

Policy and Procedure on Attendance

Potterspurry Lodge School and Children's Home

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1. Monitoring and Review

- 1.1.** The Proprietor will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than three years from the date of approval shown above, or earlier

if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

- 1.2.** The local content of this document will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head of Service.

Signed:



Andrew Sutherland
Representative, Proprietor- Cambian Group
 November 21

2. Terminology

- 2.1.** Our aim is to use consistent terminology throughout this policy and all supporting documentation as follows:

'Establishment' or 'Location'	this is a generic term which means the Children's Home/school/college Potterspurry Lodge School is a school.
Individual	means any child or young person under the age of 18 or young adult between the ages of 18 and 25. At Potterspurry Lodge School we have 40 children attending and/or residing between the ages of 8-18
Service Head	This is the senior person with overall responsibility for the school. At Potterspurry Lodge School this is the Principal who is Jenny Nimmo. * dual registered locations need to include Service Head and Registered Manager if they are not the same person.
Key Worker	Members of staff that have special responsibility for Individuals residing at or attending the Establishment.
Parent, Carer, Guardian	means parent or person with Parental Responsibility
Regulatory Authority	Regulatory Authority is the generic term used in this policy to describe the independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services. At Potterspurry Lodge School this is Ofsted.
Social Worker	This means the worker allocated to the child/family. If there is no allocated worker, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.
Placing Authority	Placing Authority means the local authority/agency responsible for placing the child or commissioning the service
Staff	Means full or part-time employees of Cambian, agency workers, bank workers, contract workers and volunteers.

3. Definitions

Authorised absence

- 3.1. An absence is classified as authorised when an Individual has been away from Location for a legitimate reason and the Location has received notification from a parent. For example, if an Individual has been unwell, the parent/carer/guardian writes a note or telephones the Location to explain the absence.
- 3.2. Only the Location can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority.
- 3.3. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes an Individual out of Location to go shopping during Location hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised absence

- 3.4. An absence is classified as unauthorised when an Individual is away from our Location without the permission of both the Location and a parent.
- 3.5. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if an Individual is away from Location without good reason, even with the support of a parent. The Location keeps accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of five years.

4. Legislation

- 4.1. Complies with Part 3, paragraph 17 of The Education (Independent School Standards Compliance Record) (England) (Amendment) Regulations.

5. Applies to:

- 5.1. the whole Location inclusive of activities outside of the normal Location hours;
- 5.2. all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor and volunteers working in the Location.

6. Availability:

- 6.1. This policy is made available to parents/guardians, carers, staff and pupils from the Location office.

7. Introduction/Aims

- 7.1. We expect all Individuals on roll to attend every day, when the Location is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.
- 7.2. We do all we can to encourage the Individuals to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our Location a happy and rewarding experience for all Individuals.
- 7.3. The Proprietors are responsible for making sure the Location keeps Admission and Attendance registers in accordance with the regulatory requirements. For all day pupils of compulsory school age our attendance register records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also

indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised. The Proprietors also ensure that a compliant admissions register is also kept.

- 7.4.** The school or college calendar and dates when the location is open can be accessed from the home page of our website. Alternatively, our term dates and Calendar of Events can be obtained from the School Office.

Emergency closures for such things as extreme weather will also be communicated to parent / guardians / carers via a telephone call / email or posted on the school website.

Non-Negotiables

- 7.5.** Every child is expected to attend school every day

When pupils' attendance falls below 90% they become a concern for senior leaders.

Attendance is monitored daily.

Daily contact is made with the parents of pupils whose attendance is a concern.

Good attendance is rewarded and celebrated publicly.

Pupils who are persistently absent are monitored daily and parents are contacted regularly (even daily if appropriate) to celebrate improvements or remind them of targets. Records are kept of this contact.

All parents are informed of attendance expectations at transition into school including pupils who join midyear.

Reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with medically diagnosed serious illness.

Regular meetings are held with parents and medical professionals to update next steps.

Medical appointments must be held outside of the school day except in exceptional circumstances where school leaders are made aware of the exceptional circumstances.

School Attendance and The Law

- 7.6.** By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

Unauthorised absence may result in the school referring to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

This may include issuing each parent with a Penalty Notice for £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days or referring the matter to the Magistrates Court whereby each parent may receive a fine up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

There is no longer any entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school".

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended in September 2013. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that the heads of school may not grant any

leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

The Role of the Parents/Guardians/ Carers

7.7. Parents/guardians/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring that Individuals of compulsory school age 5 to 18 receive a suitable education, either by regular attendance or otherwise.

