

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)



TOAST Attendance and Engagement Policy

1. Purpose of this Policy

TOAST is committed to providing an inclusive, supportive and engaging learning environment where every learner is encouraged and supported to attend regularly and participate meaningfully in their education.

Regular attendance and active engagement are essential in enabling learners to develop their knowledge, skills, confidence and independence. TOAST recognises that learners may experience barriers that impact attendance and participation and is committed to working collaboratively with learners, families, carers and external professionals to identify and reduce these barriers wherever possible.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote positive attendance and punctuality.
- Encourage meaningful learner engagement.
- Identify attendance or engagement concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- Provide timely and appropriate support to learners experiencing barriers.
- Ensure attendance is accurately monitored and recorded.
- Meet safeguarding and funding requirements.
- Promote a culture where every learner feels valued, supported and motivated to participate.

This policy applies to all learners enrolled at TOAST.

2. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Learner Support Policy
- Learner Induction Policy
- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)

- Admissions and Suitability Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy



3. Associated Procedures

Promoting Good Attendance

TOAST will encourage positive attendance by:

- Creating a welcoming and inclusive learning environment.
- Developing positive relationships with learners and families.
- Providing meaningful and accessible learning opportunities.
- Identifying barriers to attendance at an early stage.
- Working collaboratively with external professionals where appropriate.
- Recognising learner achievements and progress.

Learner Responsibilities

Learners are encouraged to:

- Attend all scheduled learning sessions where they are able.
- Arrive on time.
- Inform TOAST if they are unable to attend, where appropriate.
- Participate in learning activities to the best of their ability.
- Respect staff, peers and the learning environment.

TOAST recognises that some learners may require support to fulfil these responsibilities due to their individual needs.

Parent, Carer and Support Network Responsibilities

Parents, carers and support providers are encouraged to:

- Support learners to attend regularly.
- Notify TOAST as soon as possible if a learner is unable to attend.
- Inform TOAST of any medical appointments or planned absences.
- Work collaboratively with staff to address attendance concerns.

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)

- Share relevant information that may affect attendance or engagement.



Staff Responsibilities

Staff are responsible for:

- Creating engaging, inclusive and learner-centred sessions.
- Recording attendance accurately.
- Monitoring learner engagement throughout each session.
- Identifying emerging concerns promptly.
- Communicating attendance concerns with appropriate managers.
- Supporting learners to overcome barriers where possible.
- Recording interventions and outcomes where required.

Morning session registers should be completed within **15 minutes** of the session starting (by **9:45 am**).

Afternoon session registers should be completed within **15 minutes** of the session starting (by **1:45 pm**).

Attendance Recording

Attendance will be recorded for every scheduled learning session.

The member of staff leading or supervising the session is responsible for ensuring that an accurate attendance register is completed. Where appropriate, this responsibility may be delegated to another authorised member of staff; however, the member of staff leading the session remains accountable for ensuring the register is accurate and completed within the required timescales.

Attendance registers will be completed using the ZOHO Young People's Hub, which is TOAST's designated system for recording learner attendance.

Registers should accurately identify whether a learner is:

- Present.
- Late.
- Authorised absence.
- Unauthorised absence.
- Participating in an educational activity off-site.
- Attending a medical appointment.
- Absent for another agreed reason.

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)



Registers should be completed as soon as possible at the start of each learning session and no later than **15 minutes** after the scheduled session start time, unless exceptional circumstances prevent this.

Where a learner is absent, staff should ensure that the appropriate absence category is recorded within the ZOHO Young People's Hub, together with any relevant information known at the time. Any concerns regarding unexplained absence or patterns of poor attendance should be reported promptly in accordance with this policy and the organisation's safeguarding procedures.

Attendance records must be accurate, completed promptly and stored securely within the ZOHO Young People's Hub in accordance with TOAST's Data Protection and Information Sharing Procedure and Records Management Policy.

Attendance records must be accurate, completed promptly and stored securely in accordance with the Data Protection and Information Sharing Procedure and Records Management Policy.

Learner Engagement

TOAST recognises that attendance alone does not demonstrate successful participation or meaningful learning. Learner engagement is equally important and should be considered alongside attendance when evaluating a learner's progress, wellbeing and access to education.

Engagement may look different for every learner and should always be considered within the context of the individual's strengths, needs, communication preferences, learning goals and identified support arrangements. Staff should adopt a person-centred approach and recognise that engagement may vary depending on a learner's physical health, emotional wellbeing, communication needs, sensory processing, confidence and individual circumstances.

