TOG)

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Record of changes

Version	Date	Changes
V2	31/07/2024	Policy expanded to include all The Outdoors Group business areas
V3	01/11/2024	Table of contents added TOS Absence reporting added Link to revised Payment and Cancellation Policy added

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Introduction

This Policy applies to all business area of The Outdoors Group (TOG)

- The Outdoors School (TOS) DfE Number: 878/6075
- Alternative Outdoors Provision (AOP)
- Forest School and Training (FS&T)

The Outdoors Group is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all learners. Learners need to attend school and sessions regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered to them. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and can lead to educational disadvantage.

It is the policy of TOG to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to productive and successful learning. Our provision will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all learners.

TOG will give a high priority to conveying to parents, carers and learners the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents, carers and learners have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong learning community links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems that affect a learner's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents, carers and learners to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the learner to full attendance at all times.

Definitions

Acronym	Definition
AIO	Attendance Improvement Officers
CLM	Collaborative Learning Manager Software
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
LA	Local Authority
SENDCO	Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Coordinator

Aims

- To improve learner attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure learner entitlement to a full-time and alternative provision education is monitored and supported (where applicable).
- To encourage learners and parents/carers to comply with the legal requirements of attendance.
- To encourage and reward good habits of attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure presence at all sessions and timetabled activities.

Attendance and punctuality are often warning signs to other underlying issues and must not be taken lightly; although throughout the day the sessions are very flexible and a lot of autonomy is provided to the learners, there is an expectation that punctuality in the morning is necessary, and that the attendance levels are good.

Critically, there is a follow up policy for all learners on any day off. This means contact with the learner's household is attempted when learners don't attend, and a dialogue is begun as soon as possible.

Legal Framework (TOS and AOP)

1. Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age receives a suitable education. They will be encouraged to contact the school early on the first day and subsequent days of absence and keep the school informed of any reasons for non-attendance.
2. Parents or carers should contact the groups tutors as first point, followed by the school main phone number if they are unable to contact them.
3. Children registered at school must by law attend regularly, achieving the Government set target of 95%.
4. The Outdoors School must have two registers:
 - Admission register - which is the school roll
 - Attendance register - which is called twice a day.
5. Staff will be made aware of the Registration process and receive in-service training on Registration regulations and Education Law. If a learner is absent the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Only the school, not the parent/carers, can authorise the absence and may require medical evidence to support notes.
6. The Local Authority (LA) may only instigate legal proceedings in cases where absences are unauthorised.
7. Learners must attend unless:

- they are too ill to do so
 - their absence lists any other of the school's discretionary reasons such as compassionate leave of absence, religious observance or where special educational requirements have been made. Parents/carers should not expect to take annual holiday in term time
8. The Outdoors School can authorise up to 10 days absence in exceptional circumstances. For AOP learners, the learner's school is expected to inform the provision of any absences approved or otherwise.
 9. We acknowledge many of our learning community will have experienced difficulties in maintaining positive attendance at school. However, with the start of a learner's new placement attendance expectations are high and must be achieved.

TOS Rewards

- Learners with 100% attendance will be awarded certificates at the end of each half term.
- Learners who miss the odd half day for unavoidable appointments will also receive a certificate acknowledging excellent attendance.
- Assembly time and 1:1 time with staff will address the importance of attendance on a regular basis.
- Children whose attendance has significantly improved will be rewarded using the school's reward system.

AOP Attendance

Attendance is recorded once daily on our internal programme for all learners. Additionally, for learners who are referred by the local authority, we record attendance twice daily on Collaborative Learning Manager Software (CLM). We expect attendance to be marked within thirty minutes of the beginning of the session.

Attendance Reporting

Attendance is reported to schools through emails which are sent to attendance officers at each school on the morning that their learner is booked in with us. For all sessions attended or late arrivals up to thirty minutes, the email confirms attendance. For any absences that are marked, our administrator contacts parents/carers to ascertain a reason for the absence before reporting to schools any non-attendance by email. CLM is utilised in the morning and afternoon of each session of learners who are referred directly by the local authority.