Our Responsibilities

7.8. We are required to maintain two registers:

- An admission Register - known as the School Roll
- An attendance Register. (School Pod / Behaviour Watch Portal)

The Admission Register

7.9. This gives particular information about Individuals who are currently registered as attending this location. For the purposes of day to day management, the admission register will be contained within the school database, although selected information will be printed and placed in key location (such as the Staff Room, School Office, DSL Office and the Headteacher's Study, to facilitate ease of access of information). The register will comprise information that is compliant with regulations set out in the education (pupil registration) (England) regulations 2006, which have superseded the regulations of 1995 and the amendments of www.opsi.gov.uk. For each pupil, the admission register will contain:

- Name in full
- Sex
- Name and address of every person known to the Governor to be a parent of the pupil (and an indication of the parent with whom the pupil normally resides)
- At least one telephone number at which the parent can be contacted in an emergency
- Day, month and year of birth
- Day, month and year of admission or re-admission to the school
- Name and address of the school last attended, if any
- An indication of boarding/care order or day attendance (external placements)

Attendance Register

7.10. We are required to ensure that the attendance register for all Individuals on the Register School Pod / Behaviour Watch is taken twice a day – once at the start of the morning session (Tutor Time) and once during the afternoon (At the start

of Lesson 5). We value attendance Individuals who complete 100% attendance each term (Three times a year) will be celebrated and they will receive an award.

The School day starts at 8:50am and the School Day ends at 3:00pm.

The Morning Registration closes at 9:30am and the Afternoon Registration closes at 1:45pm.

Each Individual must be marked on the register in one of the following categories:

- **Present (\ /)**
- **Engaged (B, V, D, P, V, W, J)** in an approved educational activity away from the school site (approved by the Headteacher and supervised by a person approved by the Headteacher, including sporting activities, educational visits or residential trips)
- **Absent**
- **'C'-Taking authorised absence** (granted leave of absence by the head teacher or a person acting on their behalf, unable to attend by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause, observing a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs)
- **'O'-Taking unauthorised absence** (if no reason is established when the register is taken, the entry may be corrected later when the reason is established).
- **'R'-Religious Observance.** As a school we acknowledge the multi-faith culture of British Society and recognise that on some occasions religious festivals may fall outside of school holiday periods. If this is the case then a written request for a 'Leave of Absence' should be submitted to the Principal. Absences for Religious Observance will be authorised for up to 2 days.
- **'Y'-Unable to attend through exceptional circumstances/Evidenced LA Transportation issues/unavoidable closure of the school site or part of it.** ('Y' code does not count against overall attendance percentage).

7.11. Teachers/Tutors will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If an Individual is absent, the register must say whether or not the absence has been authorised by the school. Parents/guardians/carers cannot authorise absence – it is the school or college that decides how to classify absences). Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification of absence (e.g. illness). All other absences are treated as unauthorised. Authorised absences include: medical or dental appointments, days of religious observance, visit's to future schools, exclusion, family bereavement and special occasions (e.g. weddings). All requests for absence must be made in writing to the head teacher, giving the school plenty of time to consider the request.

7.12. If an individual is absent without explanation when the register is taken, parents/carers/guardians will be contacted the same day to establish a reason for absence. This contact will normally be in the form of a telephone call. If contact cannot be made then a home visit may take place to ascertain the reason for the absence. The absence will be treated as

unauthorised until an explanation is offered as satisfactory in line with the DFE school attendance Addendum document 2021 -2022.

If a child's attendance falls below 90% the individual will be classified as a persistent absentee, in this instance the school can only record an illness with medical proof, eg, a doctors note or appointment card. If a child's attendance falls below 50% the individual will be classified as a severely persistent absentee.

Failure to Attend School

7.13. If a child is a persistent absentee/severely persistent absentee the school will contact the parent/guardian/carer to raise a concern about attendance and to inform them that their child's attendance will be monitored for a six week period.

The parent/carer/guardian will be invited to discuss any barriers which are affecting attendance and the school will attempt to support the parent/carer/guardian in order to improve the child's attendance.

If after the six week monitoring period, there is no improvement then the Attendance Lead, Designated Safeguard Lead and Principal will write to the parent/guardian/carer again to arrange an Attendance Meeting.

The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss any barriers affecting attendance further, allow the school to offer/signpost support and for the parents to share any concerns.

Following this meeting the child's attendance will be monitored for another six weeks.

