



Children Missing or Absent from School Policy

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Next Review 01-28
Approved by: TZL

This Policy applies throughout the School from the EYFS to Year 6.

Children who are school age and who are not attending school on a regular basis are at risk of poor educational outcomes and are more likely to become NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life. Going missing from home, care or school or being regularly absent from school can also be an indicator of abuse or harm both within the family and the community.

Definition

The Department for Education statutory guidance, Children Missing Education (2025), defines children missing education as children of compulsory school age who are not:

- On a school roll
- Placed in alternative provision by the local authority
- Receiving a suitable education elsewhere, either at home or within the private sector

Keeping Children Safe in Education also recognises the need to safeguard all children who are absent from school; these are children who have a school place but are absent from school for prolonged periods or on repeat occasions. These children require an early safeguarding response from schools to avoid them becoming children missing education. This policy relates to all children who are missing or absent from school.

Children missing education are at significant risk of underachievement, safeguarding concerns and exploitation. The School will ensure timely identification, robust tracking and appropriate referral of all pupils who are absent or at risk of becoming children missing education.

Regulatory framework

Schools have a statutory duty under S. 175 of the Education Act 2002 and S.11 of the Children Act 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) to work with the relevant local authorities, safeguarding partners and other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, identify children who may need early help and take prompt action where there are child protection concerns. The School and Governing Body must have regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance Children Missing Education as part of their efforts to promote the welfare of children.

The Borough of Camden has a further duty under section 436A of the Education Act 1996 and related statutory guidance, Children Missing Education, to identify any child in the borough of statutory school age who is missing education and to take steps to provide access to appropriate

education provision. School attendance is compulsory from the first term after a child's 5th birthday up to the last Friday in June after the child's 16th birthday.

This Policy also has regard to the Independent School Regulatory Requirements, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026; Children Missing Education statutory guidance (September 2025); Working together to improve school attendance (August 2024); the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024; and the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework (September 2025).

Purpose

The welfare of all pupils at The Cavendish School is our paramount responsibility. All staff should be aware that children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns both within and outside the family. We are aware that this may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. Absence may indicate parent or child mental health problems. Additionally, it may indicate risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage.

Extra-familial harm is the risk young people face outside their family, arising from risks within the community or neighbourhood environment or from their peer group. Extra-familial harm includes substance misuse, anti-social and criminal behaviour, child sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation (including county lines) and violent extremism.

Young people who are out of education or who are regularly absent from school are more vulnerable to extra-familial harm, particularly exploitation, as it provides their exploiters with an opportunity for grooming. Where children are already going missing or absent from school, this is a key indicator that they may already be involved.

The Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, emphasises the vulnerability of children who are missing or absent from education to harm and abuse, and that being missing or absent from education is a key indicator of extra-familial harm and exploitation.

The School recognises that all children may be vulnerable to harm, exploitation or abuse regardless of age, background or context.

Staff must always maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' with regard to safeguarding issues. Staff must respond promptly to any concerns about absence, missing education or a pupil's whereabouts.

Early identification and intervention

In line with Department for Education statutory guidance (September 2025), the School recognises that early identification of absence is critical in preventing children from becoming missing from education.

The School will ensure that:

- All pupils are accounted for through daily attendance monitoring
- Any unexplained absence is followed up on the same day
- Emerging patterns of absence are identified and acted upon without delay
- Information is shared promptly with relevant safeguarding partners where concerns arise

The School will adopt a support-first approach, working with pupils and families to understand and address barriers to attendance before considering enforcement action, unless there is an immediate safeguarding concern.

The School will identify a Senior Attendance Champion who will work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the local authority to monitor attendance data, identify patterns and ensure timely intervention.

School duties

The School has a statutory duty to:

- Ensure details of the pupil are on the admission register when the child first registers at the school
- Monitor pupil attendance through daily attendance records
- Carry out reasonable enquiries about the child's whereabouts if the child fails to attend
- Carry out reasonable enquiries without delay, and in partnership with the local authority where appropriate
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date attendance records and systems to track and monitor absence effectively
- The School has a duty to ensure that the information held on the register is up to date, particularly where and with whom the child currently lives, and should regularly request parents to check and update information.