When monitoring learner engagement, staff should consider whether learners are:

- Participating in learning activities at a level appropriate to their individual needs.
- Engaging with staff, peers and the learning environment.
- Communicating effectively using their preferred methods of communication, including Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), visual supports, hearing assistive technology or other specialist communication methods where appropriate.
- Demonstrating interest, motivation or curiosity in learning, recognising that engagement may be expressed in different ways.

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)



- Working towards their individual learning outcomes, Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes and preparation for adulthood goals.
- Developing independence, confidence and participation in learning and wider activities.
- Accessing reasonable adjustments and support arrangements effectively.
- Experiencing any barriers that may affect their engagement, participation or progress.
- Requiring additional support, intervention or changes to their learning environment or teaching approach.

Where concerns regarding engagement are identified, staff will work collaboratively with the learner, parents or carers and relevant professionals to understand the underlying causes and implement appropriate support strategies. This may include reviewing teaching approaches, reasonable adjustments, communication methods, Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) strategies, Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), Barrier Needs Assessments, Individual Risk Assessments or other relevant support arrangements.

Learner engagement will be reviewed regularly through observations, learner voice, progress reviews and collaborative discussions to ensure that every learner is supported to participate meaningfully, achieve positive outcomes and reach their full potential.

Barriers to Attendance and Engagement

TOAST recognises that attendance and engagement may be influenced by a wide range of individual, environmental and social factors. We understand that attendance concerns are often an indicator of an underlying need rather than a lack of willingness to attend, and our approach is to identify and remove barriers wherever possible.

Potential barriers to attendance and engagement may include:

- Physical health needs.
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Anxiety or emotionally based school avoidance.
- Communication needs.
- Learning disabilities or additional learning needs.
- Sensory processing differences.
- Neurodiversity, including autism and ADHD.
- Medical appointments or ongoing treatment.
- Medication or fatigue.
- Transport difficulties.

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)



- Family circumstances or caring responsibilities.
- Bereavement or significant life events.
- Behaviour that communicates an unmet need.
- Difficulties with peer relationships or social interactions.
- Environmental factors, including noise, sensory demands or changes to routine.
- Safeguarding concerns.
- Barriers associated with transition or change.
- Other individual circumstances affecting attendance or engagement.

Where barriers are identified, TOAST will work collaboratively with the learner, parents or carers and relevant professionals to understand the underlying causes and develop appropriate support strategies.

Support may include:

- Completing a Barrier Needs Assessment.
- Implementing reasonable adjustments.
- Reviewing Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Plans, Individual Risk Assessments or Healthcare Plans where appropriate.
- Adjusting learning approaches, timetables or support arrangements.
- Providing additional pastoral, wellbeing or therapeutic support.
- Working in partnership with external agencies and professionals.
- Developing and reviewing an Attendance Support Plan where appropriate.

The effectiveness of agreed support strategies will be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to meet the learner's needs and promote improved attendance, engagement and positive educational outcomes.

Supporting Attendance and Engagement

TOAST recognises that every learner's circumstances are unique and that barriers to attendance and engagement may arise for a variety of reasons. Where concerns are identified, the focus will be on understanding the underlying causes and working collaboratively with the learner, their family and relevant professionals to provide appropriate support.

Support will be tailored to the individual needs of the learner and may include:

- Flexible approaches to learning where appropriate.
- Adjustments to teaching methods, learning activities or timetables.
- Reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) strategies.

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)



- Barrier Needs Assessments.
- Individual Risk Assessments.
- Communication adaptations, including the use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), visual supports, hearing assistive technology or other accessible communication methods.
- Wellbeing, emotional regulation or pastoral support.
- Additional learner support or intervention sessions.
- Review of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Plans or Healthcare Plans where appropriate.
- Transition planning and support during periods of change.
- Multi-agency working with parents or carers, the Local Authority, health professionals and other relevant agencies.
- Regular review meetings with learners, parents or carers and relevant professionals to monitor progress and review support arrangements.
- Attendance Support Plans with clearly agreed actions, responsibilities and review dates where appropriate.

Support arrangements will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective and responsive to the learner's needs. Where barriers to attendance persist, TOAST will continue to work collaboratively with the learner, their family and relevant professionals to identify further strategies that promote sustained attendance, engagement and positive educational outcomes.

Persistent Absence

TOAST recognises that persistent absence may be an indicator of underlying barriers to learning, wellbeing, health, safeguarding concerns or other factors affecting a learner's engagement. Our approach is to identify concerns early, work collaboratively with learners and families, and provide appropriate support to improve attendance and engagement.

The Attendance and Engagement Coordinator is responsible for monitoring learner attendance across the provision and identifying patterns of persistent absence, declining attendance or other attendance concerns.