Attendance Concerns

Repeated non-attendance should be noted by the referring school or organisation, though we do follow up with stakeholders to report any patterns or concerns that we note within the AOP.

Forest School Attendance

Home Education Groups and Holiday Club attendance is accurately recorded through daily attendance sheets compiled by the FS&T administrator and amended by session leads. This is to satisfy compliance obligations as laid out by OFSTED and the voluntary and compulsory childcare register.

Unless we have been informed of any absence(s), staff are required to contact the parent/carers without undue delay. The reason for the absence is recorded on the daily attendance sheet.

Attendance is audited internally on a regular basis as part of our commitment to safeguarding and duty of care due diligence.

Failure of the staff to record accurate attendance may result in disciplinary procedures and/or dismissal.

For any other sessions not mentioned above we will follow up any absence and lack of attendance with a courtesy call.

Our attendance policy works in association with our [Payment and Cancellation Policy](#).

Forest School Training

Attendance is recorded at the beginning of each session and course for the following reasons:

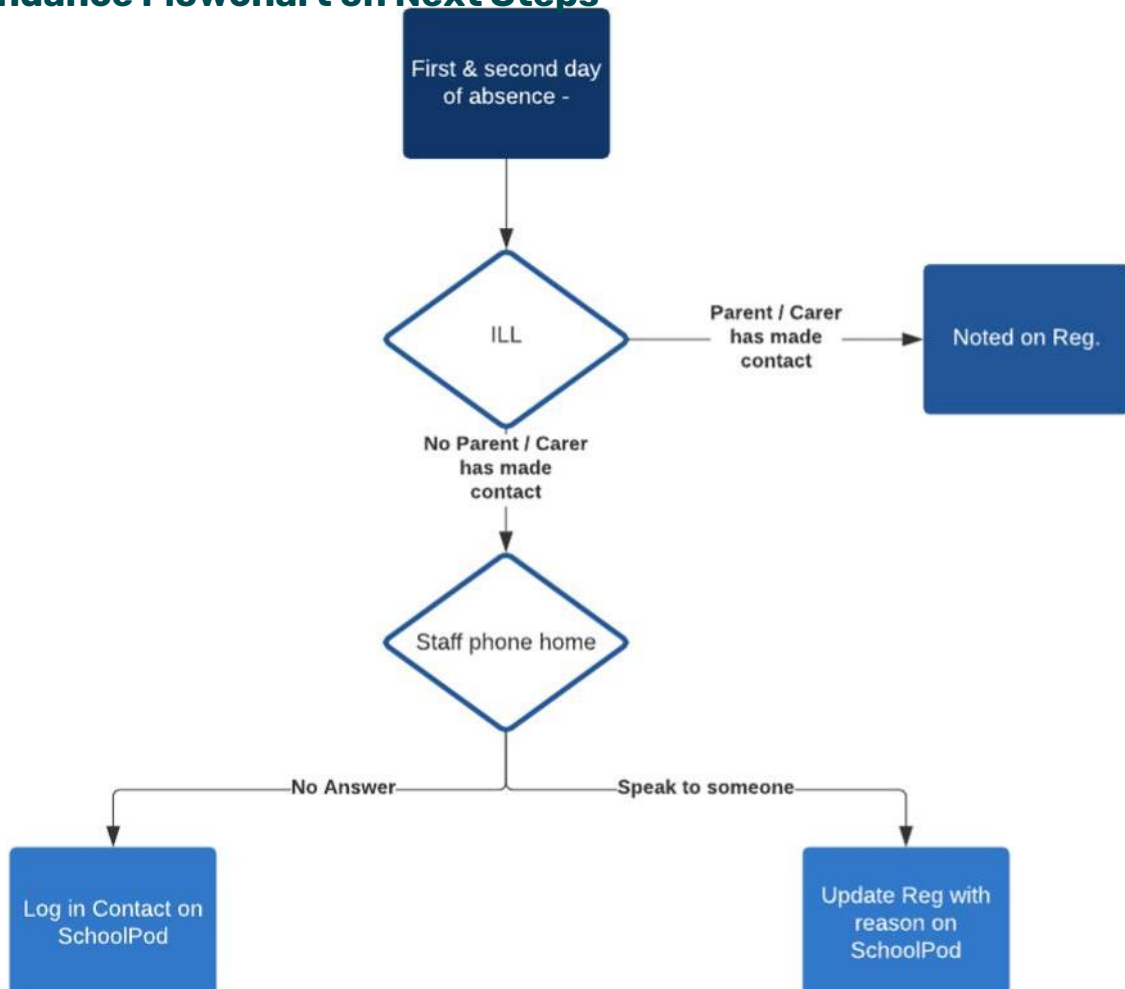
- To ensure that all guided learning hours required by the course are met
- To enable accurate payment records to be kept and reconciled against refund requests etc
- To provide evidence to the learner's funding organization of attendance.