Notify Camden's Education Services where:

- A pupil's name is added to the school roll outside of the normal transition points (notification to be sent to the Admissions team)
- A pupil does not attend for 10 school days or more without permission (notification to be sent to the Pupil Attendance Service)
- The school is about to remove the pupil's name from the roll Children Missing Education Lead Officer / Monitoring and Inclusion Officer at the Attendance & Out of School Service (ACOS)

The School will never remove a pupil from roll because of attendance difficulties, behaviour, additional needs, disability, parental complaints, academic attainment, or to avoid exclusion or inspection outcomes. All deletions from roll will comply strictly with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Early Years specific information

This policy and all of the included processes and procedures apply to all pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In the event that an EYFS child goes missing, staff must act immediately, ensuring remaining children continue to be supervised in line with statutory ratios. All trips involving EYFS children will include a detailed risk assessment and regular headcounts. Following any incident, procedures and risk assessments will be reviewed and updated. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are particularly vulnerable. For EYFS pupils:

- Contact must be made immediately on the first morning of absence
- If no contact is made, concerns must be escalated to the DSL on the same day
- There must be no 'wait and see' approach

Any unexplained absence in EYFS must be treated as a potential safeguarding concern.

Taking action when children are missing or absent

These procedures should be followed whenever a child is absent from school without authorisation or explanation from parents or fails to return to school at the start of term or other agreed time.

Generally, when children fail to attend school, their whereabouts are usually known; however, there may be occasions when a child and their family go missing and cannot be traced. In these cases, there is an expectation that the school and Camden staff will carry out reasonable enquiries in order to establish the child's whereabouts.

Action by the School (Day 1)

Whenever a pupil fails to attend School without prior permission, the School Secretary will contact the parents on the first day of absence to establish the reason for absence and when the pupil is likely to return to School. This contact must take place as soon as possible on the first day of absence and must not be delayed. The School Secretary should try to ensure that the child is safe and at home and should record who they spoke to and what information was provided. The School will not assume that absence is authorised or that a child is safe without confirmation from a parent or carer.

If on contact, the parents report that the child is also missing from home, the Local Authority's missing children protocol should be followed; the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school should be informed **immediately** and a missing children risk assessment should be carried out. The school should establish what actions parents have taken, for example, checking with friends, and whether the child has been reported as missing to the police.

If it is not possible to contact the parent by phone or email, or the school is not reassured that the child is safe and well and at home, this must be escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead on the same day. A risk assessment must be undertaken immediately to determine whether a home visit, police welfare check, referral to Children's Safeguarding and Family Help (CSFH/MASH), or contact with the local authority is required. Action must not be delayed until day 10, where there are concerns about the child's safety or welfare.

If the child is known to the Safeguarding and Children's Social Care team, their allocated social worker should be notified immediately. Where the child is looked after they should be reported as missing from school to their allocated social worker in their placing borough.

Most school absences will be for a short time and will be authorised by parents. In most cases, any missing episode will be resolved by dialogue between the school and the parent early in the process. However, where there are known vulnerabilities, previous safeguarding concerns, sudden changes in attendance, repeated absence, persistent lateness, or where the child's welfare cannot be confirmed, the DSL must consider immediate safeguarding action, including referral to CSFH/MASH or the police, without delay.

Day 10 absence

If, by day 10, the child has not returned, the local authority must be notified and continue to work jointly with them to make reasonable enquiries. Please use the form at the link below. Following notification, Camden may undertake further enquiries across education, safeguarding, housing, health and other services to help locate the child and ensure access to suitable education.

<https://forms.office.com/e/98DtzGmcXd>

Day 20 absence and removing the child's name from the school roll

If by day 20, following reasonable enquiries by the school and Camden Learning, the child's whereabouts have not been established or there is no reason to believe the child cannot attend because of illness or other cause, the school should formally notify Camden that the child's name will be removed from roll in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Failure to attend on the first day of admission

All new pupils are placed on the School's admission register (iSAMS – the School's information management system) at the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed that the pupil will attend the School. Notification that a pupil's name has been added to the School roll must be sent to the relevant local authority admissions team within five days of adding the pupil's name on iSAMS.

If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed date, staff must inform the Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, in her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) without delay. If there are concerns about the pupil's whereabouts, the Head and DSL/DDSL will notify the local relevant authority at the earliest opportunity using the appropriate form.

Where there are changes affecting the pupil (including a change of address or school), these will be reflected on the iSAMS system. This will assist the School and external agencies when making enquiries to locate any missing pupils.

The School requires parents to provide contact details for two or more adults who can be contacted in an emergency.

