

# Policy and Procedure on Attendance

## Great Dunmow School

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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*

Andrew Sutherland  
Proprietor, Cambian Group  
Date September 2023

*CaGibbs*

Carrie-Ann Gibbs  
Headteacher  
September 2025

## 2. Terminology

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

<b>‘Establishment’ or ‘Location’</b>	This is a generic term which means the Children’s Home/school/college. Great Dunmow is a school.
<b>Individual</b>	Means any child or young person under the age of 18 or young adult between the ages of 18 and 25. At Great Dunmow School we have young people attending and/or residing between the ages of 11-18 years old.
<b>Service Head</b>	This is the senior person with overall responsibility for the school At Great Dunmow School this is the Executive Head teacher who is Tonia Lewis.
<b>Key Worker</b>	Members of staff that have special responsibility for Individuals residing at or attending the Establishment.
<b>Parent, Carer, Guardian</b>	Means Home/Carer or person with Parental Responsibility
<b>Regulatory Authority</b>	Regulatory Authority is the generic term used in this policy to describe the independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services. At Great Dunmow School this is Ofsted.
<b>Social Worker</b>	This means the worker allocated to the child/family. If there is no allocated worker, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.
<b>Placing Authority</b>	Placing Authority means the local authority/agency responsible for placing the child or commissioning the service
<b>Staff</b>	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 Home/Carer. For example, if an Individual has been unwell, the Home/Carer/guardian writes a note or telephones the Location to explain the absence.
- 3.2.** Only the Location can make an absence authorised. Home/Carers do not have this authority.
- 3.3.** Consequently, not all absences supported by Home/Carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a Home/Carer 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 Home/Carer.
- 3.5.** Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if an Individual is away from Location without good reason, even with the support of a Home/Carer. 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 Home/Carers/guardians, carers, staff and pupils from the Location office.

## **7. Introduction**

- 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 reception. Emergency closures for such things as extreme weather will also be published on the home page of our website.

### The Role of the Parent/Guardians/ Carers

- 7.5.** Home/Carers/guardians/ 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

- 7.6.** We are required to maintain two registers:
- An admission Register - known as Admissions register.
  - An attendance Register.

### The Admission Register

- 7.7.** 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 [staff room, school 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](http://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 Home/Carer of the pupil (and an indication of the Home/Carer with whom the pupil normally resides)
  - At least one telephone number at which the Home/Carer 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

- 7.8.** We are required to ensure that the attendance register for all Individuals on the Register is taken twice a day – once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. We value attendance Individuals who complete

100% attendance each term will be celebrated during the end of term celebration assembly and awarded with a 100% attendance badge. Each Individual must be marked on the register in one of the following categories:

- **Present**
- **Engaged** 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**
- Unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (unavoidable closure of the school site or part of it)
- 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 Home/Carer belongs)
- Taking **unauthorised absence** (if no reason is established when the register is taken, the entry may be corrected later when the reason is established).

**7.9.** The office administrator will be responsible for monitoring attendance at the school and for following up absences in the appropriate way. Attendance is monitored and logged on class register and on Behaviour Watch. If learners are not in by 9:15am calls are made to find out reasons why, discussions with homes and reintegration meetings supported (if needed). If an Individual is absent, the register must say whether or not the absence has been authorised by the school. Home/Carers/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.

**7.10.** If an individual is absent without explanation when the register is called, the office administrator will normally contact the Home/Carers/guardians/carers the same day whenever possible. The absence will be treated as unauthorised unless an explanation is offered as satisfactory justification for absence. Under education law, Home/Carers/guardians/carers may request absence for their Individuals from school for family holiday. It is schools to determine whether or not they agree to a family holiday during term time. Schools may authorise absence for the purpose to a maximum of 10 school days in any school year. Our School feels that family holidays should be taken when the school is not in session, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

**7.11.** If learners are on work experience/at an alternative provision/on a 3<sup>rd</sup> party activity, the attendance officer will make a call to the home to check that the learner has attended. School staff will also make calls to work placement providers/alternate provision to check that the learner has attended timetabled sessions. Absences from alternative provisions are handled in the same format as absence from school as outlined above.