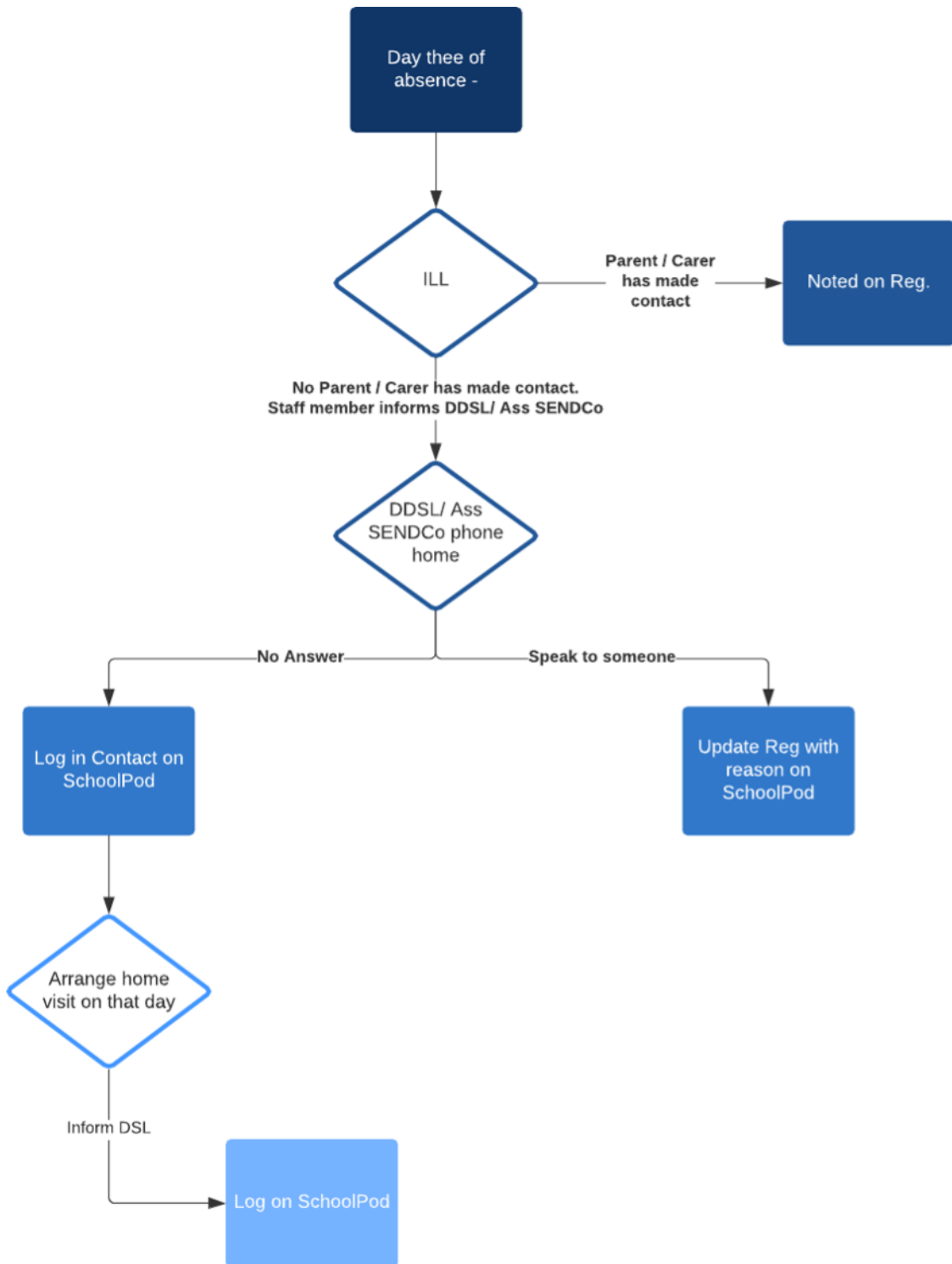
When learners fail to attend, we will carry out a welfare courtesy call.