Risk assessment

When assessing risk, the school should consider the following:

- Is the child known to CSFH in Camden or elsewhere?
- Is the child looked after or looked after previously?
- Is the child currently subject to a child protection plan or a child protection investigation?
- If not, does the school have any current concerns about the child?
- Is the child known to CSFH as a child in need?
- Have there been previous concerns or previous involvement with CSFH in Camden or elsewhere?
- Is the child known to the Early Help service?
- Is this a mobile family?
- Is there a history of poor attendance?
- Have parents previously been subject to proceedings in relation to attendance?
- Are there any immigration issues?
- Is the child vulnerable because of disability or mental and emotional wellbeing?
- Is the child at risk of contact with concerning adults, including contact online?
- Has the child been known to associate with adults who pose a risk to children?
- Is the child at risk of CSE? (A separate CSE risk assessment should be carried out).
- Is the child at risk due to FGM, forced marriage or abduction and consequently at risk of being removed from the UK?
- Is the child at risk of extra-familial harm and/or exploitation?
- Is the child a young carer?
- Is there a history of domestic abuse and violence in the family?
- Is there a history of parental mental ill health or substance misuse?
- Is the fact that the child is missing unusual?
- Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk?
- Is the child in the process of being assessed for special education needs/Education, Health and Care plan?
- Is there an indication that the child may be subject to radicalisation or extremism?
- Is there a history of disruption to education, such as suspensions or permanent exclusions, frequent changes of school for the child or a sibling or a history of concerns about the child's behaviour at school?

Procedure to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing from the School

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing pupil is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child is found to be missing, we will take the following steps without delay:

- Take a register to ensure that all other pupils are present
- If age appropriate, check with the pupil's friends to see if they know the missing pupil's whereabouts
- Check the timetable to ascertain whether the pupil attended the previous lesson. Speak to that class teacher

- Contact the School Office (contacting the School Office immediately by telephone, email or in person). The School Secretary will carry out the following checks:
 - The absence list
 - The Medical Room
 - The sports fixtures and activities lists
- Inform the Head and the DSL/DDSL
- Ask all adults and pupils calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the missing child
- Occupy the other pupils in their classroom(s)
- The Head (in her absence, the Deputy Head Strategy and Operations) will arrange for one or more adults to search the School premises, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, etc., where a pupil might hide. The adults will be given specific areas to search. Particular attention will be paid to:
 - Music practice rooms
 - Lavatories
 - Learning Support rooms
 - All classrooms
 - Cloakrooms
 - Gym
 - St Mary's Hall (NB check under retractable seating)
 - Playgrounds
- Check the doors, gates and CCTV records for signs of entry/exit

EYFS requirement

At least one member of staff must remain with the other pupils at all times to maintain statutory ratios.

If the pupil is still missing, the School will take the following steps without delay:

- Inform the Head and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- The Head will ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been taken. The Head will ask the parents to come to the School at once
- The Head or DSL/DDSL will notify the police
- Carry out a local area check on foot (along Inverness Street and Arlington Road)
- If the pupil's home is within walking distance, a member of staff will set out on foot to attempt to catch up with them
- The DSL/DDSL will inform the Camden Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- The School will co-operate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chair of Governors
- Inform the School's insurers
- If the pupil is injured, a report will be made under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 15 days after the accident

During the course of the investigation into the missing child, the school, in consultation with the LADO, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

A record is kept by the school of any instances in which a pupil is missing or absent from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation. A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted. The School will always consider the wider circumstances around a child going missing from School and whether there are wider safeguarding concerns that may need to be addressed in line with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Kentish Town Police Station non-emergency: 101

Emergency Services: 999

Procedure to be followed by staff if a pupil goes missing on an educational visit

- An immediate head count will be taken to ensure that all other pupils are present
- An adult will search the immediate vicinity
- If appropriate, contact the venue manager and arrange a search
- Inform the Head and the DSL/DDSL by mobile phone
- Immediately contact the police
- The remaining pupils will be taken back to School as soon as reasonably practicable
- The Head (in her absence, the Deputy Head Strategy and Operations) will ring the pupil's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been taken. The Head will ask the parents to come to the venue or the School, as appropriate, at once
- The DSL/DDSL will inform the Camden Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) and the LADO
- The School will co-operate fully with any police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by the local authority
- Inform the Chair of Governors
- Inform the School's insurers
- If the pupil is injured, a report will be made under RIDDOR to the HSE as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 15 days after the accident

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. The school will review its procedures and, if appropriate, these would be adjusted.

School procedures when travelling by tube

Pupils occasionally travel by tube, accompanied by teachers. All children are made aware of the procedure which they must follow if they become separated from the teachers or the remainder of the party for any reason:

If any pupil is left alone on the platform at a tube station because they have not boarded the train with the remainder of the party for any reason, they should wait on the platform. A teacher will get off at the next stop and return immediately to collect them.

