



CAM WOODFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL

HEADTEACHER Mrs Louise Bennett

Attendance Policy

2024-26

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Attendance Policy Review Date May 2026

Attendance Policy

2024 - 2026

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Attendance Policy- ‘Working together to improve school attendance’ DfE Policy Document, Applies from 19th August 2024

At Cam Woodfield Junior School we want to ensure that our pupils are able to take the fullest possible advantages of all that we have to offer. We want every pupil to attend school every day that they can. This attendance policy sets out what is expected so that this may be achieved.

In embedding this policy across the school, we hope to work together in achieving the school’s attendance target which aims to support all pupils in achieving 100% attendance.

THE LAW – DfE Policy Document

- The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.
- Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.
- This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.
- For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

Responsibilities

Parents/Carers should:

- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- Book any medical appointments outside of the school day where possible.

The Principal will:

- Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.
- Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.
- Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.
- Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.
- Notify the LA and/or the Department for Education (DfE) of absence figures for the school and, where necessary, individual pupils.

The Senior Attendance Champion (SAC) will:

- Set a clear vision for improving and maintaining attendance.
- Establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence.
- Ensure that all staff use the systems to support pupils and families with absence.
- Will have a strong grasp on whole school absence data and will regularly monitor and evaluate progress.

Academy Trustees and Governing Body will:

- Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.
- Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.

Attendance % Thresholds

We expect all pupils to have good attendance at CWJS. We understand that at times a pupil may fall ill or is absent due to extenuating circumstances on the rare occasion. However, we will measure and report on pupils' attendance using these % thresholds in the table below:

100%	Excellent Attendance
96%	Good Attendance
91%	Room for Improvement – SAC Intervention
90% or Lower	Cause for Concern – Intense SAC & External Intervention
Further information regarding SAC (School Attendance Champion) intervention can be found on page:8.	

School Times

We expect children to be in the classroom at 8.50am for registration.

Staff are on duty in the playground from 8.40am

School timings for the start, lunch and end of the school day:

- 8:40am School gates are open.
- 8:45am School bell rings to signify lining up time for all children.
- 8:50am All children in class. The Register is taken by the class teacher.
- 12:20 – 1:10pm Lunchtime
- 1:15pm Afternoon register taken.
- 3:20pm End of the school day.

Children should be collected promptly unless they are attending an after-school activity. Parents will have been informed of the time for collection following an after-school activity.

If another parent or family member is collecting the child, then the school needs to be informed by the parent before the end of the school day. Failure to do so, will mean that the child will not be released to that adult until parent authorisation is confirmed.

In the unlikely event that a child is not collected at the end of the school day, and we cannot contact parents/carers or emergency contacts, social services will be contacted.

PLEASE NOTE: *Each school day consists of two sessions (8:50am morning and 1:15pm afternoon).*

Registration

School must keep attendance registers for all pupils on the school roll. The class teacher will call the register twice a day and every pupil will be marked as present, absent or engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site. It must be shown, by the use of approved codes (appendix 1) whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Registration will take place between 8.50am and 9.00am for the morning session and between 1.15pm and 1.25pm for the afternoon.

Pupils arriving between 8:50 – 9:00am for morning registration and 1:15 – 1:25pm for afternoon registration, will be registered as '**Late**'.

Pupils arriving after the registration periods (8:50 - 9:00am and 1:15 - 1:25pm) will be marked as '**Unauthorised Absence**' unless there is an acceptable reason for lateness.

The marking of registers will be in accordance with guidance issued by the DfE.

Only the school can decide whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised and does not have to accept the reasons given by a parent or carer.

Authorised Absence

Is when a pupil:

- Is absent with the prior permission of the school;
- Is attending an official examination from a registered board that is in school time e.g. associated with music, dance or martial arts etc;
- Is too unwell to attend school or is attending a medical or dental appointment;
- Is away for a day set aside by their parent's religion for religious observance;
- Has suffered a family bereavement;
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable where the parents and the school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons, and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable.
- Has been suspended or excluded;
- Of Traveller parents if travelling in connection with their work.

An approved educational activity is not recorded as an absence and will be marked when a pupil is on a school/educational visit, is attending an approved off-site activity or is receiving special off-site tuition.

Unauthorised Absence

Is when:

- A pupil is absent and no explanation or an unacceptable explanation is offered;
- A pupil arrives after the registration period has closed without an acceptable reason;
- A pupil is away from school on a family holiday for a period not previously agreed as exceptional with the Principal.
- A pupil is away from school for a period not previously agreed as exceptional with the Principal.

Please refer to the table below that clearly states how many sessions your child will miss, according to how many days they have as unauthorised absence.

School Days Absent	Sessions Missed (am & pm)	Unauthorised Absences
1	2	2
2	4	4
3	6	6
4	8	8
5	10	10
6	12	12

Holidays in Term time

Approval for holidays taken in term time cannot be granted unless the reasons are exceptional. Taking a holiday without the leave being agreed in advance by the school may result in the Local Authority issuing a penalty notice.