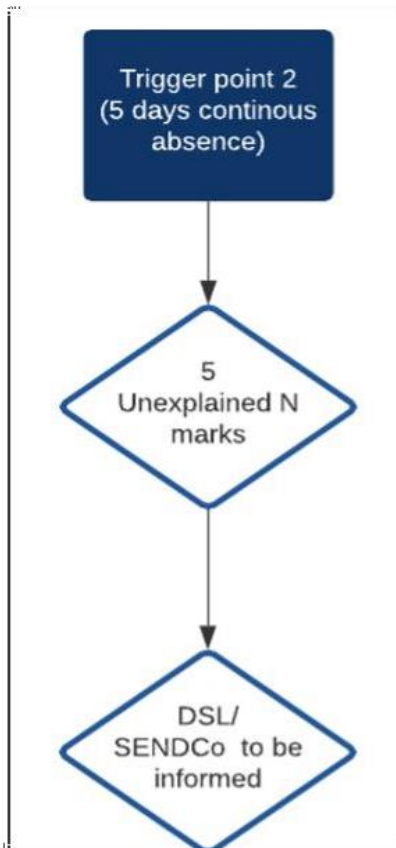
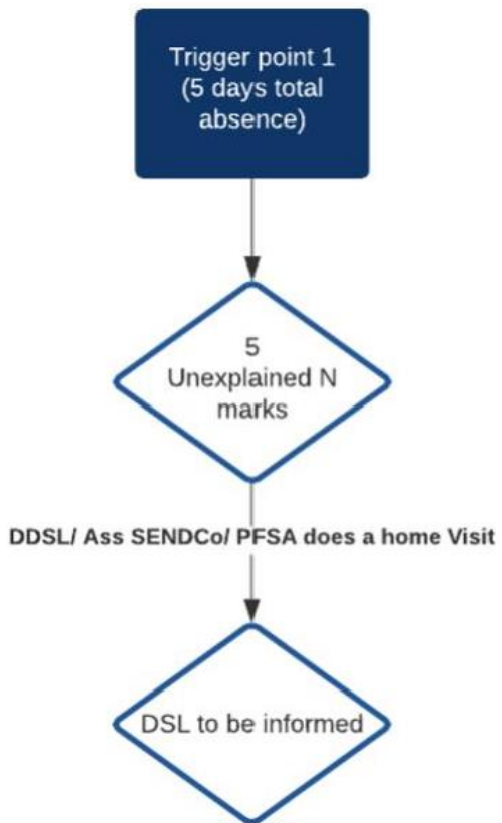
Appendix A: TOS Attendance Monitoring Process