If a pupil boards a train at a tube station for any reason without a member of staff, the pupil should get off at the next stop and wait on the platform. A member of staff will come on the next tube to meet them.

Procedure to be followed by staff once the pupil is found

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the pupil
- Inform the Head, who will inform the DSL/DDSL and then the police if appropriate
- The Head (in her absence, the Deputy Head Strategy and Operations) will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident (having discussed this beforehand with the LADO if necessary)
- The Head will instigate a full investigation (if appropriate, involving the LSCB)
- Media queries should be referred to the Head (after discussion with the LADO if appropriate). No other staff should communicate with the media
- The investigation should involve all concerned, providing written statements
- The investigation report should be detailed, covering: time; place; number of staff and children; when the pupil was last seen; what appears to have happened; the purpose of the trip; the length of time that the pupil was missing and how they appear to have gone missing; lessons learned for the future
- Consider whether actions need to be taken in line with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy where there are concerns about the welfare of the child

Records and procedures

The School will maintain a clear written chronology of all enquiries, contacts, referrals, decisions and actions taken in relation to pupils who are absent, missing from education, or removed from roll.

A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the pupil was found will be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures will be adjusted.

During the course of the investigation into any missing child incident, the School, in consultation with the LADO, will decide what information should be given to other parents, staff and other pupils and how any media enquiries are to be dealt with.

Children who are vulnerable to harm whilst missing or absent from education

Some children are more vulnerable to going missing from education or being frequently absent and consequently may be at risk from harm whilst out of school because of their circumstances, and staff should be aware of the following:

- Children who are at risk of harm may be kept from school in order to cover up abuse, or may not be attending school due to neglect. If a child is missing or absent from school and there

are concerns about their safety or welfare, staff must follow child protection procedures and make a referral to CSFH as appropriate. Staff can seek advice from the MASH team on a “no names” basis if they are unsure about what action to take

- Children from overseas may have been trafficked into the UK for the purposes of exploitation and modern slavery, for example, for domestic servitude, forced labour or benefit fraud. In these cases, the child will be enrolled at the school for a short time before disappearing, having been moved on for exploitation. Camden’s schools and Camden’s Schools Admissions Team should be aware of any adult who is seeking a school place for a child for whom they are not a close relative. For further guidance, please see the CSCP guidance on safeguarding trafficked children: <https://cscp.org.uk/resources/child-trafficking-and-modern-slavery/>
- The School is aware that young girls may be taken out of school for the purposes of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage. The School should be vigilant to families taking extended holidays abroad, or failing to return from holiday, especially where an older sibling is thought to have experienced FGM or forced marriage. For further details, please see government guidance for schools: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>
- Young people who go missing or are regularly absent from school are vulnerable to extra-familial harm and exploitation. Pupil absence may also be an indicator that a young person is already at risk or being exploited. Schools should be aware of young people who regularly do not attend and also those who go missing from school during the course of the school day. The School should also be vigilant to exploiters targeting schools and collate and report any evidence of young people getting into cars with older teens or unknown adults
- Children may be absent from school because they have run away from home or care and may be at risk whilst away. It is important that the School is aware of pupils who may have run away, particularly children who may have run away from home but not been reported missing by parents. For further information on the role of schools, children’s centres and education staff, please see the CSCP Missing children protocol: <https://cscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/CSCP-missing-protocol-2023.pdf>
- Some children may be taken out of school because parents wish to home educate. Parents have a right to home educate, but where schools have concerns about the safety and welfare of a child who is about to be removed for home schooling, a referral should be made to the MASH team and a discussion held with the PAS to ensure contact is made with the family
- Although in many schools it is difficult for pupils to leave the school building during the school day, the school needs to be aware of instances where pupils are regularly absenting themselves from schooling during this time and take appropriate action to monitor post-registration truancy. Cases should be discussed with a key member of staff in school, such as the Deputy Head Pastoral, the Head or the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The School recognises that children do not need to be missing from education to be at risk. Pupils who are persistently absent, frequently late, or whose attendance patterns change suddenly may also be at risk and must be monitored closely.

Information sharing

The School will share information in line with statutory safeguarding duties, the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Concerns about sharing information must not prevent the timely sharing of information where this is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. Information will be shared in a timely, proportionate and lawful manner with relevant agencies where there are safeguarding concerns.