The Attendance and Engagement Coordinator will:

- Monitor attendance records and analyse attendance trends using the ZOHO Young People's Hub.
- Identify learners whose attendance is causing concern or who are at risk of persistent absence.
- Liaise with Coordinators, the Senior Leadership Team and relevant staff to discuss attendance concerns.

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)

- Contact learners, parents, carers or support providers where appropriate to explore reasons for absence.
- Identify any barriers preventing attendance, including medical needs, anxiety, transport issues, safeguarding concerns or other factors affecting engagement.
- Work collaboratively with learners, families and relevant professionals to identify appropriate support and reasonable adjustments.
- Develop, implement and review Attendance Support Plans where appropriate.
- Monitor the effectiveness of agreed interventions and review progress regularly.
- Escalate concerns to the Senior Leadership Team or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where attendance raises safeguarding concerns or where additional intervention is required.
- Maintain accurate records of attendance concerns, contact with families and agreed actions within the ZOHO Young People's Hub.

Where attendance becomes a concern, TOAST will:

1. Monitor attendance patterns and identify emerging concerns.
2. Discuss attendance with the learner, where appropriate, to understand any barriers to engagement.
3. Contact parents, carers or relevant support providers.
4. Explore the reasons for absence and identify any underlying issues.
5. Consider whether safeguarding concerns, medical needs or additional support requirements are contributing to poor attendance.
6. Implement reasonable adjustments or additional support where appropriate.
7. Develop an Attendance Support Plan where attendance concerns persist.
8. Involve relevant professionals or external agencies where additional support is required.
9. Review attendance regularly and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
10. Escalate concerns through safeguarding procedures where there is reason to believe a learner may be at risk of harm.

The focus will always be on working collaboratively with learners and their families to improve attendance, remove barriers to engagement and support positive educational outcomes, rather than applying punitive measures.

Unexplained Absence

Where a learner fails to attend a scheduled learning session without prior notification or explanation, TOAST will take prompt action to establish the learner's whereabouts and ensure their safety and wellbeing.

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)



The Attendance and Engagement Coordinator is responsible for monitoring unexplained absences and ensuring that appropriate follow-up action is taken. Where the Attendance and Engagement Coordinator is unavailable, this responsibility will be delegated to an appropriate member of staff.

Where a learner is absent without explanation, TOAST will:

- Check the learner's attendance record, timetable and any available information regarding the absence.
- Attempt to contact the learner, parent, carer or relevant support provider as soon as reasonably practicable on the first day of absence.
- Record all attempts to make contact and any information received within the ZOHO Young People's Hub.
- Consider any known safeguarding concerns, vulnerabilities, medical needs, communication needs or individual risk factors.
- Liaise with the learner's Coordinator and other relevant staff to establish whether there is any known reason for the absence.
- Escalate concerns to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) where appropriate.
- Refer any safeguarding concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and follow the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy where there is reason to believe a learner may be at risk of harm.

Where contact cannot be established and there are concerns regarding the learner's welfare or safety, TOAST will undertake a dynamic risk assessment and determine whether further action is required. This may include contacting other professionals involved with the learner or, where appropriate, requesting a welfare check from the police.

Repeated unexplained absences will be monitored and reviewed by the Attendance and Engagement Coordinator in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team. Where concerns persist, TOAST will work proactively with the learner, parents or carers, the Local Authority and other relevant professionals to identify barriers to attendance, implement appropriate support and promote improved engagement.

Learner Missing During the Learning Day

Where a learner has been recorded as present but is subsequently unaccounted for during the learning day, this will be treated as a safeguarding concern and immediate action must be taken.

Staff will:

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)



- Immediately undertake a brief search of the immediate area and any locations where the learner is expected to be.
- Notify a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) immediately if the learner cannot be located.

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Coordinate a wider search of the building and surrounding areas where appropriate.
- Attempt to contact the learner immediately using any available telephone number.
- Contact the learner's parent, carer or emergency contact without delay to establish the learner's whereabouts.
- Review the learner's individual Risk Assessment, Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Plan and any known vulnerabilities or likely locations.
- Assess the level of risk based on the learner's age, understanding, communication needs, known behaviours, medical needs and individual circumstances.

Where the learner cannot be located, there has been no successful contact and there is concern for their immediate safety, the Senior Leadership Team will determine whether the learner should be reported as missing to the police.

As a guide:

- **Learners under the age of 18:** If the learner cannot be located and no contact has been established within approximately **5–10 minutes**, or sooner where there is an immediate safeguarding concern or increased level of risk, the police will normally be contacted without delay.
- **Learners aged 18 and over:** A dynamic risk assessment will be undertaken, taking into account the learner's capacity, known vulnerabilities, individual risk assessment and safeguarding needs. Where there are concerns for the learner's safety or wellbeing, the police will be contacted immediately.