Appointments

We ask that parents and carers book appointments after school hours or during holidays. If this is unavoidable, school must receive prior notification and an online absence request form, must be completed.

Appointment cards or consultant letters should be seen by office staff as proof of the appointment and a copy attached to the absence request form.

Pupils leaving school mid-session will notify the office on departure and re-arrival. If present at registration no amendment to the register is necessary. If absent at registration the register should be marked with an authorised absence mark. Again, for safety reasons, pupils should report to the office on arrival.

Part-time Timetables

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school or another setting full-time, and a part-time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible.

A part-time timetable should:

- Have the agreement of both the school and the parent the pupil normally lives with.
- Have a clear ambition and be part of the pupil's wider support, health care or reintegration plan.
- Have regular review dates which include the pupil and their parents to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.
- Have a proposed end date that takes into account the circumstances of the pupil, after which the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. It can, however, be extended as part of the regular review process. In some limited cases, a pupil with a long-term health condition may require a parttime timetable for a prolonged period.

'Support First' – Working together to support a child's attendance.

As the DfE notes, '*Improving attendance is everyone's business*', and it is important that we, as your child's school, work together in partnership with you, your family, your child, and the wider community.

The new 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' Guidance emphasises a 'Support First' ethos, and recognises that '*the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families... [It] is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.*'

If you are concerned about your child's attendance, then please contact the school office as soon as possible so that barriers to attendance can be understood, and appropriate support can be put in place to support you, your family, and your child to prevent further absences. Please request to speak to the School's Attendance Champion, Mrs Wainwright.

Intervention can be delivered in various ways depending on the needs of the child or family. The school's main aim will be to reduce the amount of time a child is away from school and will work in partnership with the parents or carers to address the main causes for the unauthorised lateness or absence.

Mental or Physical Ill Health or SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disabilities) Pupils

Some pupils face more complex barriers to attendance.

This can include pupils who have long term physical or mental health conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as it is for any other pupil but additional support may need to be provided.

In developing this support, the usual processes relevant to any attendance case apply:

- Understanding the individual needs of the pupil and family;
- Working in partnership with the pupil and family to put in-school support in place and working with other the local authority and other agencies where external support is needed (and available)
- Regularly reviewing and updating the support approach to make sure it continues to meet individual needs.

Longer Absences Due to Medical Procedures

Pupils who have been absent for a long period of time due to medical absence, will be positively welcomed back and will be helped to catch up with missed work. Friendship groups will be monitored for a period to ensure that the pupil is happily settled back into school life.

School's Day-to-Day Procedures on Attendance

1. After close of class registers, the office staff will check attendance.
2. The office staff will highlight any pupil(s) to the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) including the Senior Attendance Champion by email, who have an unexplained or prolonged absence.
3. Office staff will telephone unexplained or prolonged absence pupils' parents / carers and request a reason for their child's absence.
4. If the office has made contact with the parent / carer, this information will be logged onto the schools CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System) online portal.
5. The absence will be assessed by the Senior Attendance Champion and SLT to determine the level of action required to ensure the pupil returns to school.

Each case of absence will be accessed on an individual basis and will take into consideration the Welfare, Social, Emotional or Mental Health or SEND needs of the pupil(s) who are raising concern.

Increasing Pattern of Lateness or Unauthorised Absence – Intervention from the Senior Attendance Champion

Where the class register shows a pattern of Lateness or Unauthorised Absences that is increasing but is not meeting the 10-session threshold, and the SAC (Senior Attendance Champion) has concerns, the following intervention will be instigated:

The SAC will contact the parents to discuss the issue(s) that is/ are causing the barriers to attendance. After this first consultation the SAC will assess if further intervention is required.

If further intervention is required, the SAC will then arrange a face-to-face meeting with the parents / carers to offer intervention / help to improve their child's attendance. This meeting will be recorded on CPOMS and a plan will be created and shared with parents / carers. This plan will highlight SMART targets in improving the pupil's attendance. The SAC will monitor the plan and the pupil's attendance and meet with the parents / carers to discuss progress.

It may well be that part of these meetings it is advised that the SAC will make a referral to external professionals to support the family. This may be Early Help or other professionals that can support the family in improving their child's attendance. Before the referral is made, the SAC will request parental consent.

The SAC will also inform parents (if appropriate and not exposing the child to further risk or danger) and Designated Safeguarding Leads of any concerns regarding attendance and the pupil(s) welfare, in accordance to the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Formalising and intensifying the support – ‘Notice to Improve’

Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with, we will work with partners, including the local authority, to formalise and intensify the support.

As part of the measures introduced, if a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences within 10 school weeks, the pupil’s parent(s)/carer(s) may receive a ‘Notice to Improve’ sent via email on behalf of the school and issued by the Local Authority (LA). Each day of absence is recorded as two sessions (morning and afternoon). Please refer to the table under the section ‘Unauthorised Absences’ pg:6. Unauthorised absences include:

- A pupil is absent and no explanation or an unacceptable explanation is offered;
- A pupil arrives after the registration period has closed without an acceptable reason;
- A pupil is away from school on a family holiday for a period not previously agreed as exceptional with the Principal.
- A pupil is away from school for a period not previously agreed as exceptional with the Principal.