This includes:

- Notifying the local authority of pupils who fail to attend regularly
- Sharing information where a pupil's whereabouts cannot be confirmed
- Working jointly with the local authority to make reasonable enquiries

Early Help services and Children's Safeguarding and Family Help (CSFH)

As part of our safeguarding duty, the School is responsible for identifying when a pupil may need extra help from an early help service or be at risk of harm due to their absence or frequent missing episodes. The school can refer to Camden's Early Help service or CSFH on behalf of the pupil. Pupils who are persistently absent from education are amongst those children identified as requiring an early help service. Where a pupil is not attending, there is an expectation that the School will work in partnership with parents and carers to try to engage them in a dialogue in order to resolve any issues and ensure the pupil's attendance.

The School has a duty to ensure that the information held on the register is up to date, particularly where and with whom the child currently lives, and should regularly request parents to check and update information. Where the school is notified that the child will be changing schools, the name of the destination school should be recorded.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Every adult who works at the School has been trained to appreciate that they have a key responsibility for helping to keep all our pupils safe at all times. This includes the importance of effective information sharing to ensure that our pupils are safe and receiving a suitable education. Where staff have concerns that a pupil is missing from School, this Policy should be followed.

Every member of our staff has read Part 1 or Annex A (as appropriate to their role) of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Our staffing ratios are generous and are designed to ensure that every pupil is supervised the whole time that they are in our care.

Camden Learning

Camden Learning through the Attendance & Out of School Service (ACOS) is responsible for:

- Identifying any child who is CME in order to ensure all children in the borough are in receipt of a suitable education

- Providing robust systems to oversee the monitoring of school attendance, absenteeism and the movement of pupils within education provision
- Making reasonable enquiries (jointly with schools) where a child goes missing from school or is persistently absent
- Taking action on notifications from schools, including the use of School Attendance Orders and Education Supervision Orders
- Supporting vulnerable children to access education
- Supporting schools to facilitate pupils to reintegrate into education following disruption
- Elective Home Education

A full list of the services available from education services is set out in Appendix 1 of this document.

Information for parents

Our Supervision of Pupils Policy describes:

- The arrangements for pupils arriving at School and leaving the premises at the end of the day
- The arrangements for supervising pupils whilst they are in School
- The arrangements for registering pupils in both morning and afternoon. Parents are responsible for notifying the School if their child is absent for any reason. The School will always contact parents if a pupil fails to arrive at School without an explanation
- The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the building
- The supervision of the playground

The enhanced supervisory arrangements for our pupils when on School trips are set out in a detailed Educational Visits Policy, which can be found on the School's website.

We review all our policies regularly in order to satisfy ourselves that they are robust and effective. All new staff receive a thorough induction into the importance of effective supervision of pupils and read Part 1 and Annex B of the DfE's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Working with children who are persistently absent

The School monitors attendance closely and will take action to address poor or irregular attendance. More information can be found in the Attendance Policy and Procedure, which is available on the School's website.

The School is required to monitor the attendance of pupils and ensure plans are in place to improve attendance. The ACOS and School Inclusion Team (SIT) will work with schools and parents where there are concerns about a pupil who is enrolled at school but is persistently absent from school:

- The School can seek advice and guidance from the ACOS/SIT on the next steps to help resolve attendance concerns

- The School can refer to the Local Authority Attendance Strategy for resources on how to improve attendance
- Where the School has worked with families and attendance remains a concern, a referral can be made to the PAS for legal action

PAS contact information can be found in Appendix 1 to this policy

In-year transfer to another school

Where a child is changing schools, the previous school should transfer information to the new school. The School will ensure that the destination school is recorded wherever known, and that Common Transfer Files and safeguarding information are shared promptly via appropriate secure systems.

The School recognises that transition points are a key risk for children becoming missing from education and will follow up on any pupil who does not start at an expected destination school.

As transitions are a crucial time for children to drop out of the system, Camden has put the following processes in place to check that all children are moving on to a suitable education provision.

If a child is transferring to another school at any other time (casual or in-year admissions) and the originating school does not know the destination school, has had no request for school records, or records have been returned, the school should follow the procedures for CME.

Elective home education (EHE)

Parents have a duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age are receiving a suitable full-time education. This may be at home or at a school and parents have a right to withdraw their child for home schooling at any time, provided the child is not subject to a School Attendance Order.

