



The Cam Academy Trust EHPS AND ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY	
Approved in consultation with the Curriculum & Standards Committee on behalf of the Trust Board:	17 th October 2018 16 th June 2020
To be reviewed:	Every two years or as appropriate
Date of next review:	June 2022
Responsible Officer:	Primary Executive Leader – Chris Jukes
Category – 2	Version 2
Adopted by EHPS LGB	25 TH August 2020

Aims and Principles

Schools within The Cam Academy Trust aim to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. Each school should be aiming for attendance of 96% + across the academic year through ensuring that all pupils regularly attend school.

Legislation and guidance

It is important that all schools to adhere to the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refer to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures, each of these documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

There is a need to use DfE's guidance on the school census to explain the persistent absence threshold and the high expectation that is set in monitoring this form of absence.



School procedures

Attendance register

All schools by law are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

The DfE attendance codes and Penalty Notices information should be included as appendices.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.



Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Reporting to parents/carers

It is important that schools set up an appropriate system for reporting attendance to parents/carers to ensure that there is a clear line of communication with parents/carers

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers (HT) of the trust school may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances' – ensuring that you have indicated a definition for this term.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained previously
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- EHPS will draw on the DfE's school attendance guidance indicating possible exceptional circumstances in which the headteacher may grant term-time holiday. As a matter of principle such absences will be the exception rather than the rule.
- Flexi – schooling requests can be made, and will be considered by the HT and Local Governing Board. As per above such absences will be the exception rather than the rule.

Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority (LA).

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the HT, following the LA's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the LA can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

Strategies for promoting attendance

EHPS will always promote and reward good attendance, including direct personal praise.

EHPS will react immediately to work with parents to support regular attendance through communicating early about issues, acknowledging positive improvements, indicating a named contact in school.



Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a [daily/weekly/monthly] basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see above).

If a pupil's absence falls below 95% during the academic year, the school should contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this. If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, the school must consider involving the Trust Education Welfare Officer (TEWO)

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and LA level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. Schools must share attendance data to the national average, and share this with the local governing body and trustees.

Each school in the trust must collect and store attendance data to use for internal purposes – for example, to track the attendance of individual pupils, identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

Roles and responsibilities

The Local Governing Board and Trustees

The LGB IS responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis and reporting this to the trustees who have overall responsibility for all trust school's attendance figures. The LGB also holds the HT to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

The HT is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The HT also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

Trust Education Welfare Officer

The TEWO will work across the schools in the CAM Academy Trust to ensure the highest possible levels of attendance and welfare for pupils. They will work in conjunction with the County Council to utilise the LA's statutory duties, responsibilities and powers for school attendance.



The Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the HT
- Works with TEWO to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the HT when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Class teachers

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

Office/reception] staff

Office/reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

THERE FOLLOWS AN ADDENDUM TO THIS POLICY TO REFLECT THE IMPACT OF COVID 19 FOLLOWING THE FULL RETURN TO SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 2020

Addendum: COVID-19 School Attendance Policy June 2020

Is attendance compulsory?

Eligible children (including priority groups) - are strongly encouraged to attend EHPS, unless they are self-isolating, or they are clinically vulnerable.

No one with symptoms should attend EHPS for any purpose. If someone in their household is extremely clinically vulnerable, children should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to, and the child is able to understand and follow those instructions.

Families should notify their school as normal if their child is unable to attend so that staff can explore the reason with them and address barriers together.



Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.

EHPS is committed to work with and support the relevant families and pupils to return to school.

Under the Coronavirus Act 2020, the law has been relaxed, so that the parent of a child of compulsory school age is not guilty of an offence on account of the child's failure to attend regularly at the school at which the child is registered (section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

Can the children of critical workers and vulnerable children still attend school, even if they are not in priority years?

Yes. Now that we have made progress in reducing the transmission of coronavirus, we are encouraging all eligible children to attend settings (where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household), even if parents are able to keep their children at home.

Vulnerable children and young people of all year groups are expected to attend educational provision where it is appropriate for them to do so.

How can schools encourage pupils to attend and maintain good attendance?

For those pupils eligible to attend, schools should address absence by sensitively exploring parents' and pupils' concerns and what is preventing attendance and work with them to re-engage pupils where appropriate. Families should notify their school as normal if their child is unable to attend. Schools should also continue to follow up with any parent or carer whose child has been expected to attend and doesn't.