These 10 weeks can span different terms, academic years, and even different educational settings, such as transitions to secondary school or in-year school changes. For instance, if your child misses 3 days of school for a holiday in July (6 sessions) and is late after the register closes on 4 occasions (4 sessions) between September and October, you may be issued a ‘Notice to Improve’ notification.

The ‘Notice to Improve’ notification will set out the expectations and period notice for the improvement of attendance such as ‘no further unauthorised absences’.

Penalty Notice

Should the expectations not be met in the improvement period, then a Penalty Notice may then be requested by the school and issued by the LA to each parent/carers responsible for the child.

Any holiday-related absence taken that includes 10 sessions in 10 weeks, may result in a Penalty Notice. In this instance, a ‘Notice to Improve’ notification will not be issued beforehand.

The penalty amount is increasing to £160 from September (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days for the first offence). If a parent receives a second penalty notice within a rolling three-year period, the fine is £160 and there is no option to pay the fine at a reduced rate.

Parents with parental responsibility, and adults residing with the child, including for example, stepparents who have day-to-day responsibility for the child, may be fined, and this applies to each child who is absent. For example, if two adults take two children out of school, the total fines would be £640 (reduced to £320 for a first offence paid within 21 days).

If a Penalty Notice is not paid within the time limits set out in the letter to the parent, the Local Authority may proceed the case to court.

Data Sharing

From the start of the 2024 to 2025 academic year, it will be mandatory for schools to share their attendance data with the Department for Education (DfE).

Statutory requirement, data sharing and data subject rights The submission of school attendance data, including named pupil records, is a statutory requirement on schools under the following legislation:

- Section 537A of the Education Act 1996 (as amended)
- Education (Information About Individual Pupils) (England) Regulations 2013 (the 2013 Regulations) (as amended)

- Section 99 of the Childcare Act 2006 (CA 2006) (as amended)
- The Childcare (Provision of Information About Young Children) (England) Regulations 2009 (2009 Regulations) (as amended) A statutory requirement:
 - means that schools do not need to obtain parental or pupil consent to the provision of information
 - ensures schools are protected from legal challenge that they are breaching a duty of confidence to pupils 7
 - helps to ensure that returns are completed by schools
 - means that all pupil data collection elements are mandatory unless specifically stated to be voluntary

Strategies We Will Use To Support And Improve Attendance

To support our attendance policy we:

- Will treat attendance as a priority;
- Promote good attendance at every opportunity –at Parents evenings, at Induction, in newsletters, in assemblies, on notice boards etc.
- Always use first day telephone contact;
- Treat each case on an individual basis.
- Ensure that pupils suffering from SEMH needs are supported and other pastoral intervention will be put in place to support them in attending school regularly.
- Reward and celebrate good and improved attendance;
- Set attendance targets for the school and for each year group;
- Keep parents/carers informed of their child’s attendance level;
- Make good use of attendance data by specific analysis;
- Notify Governors at each full governing body meeting of attendance levels;
- Provide a safe, happy, stimulating environment for children where they feel valued and welcomed and that their presence in school is important.
- School will in partnership with families to reduce attendance barriers.
- School will work closely with external partners to improve pupils’ attendance.

Success Criteria

- We are meeting or exceeding our attendance targets.
- Our attendance is in line with, or exceeds that of local comparator schools.
- We have positive feedback from outside agencies such as Ofsted, LA etc
- Everybody is clear about what to do if a child is absent from school.
- We have clear processes and intervention in place to support families and pupils who are struggling with attendance.

Attendance Policy Review Date May 2026

Appendix 1: Attendance Register Codes

School

School Attendance Codes 2024

Present Codes	
/\	present during registration
B	educated off site and for taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes
K	attending provision arranged by the local authority under Section 19 of the EA 1996
L	arrived after the register has started but before it has closed
P	participation in a sporting activity with prior agreement from school
V	educational visit or trip supervised by a member of the school staff
W	attending work experience under arrangements by the school or local authority
Absent Codes	
Authorised Absences	
C	absence due to exceptional circumstances, agreed by the headteacher
C1	in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	absent due to part-time timetable, agreed by the headteacher and parent(s)/carer(s)
D	dual registered
E	suspended or permanently excluded, and no alternative provision made
I	illness (both physical and mental health related; not medical or dental appointments)
J1	job/school/college interview
M	medical or dental appointment
Q	unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
R	religious observance (only 1 day allowed; any more coded as C if agreed)
S	study leave
T	parent travelling for occupational purposes
X	non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	unable to attend due to transport provided not being available
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being unexpectedly closed
Y4	unable to attend due to unexpected whole school closure
Y5	unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect the pupil NOT the parent)
Unauthorised Absences	
G	holiday or absence for leisure-related purposes (not agreed by the headteacher)
N	reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)
O	absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	late after register has closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	prospective pupil not yet on register
#	planned whole school closure (e.g., holidays, Insets and polling station days)