Where parents wish to remove the child for elective home education (EHE), they should give written notification to the school and the school must take the child's name off the school roll and notify the local authority. Pupils receiving EHE are monitored by Camden's Pupil Attendance Service. Camden may use a School Attendance Order to ensure parents have applied to schools. Legal action may also be taken by the Pupil Attendance Service, which will take action against parents where there is an issue of non-attendance for a child who is registered on a school roll. Legal action, such as a fixed penalty notice, will be issued by the Pupil Attendance Service (PAS) in line with the policy set out in the Penalty Notice and Enforcement Protocol.

Resources

DfE statutory guidance Children Missing Education (September 2025)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education/children-missing-education-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities-and-schools>

Keeping Children Safe in Education

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf

Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/69fb1c28d0e316a40f269a5b/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2026_a_guide_to_multi_agency_working.pdf

Camden Supporting People Directorate Children missing from education: guidance for schools, social workers and education staff

<https://cscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Children-missing-from-education-Camden-local-guidance.pdf>

Linked policies

- Attendance Policy and Procedure
- Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Code of Conduct for Other Adults
- Educational Visits Policy
- New Staff Induction Policy
- Non-collection of Pupils Policy
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supervision of Pupils Policy

APPENDIX 1 – CAMDEN ATTENDANCE SERVICES CONTACT DETAILS

Children with poor school attendance

The Pupil Attendance Service works to promote, support and, where necessary, enforce school attendance, to assist schools in developing policy relating to attendance and to establish links between home and school in order to support the education of children.

**Contact: PAS (Co-ordinator – Ed Magee) 020 7974 1653 or email ed.magee@camden.gov.uk
pas@camden.gov.uk**

Children living in women’s refuges

The PAS and Camden Safety Net work in partnership to identify and re-engage children living in women’s refuges. They also work together to offer a service by which schools can transfer the records of pupils who have relocated due to domestic abuse without knowing the name and location of the new school. Children who live in refuges will be treated as in-year admissions and applications will be made to individual schools. The Supporting People Directorate will look to strengthen links with domestic abuse services and refuges in the borough to ensure children have equal access to educational provision.

**Contact: PAS (Co-ordinator – Ed Magee) 020 7974 1653 or email ed.magee@camden.gov.uk
pas@camden.gov.uk**

Children of homeless families living in temporary accommodation, houses of multiple occupancy or Bed and Breakfast and unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees or children of asylum-seeking families

The SIT Officer works collaboratively with agencies internal and external to Camden, schools, parents and local voluntary organisations to ensure that school-age children (homeless, refugee and asylum seekers) are encouraged and supported in accessing education and are included in the mainstream education system.

Contact: SIT Officer (Sona Ruparell 020 9794 4596)

Young runaways

The School Inclusion team works with colleagues from CSFH and representatives from the Children’s Society to identify and refer those children and young people requiring extra support.

Contact: Whitney Boateng/Shaniqua Maddix (020 7974 3317)

Children with long-term medical and exceptional mental health needs

The School Inclusion Team ensures that pupils with medical needs have the opportunity to access a good quality and appropriate education. The School Inclusion Team works with parents, pupils, schools and any other agency to ensure that the educational needs of each pupil are met and that a planned, effective, regularly monitored and flexible reintegration programme is put in place for those children well enough to return to school.

Contact: School Inclusion Team (Dylan Buckle 020 7974 1654)

Looked after children

The Looked After Children and Care Leavers team (LACCL) and the LAC Virtual School accept referrals for looked after children who are currently on the roll of an educational provider in Camden but who are at risk of going missing from education. Children placed in care who do not currently have a place on the roll of an educational provider are referred to the Admissions team for reception and year 7 places and to schools for in-year admissions. This includes children placed in Camden by other authorities. The Admissions Code states that the highest priority must be given (unless otherwise provided in the Admissions Code) to looked-after children and all previously looked-after children. Previously looked after children include children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. All schools are reminded regularly about their duty to prioritise LAC and to place pupils in appropriate educational provision as quickly as possible.

Contact: LAC Virtual School Head (Sheila Durr 07717 864385)

Young carers

Family Action provides individual and group support to 7-17-year-olds identified as young carers.

Contact: Rachel Leah – Family Action (0207 272 6933)

Children who are permanently excluded from school

Those children who are permanently excluded from school are supported through the School Inclusion team to ensure that they do not miss education. The Children and Learning Directorate provides an offer of full-time education for all permanently excluded pupils and this is usually delivered through Camden's Pupil Referral Units, although alternative providers may be used if this is deemed appropriate.

Contact: School Inclusion Team (Dylan Buckle on 020 7974 1654 & Estella Maselino on 0207 974 5202) or email exclusions@camden.gov.uk

Children with poor school attendance

The ACOS team and School Inclusion Support Officers (SISO) work to promote, support and, where necessary enforce school attendance, to assist schools in developing policy relating to attendance and to establish links between home and school in order to support the education of children. SISOs have assigned schools.