Should attendance not improve then the LA will be contacted to seek further support.

All of the attendance data will also be shared with the LA, CAMHS, Social Workers, etc as needed.

If an Individual fails to regularly attend school then the parent/carer/guardian can be held to account in line with the (Section 44 Educational Act 1996).

Initially, the school will try to resolve any problems, but in the case of continued absence the school will contact the child's Local Authority (LA) and it is likely that the Education Welfare Officer will work closely with the parents/carer, pupil and school to resolve issues and develop strategies to improve attendance.

The school is required to inform the child's LA if a pupil fails to attend regularly.

Independent schools have a legal duty to report certain attendance issues to their local authority: ten days of consecutive unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence), classed a child missing in education and failure to attend regularly.

In this last case, independent schools are required to report the circumstances as soon as possible to the local authority (LA) in which the pupil lives.

Absence (including leave of absence)

7.14. If an Individual is absent:

- The parent/carer/guardian of the student should telephone the School Office by 8:50 am on the first day of absence.
- The parent/carer/guardian should continue to contact the School Office for each subsequent day of absence until their child is well enough to return to school.
- The Teacher/Tutor will record the absence in the register and will inform the school office.
- When the Individual returns to school, a note, email or telephone call to the school office from a parent or guardian should explain the absence.
- Notes are kept in the school office, a record of absence is kept on the school management system (Behaviour Watch)
- For known absences eg; a medical appointment, parents /carers can request an appropriate time period to attend, however it is expected that routine appointments eg; dentist and orthodontist be arranged out of school time.
- If a student is absence (authorised or not) for a period of more than three consecutive days then the Head of Year will organise a welfare check or visit to ascertain why a child is absent, check on their well-being and to see what we can do,

as a school, to possibly help. (The welfare check could be in the form of a phone call, a Zoom call or a home visit (depending on how long the child has been absent and the nature of the absence)).

- Once the initial welfare check has been made then subsequent visits/checks will be made every three days after the initial visit until the child returns to school.
- If the school is unable to make contact with the parent/guardian/carer within a reasonable timeframe, and where there could be a safeguarding concern, MASH or the police may need to be contacted.
- In line with the DFE school attendance document August 2020, leave during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstance and can only be authorised by the Principal.

7.13 Suspensions/Exclusions

- During the period of a fixed term suspension/exclusion the parents/carers of a suspended child who is of compulsory school age must make sure that they are not present in a public place during school hours unless there is reasonable justification. Failing to ensure this could result in parents/carers being issued a fixed penalty notice from their local authority

7.14 School Contact information:

- School Office Contact details for informing the School of any student absences: **01908 542912**.
- Tutors can be contacted via the telephone number above or via email using the format below:
E.G. If you wanted to email Mr John Jones you would use the following email address:
john.jones@cambiangroup.com
- The Attendance Lead for Potterspurty Lodge School is Mr Gary Kemp.
- The Attendance Lead can be contacted on **01908 542912** or by email at gary.kemp@cambiangroup.com
- Requests for any Term Time Leaves of Absence must be made using the Leave of Absence Request Form available from the School Office.
- **ALL** Leave of Absence Requests **MUST BE** filled in on the correct form and sent to Ms J. Nimmo **at least TWO WEEKS before** the first date of requested absence.

8. Standard Forms, Relevant Documents, Letters & References

- 8.1. Equality and Diversity Policy
- 8.2. Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA)
- 8.3. Admissions Policy
- 8.4. Inclusion Policy
- 8.5. [School Attendance Guidance - for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities 2020](#)

9. Appendix I – School Attendance Register Codes

Codes	Description	Meaning	Codes	Description	Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present	O	Unauthorised Abs	Unauthorised Absence
\	Present (PM)	Present	P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Ed. Activity
B	Education off site (no Dual reg)	Approved Ed. Activity	R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence	S	Study leave	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registration	Approved Ed. Activity	T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence
E	Excluded	Authorised Absence	U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Ed. Activity
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence	W	Work experience	Approved Ed. Activity
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence
I01	Illness (Non-Covid related)	Authorised Absence	I02	Illness (Covid-19 +ive Test result)	Authorised Absence
J	Interview	Approved Ed. Activity	#	School closed to pupils & staff	Attendance not required
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised Absence	Z	Pupil not on roll	Attendance not required
-	All should not attend/No mark recorded				
ALL X CODES = ATTENDANCE NOT REQUIRED					
X01	Non-compulsory school-age pupil not required to be in school				