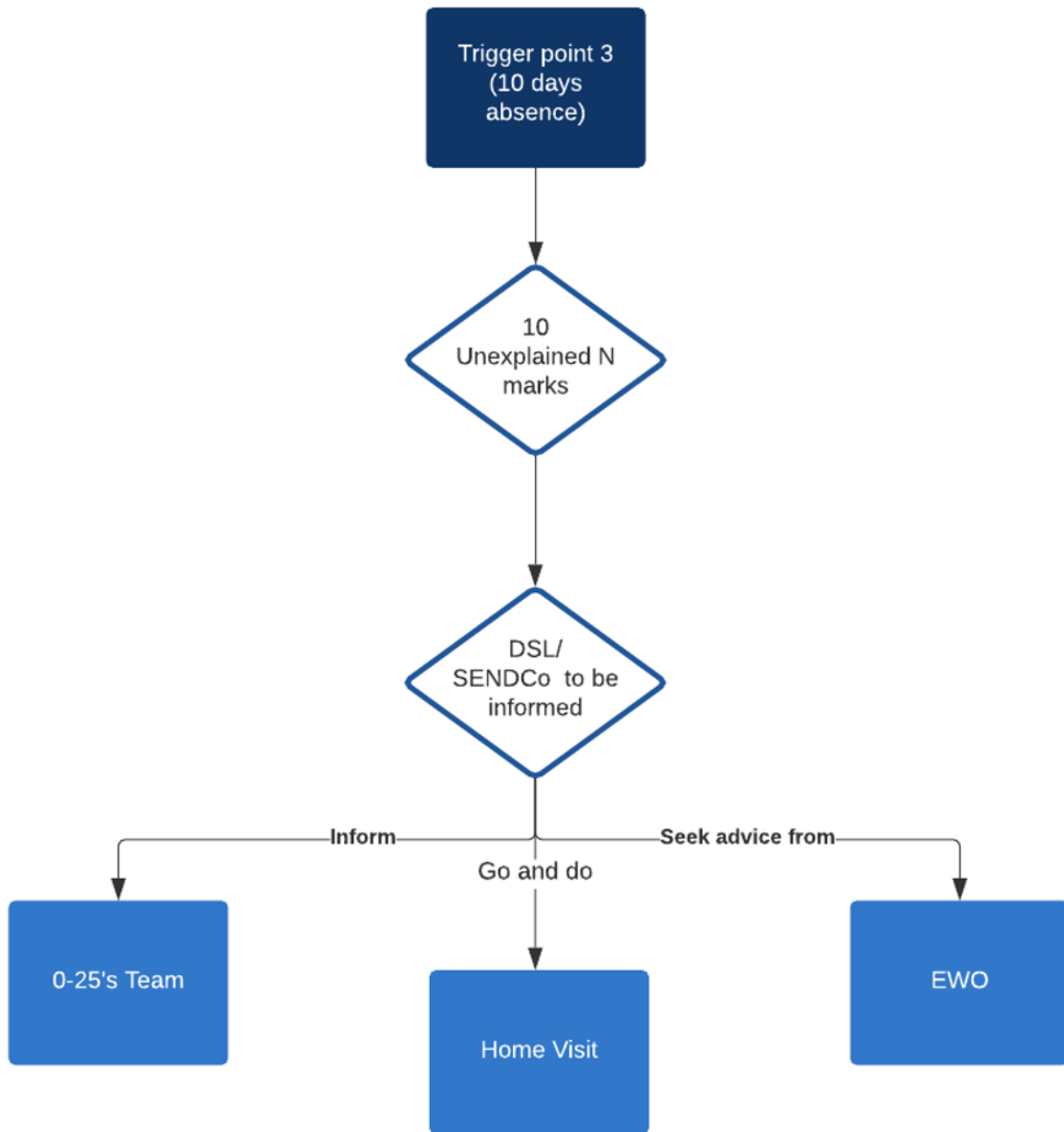
To support positive attendance, we have a clear system of monitoring and follow up:

Attendance Flowchart on Next Steps









Continued concerns relating to attendance will be discussed and where necessary the placing authority will be informed and may look at legal or supportive action to support the learner's attendance.