**Contact: ACOS (Team Manager – Ed Magee) 020 7974 1663 or email ed.magee@camden.gov.uk
Acos@camden.gov.uk**

Children attending alternative education providers (AEPs)

For young people who are unable to access mainstream schools and who are missing from education, a School Inclusion Team works with the family to identify appropriate provision, such as at a local college. There are robust procedures in place to track pupils' progress and attendance in Partnership with the Alternative Pathways Team.

Contact: CME Lead Officer Sona Ruparell 020 7974 4596 Alternative Pathways Co-ordinator (Kirsti Byrne) 020 7974 4508

Children with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs

Outreach support to primary schools for pupils with SEMH needs and challenging behaviour is available from Robson House (Primary Learning Support Service). The Robson House Outreach Team supports children, from Nursery through to Year 6, whose behaviour puts them at high risk of permanent exclusion from a mainstream primary school. The service aims to help schools develop skills and feel more confident in managing children's challenging behaviour. The service works with the whole school, with groups, and with individual children and can provide telephone advice about issues relating to individual pupils, groups, or whole school needs. Discussions are confidential and anonymous. Concerns can therefore be discussed without the involvement of parents/carers. Where direct work is agreed, referral is made with parental consent via e-CAF. The service also provides training centrally and in schools on the management of challenging behaviour, including the use of physical intervention to promote the safety of children and adults. All training and other support is delivered free of charge.

For more information, please **contact Darryl Jones (Head of School, Robson House) by telephone on 020 3772 0370, or by email (darryl.jones@camden.gov.uk).**

Camden Learning can provide advice and support to secondary schools around behaviour in schools and the range of support services and provisions available.

Contact: Chris Roberts, Camden Learning (07766 070080) School Inclusion Team Dylan Buckle (020 79741654)

Children with child protection plans or where there are child protection issues

Schools may contact Camden's MASH team for information and advice on child protection issues and whether to make referrals. If the child is already known to CSFH, the school should contact the allocated social worker.

Contact: Camden MASH team (020 7974 3317)

APPENDIX 2 - PRESCRIBED GROUNDS UNDER WHICH PUPILS CAN BE TAKEN OFF-ROLL AND NOTIFICATION TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY EDUCATION (PUPIL REGISTRATION)

The School will not remove a pupil from roll on the basis of absence alone, unmet needs, behaviour, or where the pupil could reasonably be supported to return to education. All deletions from roll will comply strictly with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and will be made in consultation with the local authority where required.

Ground A - The pupil has been registered at another school

Where a pupil has been registered at another school, unless:

- A school attendance order naming the school is in force in relation to the pupil
- The pupil is a mobile child and the school is their main school
- The school has agreed with a person with control of the pupil's attendance at the other school that the pupil should be registered at more than one school
- The school itself has control of the pupil's attendance at the other school and has decided that the pupil should be registered at more than one school

Ground B - The pupil has not continued at the school following completion of nursery education

Where a pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education and, on completing nursery, does not continue into reception (or a more senior class).

Ground C – The pupil is also registered at one or more other schools and the other schools have agreed to the deletion

Where a pupil is registered at one or more other schools, and:

- The school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again
- Each school where the pupil is registered has given consent to the deletion
- There is no school attendance order naming the school in force in relation to the pupil
- The pupil is not a mobile child, or if they are, the school is not their main school

Ground D - The pupil has a school attendance order which has been changed to name another school

Where the pupil is the subject of a school attendance order that previously named the school, but another school has now been named on that order instead.

Ground E - The pupil had a school attendance order, which has been revoked

Where the pupil was the subject of a school attendance order naming the school, but the order is revoked because the local authority that made the order is satisfied that arrangements have been made for the child to receive suitable full-time education for their age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs somewhere other than at a school.

Ground F - The parent of a pupil has notified the school in writing that the pupil will be leaving the school to be educated otherwise than at a school

Where the pupil's parent has informed the school in writing that the pupil will no longer attend the school after a certain day and will receive education otherwise than at a school and that day has passed, and there is no school attendance order naming the school in force in relation to the pupil.

It would not be appropriate for school staff to encourage EHE as a solution to difficult issues, as this is unlikely to be in the best interests of the child. The school - not the parent - has a legal duty to notify the local authority when deleting a child from roll under this criterion. An EHE notification must be sent by the school to EHE@camden.gov.uk

[Educating your child at home - Camden Council](#)

Ground G - The pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school

Where a pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school, the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again, and the pupil is not a boarder at the school.

