

**YOUR
CHILD
AND
ATTENDANCE
AT
SCHOOL**

Your Child and Attendance at school

Why is attendance important?

As a parent or guardian, you have a legal responsibility to make sure that your child attends school and is not late. Our registers are taken at 8:45am. When pupils are late or absent from school, they have to find time to make up missed work and lose out on chances of working and mixing with their friends. We expect an attendance of above 97% and full punctuality.

Parents' Charter

Under the Parents Charter, schools now have to publish their rates of unauthorised absences or 'truancy'. This means schools will be changing some of their previous rules about absences. Absences will now fall into two new groups, authorised and unauthorised absence.

What is authorised absence?

Authorised absence means time out of school for approved reasons, for example: taking part in activities outside school, such as sports, field trips, visits to museums etc., even though these may be in school time.

Illness and urgent medical treatment are also authorised absences. The school will need an explanation from you (a note or telephone call) if they are to authorise the absence. Routine dentists and GP appointments should be made outside school hours.

What is unauthorised absence?

Unauthorised absence is any absences from school without any explanation from you, or where the reason for absence is one that the school will not authorise.

What you should do about absences:

Please contact the school on the day of absence before 9:30am. This can be done by email to absent@csg.school or by telephone 020 7485 3414. If you need to take your child away for any length of time, no matter how short, you **must** tell the school in advance so that they authorise the absence. The school will then understand the reason for absence and if there is a problem you can discuss it with them in advance.

Holidays

No holidays should be booked or taken during term time. Under exceptional family circumstances you must apply in writing to the Headteacher for permission.

The Education Welfare Service

If there are any problems with your child's attendance at school teachers may ask the Education Welfare Officer for the school to contact you. The role of the Education Welfare Officer is to support the partnership between parents and schools and to ensure that the maximum school attendance of Camden pupils is achieved.

The EWO also deals with the notification of Children Missing Education & Elective Home Education by informing the local authority of this.

The Education Welfare Officer may wish to see you and your child at school, at your home or an agreed venue, eg Crowndale Centre. She or he will want to discuss the reasons for non-attendance and to support parents in addressing any issues that are linked to unauthorised absences.

Penalty Notice

From 1st September 2012, the local authority's Penalty Notices for pupils with low attendance have become more stringent. Currently 8 unauthorised absences (U) in 8 weeks will warrant a penalty notice. A penalty may also be issued for persistent absences where attendance continues to remain below 90% in a term.

A Penalty Notice will be issued for each child in the family to the parents/carers. The cost of a Penalty Notice is **£60** per parent per child if paid within 21 days. After this period of time, it doubles to **£120** for a further 7 days. If a Penalty Notice is not paid after 28 days of the date of issue, the authority may start court action which may result in a fine of up to **£2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment resulting in a criminal conviction for each parent for the offence of irregular attendance.**

Camden Education Authority may prosecute parents under the 1996 Education Act, for failing to ensure that their child received an efficient full-time education. Unauthorised absence can then be tackled by devising a planned programme of support for a child in collaboration with parents.

Points to remember:

1. Please contact the school before 9:30am either by email to: absent@csg.school or telephone 020 7485 3414 if your child is absent from school, or by letter if they intend to be away at a later date. (There is an answer machine if you ring before 8am)
2. Make non-urgent medical/dental appointments out of school time.
3. Do not take your child on holiday during term time.
4. If you have any problems with your child's attendance, contact the school. We are here to help you and your child get the most from their education.