Schools should work together with the EWO and other relevant partners to support parents and children in their return to regular attendance. When working to improve attendance, schools and other partners should consider the individual circumstances of each child and parent in order to ensure that they are appropriate to the child's needs. Schools may wish to focus support particularly on pupils who were previously persistently absent or at risk of being so.

No one with symptoms should attend a setting for any reason. If someone in their household is extremely clinically vulnerable, as set out in the [guidance on shielding](#), they should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to, and the child is able to understand and follow those instructions.

Schools should continue to inform social care where children with a social worker do not attend.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children and young people will continue to attend educational provision, where it is appropriate for them to do so.

In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an educational setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker (where appropriate) and educational setting should explore the reasons for this, directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting the virus, the school or social worker should talk through these concerns with the parent following the advice set out by [Public Health England](#). Educational settings should notify the child's social worker (where relevant) where the child does not attend school.

Where applicable, designated safeguarding leads and/or equivalent staff should keep under review their lists of vulnerable children and young people who should be attending provision. Education providers and other professionals will want to work together to ensure adequate and appropriate arrangements are in place to keep in touch with vulnerable children and young people (whether they are attending provision, or not attending for an agreed or non-agreed reason), such as by email, phone or visit. To support this, educational settings should take the opportunity when communicating with parents and carers to confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

Schools should resume taking the attendance register following re-opening to more pupils. Guidance on completing the attendance register at this time, along with which codes to use, is available. Schools should also continue to submit the [Educational Setting Status form](#) via the online portal to report whether they are open and how many children and staff are in school.

Schools should have a policy on how long the register should be kept open and where a school implements staggered start times, they may wish to consider temporarily extending this period

Schools and colleges will not be held to account for attendance levels at this time.

Attendance Registers -

Schools should:

- resume taking the attendance register when more groups of pupils begin to return to school
- consider using the attendance and absence codes in the following sections when completing the attendance register until further notice
- This guidance on resuming the attendance register will be reviewed regularly as the situations develops.

Pupils who are not eligible to attend a session

This includes any pupil who is not in an eligible year group or priority group (children of critical workers and vulnerable children). This may also include children who are in an eligible year group but are not required in school for a specific session, i.e., year 10 and year 12 pupils who are not among the quarter of pupils expected in school at a given time.



They should be recorded as code X (not required to be in school). (Temporarily, code X can be used for compulsory school age children – usually it is only used where non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.)

Pupils who are eligible to attend a session but do not

This includes children in eligible year groups, children of critical workers and vulnerable children, such as:

- where a pupil is shielding, self-isolating, or the pupil has an education, health and care plan (EHCP) and their risk assessment says that their needs cannot be safely met in school, they should be recorded as code Y (unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances). (Temporarily, code Y can be used where a pupil is prevented from attending school due to following government guidance on coronavirus). To help you to complete the educational setting status form, you should note whether the absence is due to shielding or isolation
- where a pupil cannot attend school due to illness, as would normally be the case, the pupil should be recorded as code I (illness). To help you to complete the educational setting status form, you should note whether the illness involves coronavirus symptoms
- where a pupil does not attend school - despite being eligible and is not shielding, self-isolating, unable to attend due to illness, nor has an EHCP risk assessment saying their needs cannot be safely met at school, the pupil should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) where no other authorised absence code is appropriate

At this time, all absence should be classed as authorised.

Pupils who are attending other schools

Where a pupil is attending:

- another school at which they are registered, as would normally be the case, code D (dual registered) should be used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question as they are attending the other school at which they are registered
- a host school on a temporary basis because their home school cannot accommodate them, the pupil will not be registered at the host school. The home school should record the pupil as attending an approved education activity using code B (off-site educational activity) - the host school does not need to add this child to their attendance register but should keep a record of their attendance for safeguarding purposes and include the child in their daily totals for the educational setting status form - schools should put in place arrangements whereby the host school notifies the home school of any absences.



Using other authorised absence and attendance codes

Where other specific authorised absence and attendance codes are more appropriate schools may want to use these as usual, such as code M (medical appointment).

Staggered start times

Schools should have a policy on how long the register should be kept open but where a school implements staggered start times, they may wish to consider temporarily extending this period, or reopening the register.

The EWO will continue to work with schools to monitor the welfare of vulnerable children who are not attending school, and other pupils they might wish to keep in touch with, for safeguarding purposes. Further information is set out in the [vulnerable children guidance](#).

Attendance figures (using agreed categories) each day (by noon) will be reported to the trust EWO.

[Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus \(COVID-19\) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)