In circumstances where parents are moving away and withdrawing their child but are unable to say how their child will continue with their education, for example, the family are relocating but have not been able to secure a place at a new school in advance, once the pupil has completed their final day at school and moved out of the area, the school must delete the pupil's name from the admission register and the pupil's information should then be transferred to the Lost Pupil Database via the S2S system.

Schools must obtain details of the child's new address and refer to the CME Officer to enable a CME notification to the destination local authority and reduce the risk of the child falling out of the education system. Children must only be removed once the destination LA has confirmed receipt of the notification.

Where a parent has notified the school that the child is leaving the country and the school has reason for concern under safeguarding, then a referral to MASH must be made. Children who leave the county are not deemed as CME.

Reasonable distance

DfE does not define reasonable distance because each case depends on the family situation and the geography of the area, for example, the parents' ability to get the child to the school, a safe walking route or the accessibility of local transportation.

Ground H - The pupil has not returned following a leave of absence

Where a pupil has been granted a leave of absence and:

- The pupil has not attended school within the ten school days immediately after the end of the period for which the leave was granted
- The school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause
- The school and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances, but they have not succeeded, or they have succeeded, but they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps that could be taken (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance

Ground I - The pupil has been continually absent from school for 20 school days

At no time was the absence during that period authorised by the school.

- The school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause
- The school and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances, but:
 - o they have not succeeded, or
 - o they have succeeded, but they agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will attend the school again, taking into account any reasonable steps they could take (either jointly or separately) to secure the pupil's attendance

Pupils who have been located but have not returned to school.

Where a pupil has been located and their circumstances discovered, but they have not returned to school, a joint decision is required between the school and the local authority before this ground is used. Both must agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe the child will return to the school, even with reasonable support and/or enforcement to try to cause their return to school. This means the final criterion will be met very rarely, usually when a pupil has been out of the country for a prolonged period and there are no signs of the pupil returning.

This ground cannot be used in any case where the pupil could reasonably be supported to return to school, regardless of whether that support has been provided. It cannot be used where a pupil is absent because of a health reason. It also cannot be used in cases where attendance legal action to cause the pupil to return to school could reasonably be taken instead. In such cases, the appropriate support or enforcement should be taken rather than the pupil's name being deleted from roll.

Ground J - The pupil is detained under a sentence of detention

Where a pupil is found guilty of a crime and detained under a sentence of detention, before the pupil's name can be deleted from the admission register, the school must have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will not return to the school once they are released.

This must be decided on a case-by-case basis after considering whether the pupil will return at the end, or partway through their sentence (e.g., where part is served on licence in the community).

In determining whether there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will return to the school following their detention, it is expected that schools will discuss this with the pupil's youth offending team worker.

Pupils who are remanded to custody awaiting trial or sentencing cannot be removed under this ground.

Ground K - The pupil has died

A pupil's name should only be deleted from the admission register when the school is informed of the death. This would normally come from the pupil's parent, but it is possible that notification comes from another source, such as relatives or the police.

Once the school receives the information, it is particularly important to delete the pupil's name as quickly as possible to prevent inadvertent and unnecessary contact with the family about the child

Ground L - The pupil will be over compulsory school age and will not continue into the sixth form

Where a pupil will be over compulsory school age by the school next meets, and:

- the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again
- the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements to be transferred to the school's sixth form

Compulsory school age

A pupil ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Ground M - The pupil is a boarder at a school maintained by a local authority or academy and their boarding fees have not been paid

Where a pupil is a boarder at the school and:

- the school is maintained by a local authority or is an academy
- charges for the pupil's board and lodgings are payable by the pupil's parent
- those charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate

Ground N - The pupil has ceased to be a pupil at an independent school or non-maintained special school

Where a pupil has ceased to be a pupil at the school and the school is not maintained by a local authority or an academy (including a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts).

Ground O - The pupil has been permanently excluded from the school

Where a pupil has been permanently excluded from the school, a pupil's name cannot be deleted from the admission register until the outcome of any consideration of reinstatement and independent review (in the case of a disciplinary exclusion from a maintained school, pupil referral unit, or academy) or appeal (in the case of a city technology college or city college for the technology of the arts) is known.

Not yet compulsory school age – The LA requests returns for all children at non-transitionoff points, including children below compulsory school age. Although this is not a statutory requirement, it ensures the LA has clear visibility of all children.