All actions taken, decisions made, contact attempts and timescales will be accurately recorded within the ZOHO Young People's Hub and any safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

Following any missing learner incident, a debrief will be undertaken and relevant risk assessments, support plans and control measures will be reviewed to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)



Punctuality

TOAST recognises that arriving on time supports learners to access the full learning experience, establish positive routines and maximise opportunities to participate in education, community activities and preparation for adulthood.

Learners are encouraged and supported to arrive promptly for all scheduled learning sessions. Staff will promote the importance of punctuality whilst recognising that some learners may experience barriers that affect their ability to arrive on time.

Where lateness becomes frequent or begins to impact a learner's education, wellbeing or engagement, the Attendance and Engagement Coordinator, in collaboration with relevant staff, will seek to understand the underlying causes and work collaboratively with the learner, parents or carers and other relevant professionals to identify supportive solutions.

Support may include:

- Identifying barriers contributing to lateness.
- Implementing reasonable adjustments where appropriate.
- Reviewing transport arrangements or travel training needs.
- Providing additional pastoral or wellbeing support.
- Reviewing individual support plans, including Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Plans or Barrier Needs Assessments where appropriate.
- Developing agreed strategies to support improved punctuality.
- Monitoring progress and reviewing the effectiveness of agreed interventions.

The focus will always be on supporting learners to improve punctuality through positive, person-centred approaches rather than applying punitive measures.

Safeguarding

TOAST recognises that poor attendance, persistent absence, reduced engagement, frequent lateness or sudden changes in attendance patterns may be indicators that a learner is experiencing additional vulnerabilities, unmet needs or safeguarding concerns. Attendance and engagement are therefore monitored as an important aspect of safeguarding and promoting learner wellbeing.

All staff are expected to maintain professional curiosity and consider whether changes in a learner's attendance, punctuality or engagement may indicate that additional support or intervention is required.

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)



Where concerns are identified, staff will:

- Consider the learner's individual circumstances, known vulnerabilities and any existing support arrangements.
- Discuss concerns with the Attendance and Engagement Coordinator, Coordinator or Senior Leadership Team where appropriate.
- Record concerns accurately and promptly within the ZOHO Young People's Hub.
- Refer safeguarding concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in accordance with the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.
- Work collaboratively with learners, parents or carers and relevant professionals to identify and address any barriers to attendance, engagement or wellbeing.
- Follow organisational procedures where a learner is missing during the learning day or where their whereabouts cannot be established.

Where attendance, punctuality or engagement gives rise to concerns about a learner's safety or welfare, TOAST will take appropriate action without delay, which may include working with external agencies, the Local Authority or the police where necessary to safeguard the learner.

Attendance and engagement concerns will always be considered alongside safeguarding information, learner wellbeing, behaviour, health needs and other relevant factors to ensure a coordinated, person-centred response that promotes the safety, welfare and best interests of every learner.

Monitoring and Quality Assurance

Attendance data will be monitored regularly to:

- Identify attendance trends.
- Monitor learner engagement.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Inform learner reviews.
- Support continuous quality improvement.
- Meet funding and regulatory requirements.

Issue Date: *August 2026*

Review Date: *July 2027*

Lead Officer: *Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)*



Equality and Inclusion

TOAST is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and recognises that attendance, punctuality and engagement are influenced by a wide range of individual circumstances. We acknowledge that learners may experience different barriers to accessing education and that an equitable approach is required to ensure every learner has the opportunity to participate, achieve and succeed.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered and implemented, where appropriate, to ensure that learners are not disadvantaged because of a disability, medical condition, communication need, additional learning need or any other protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

TOAST will work collaboratively with learners, parents or carers and relevant professionals to identify barriers to attendance and engagement and develop person-centred strategies that support positive educational outcomes.

Support may include:

- Implementing reasonable adjustments.
- Providing flexible approaches to learning where appropriate.
- Adapting communication methods, including the use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), visual supports, hearing assistive technology and other accessible resources.
- Reviewing Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Plans, Individual Risk Assessments or Healthcare Plans where appropriate.
- Providing additional pastoral, wellbeing or therapeutic support.
- Working collaboratively with external professionals and partner agencies.

TOAST is committed to removing barriers to attendance and engagement wherever reasonably practicable and will always seek to provide support that promotes inclusion, independence, dignity and participation rather than creating additional obstacles. Accessibility, equality and inclusion will remain central to all decisions relating to learner attendance, engagement and participation.

Issue Date: August 2026

Review Date: July 2027

Lead Officer: Roxy Durran (Quality and Compliance Manager)

Appendix 1

ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