## Failure to Attend School

**7.12.** If there is concern about an Individual's absence, the teacher will contact the office and this will immediately be followed up by the Headteacher. If an Individual fails to regularly attend school then the Home/Carer/guardian is guilty of an offence (Educational Act 1966). Initially, the school will try to resolve any problems, but in the case of continued absence the school will contact the Local Authority (LA) and it is likely that the Education Welfare Officer will work closely with the Home/Carers, pupil and school to resolve issues and develop strategies to improve attendance. The school is required to inform the 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 unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence), failure to attend regularly, and deletion from the school register when the next school is not known. 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.

When a child has frequent school absences, a multi-agency meeting may be held. This brings together professionals, such as school staff, social workers, and health experts, to review the child's attendance patterns. The aim is to identify any issues affecting the child or family and find ways to support them. By working together, the professionals

can create a plan to improve the child's attendance and overall well-being, ensuring they get the most from their education.

## Absence

### 7.13. If an Individual is absent

- When an Individual is absent unexpectedly, the office administrator will record the absence in the register.
- When the Individual returns to school, a note, email or telephone call to the school office from a Home/Carer or guardian should explain the absence. Notes are kept in the school office.
- A note, email or telephone call may be sent/made to the school office prior to the day of absence e.g. if an Individual has a medical appointment.
- If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of an Individual, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. Cambian Great Dunmow School will then be in contact straight away with the Home/Carer or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the Individual.
- If learners are not in by 9:15am calls are made to find out reasons why, discussions with Carers/Homes and reintegration meetings supported (if needed).
- If an individual is absent after 10am (morning lessons) then an individual may be asked by the headteacher to return to school for afternoon sessions due to the impact to the planned lessons and class learning. This means

that an individual will be refused to enter morning lessons due to their lateness and this will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

- If an individual is absent after 2pm (afternoon lessons) then an individual may be asked by the headteacher to return home due to the impact to the planned lessons and class learning. This means that an individual will be refused to enter afternoon lessons due to their lateness and this will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

### Requests for leave of absence

- 7.14.** We believe that Individuals need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are exceptional circumstances under which a Home/Carer may legitimately request leave of absence for an Individual to attend a specific event.

### Long-term Absence

- 7.15.** When Individuals have an illness that means they will be away from our school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home so that they can keep up with their school work. Any ongoing absences, 'lates' or unauthorised absences for holidays are followed up as quickly as possible.

### Repeated Unauthorised Absences

- 7.16.** The school will contact the Home/Carer of any Individual who has an unauthorised absence. If an Individual has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the Home/Carers will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem.

- 7.17.** The Head Teacher will arrange for a reintegration meeting with the Home/Carers and young person to look at barriers to attending

- 7.18.** If the reintegration meeting is successful a YP reintegration plan will be put in place - this can be in the form of the following -

- Flexible/ reduced timetable
- Alternative provision sourced
- Additional support put in place to support barriers to learning
- Mediation
- Learning based incentives

- 7.19.** If the reintegration meeting is unsuccessful and the YP continues to not attend, further support will be offered to the home in the form of -

- Work sent home to support more positive involvement in completing education
- Teachers to frequently visit the home to try and reengage and encourage attendance at school
- Further reintegration meetings arranged to re-approach the issue of non-attendance and how we can reduce this
- Liaison with NEET alternative provisions (age dependent) to try and engage YP in more positive ideas around barriers to ETE.

## 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

## 9. [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

## 10. Appendix I – School Attendance Register Codes

CODE	MEANING
/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Off-site educational activity (education is supervised and safeguarded)
P	Participating in supervised sporting activity
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
	<b>AUTHORISED ABSENCES</b>
C	Leave of absence authorised by school
C1	Absence for a regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	Pupils on part-time timetables
E	Excluded
I	Illness
J1	Leave of absence to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution
K	Education provision arranged by a local authority, rather than the school
M	Medical/Dental appointments
Q	Pupils unable to attend school due to lack of access arrangements
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
	<b>UNAUTHORISED</b>
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed)
N	Reason for absence not yet provided
O	Unauthorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed) after 9.15am
	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE</b>
X	Not required to be in school
Y	Enforced closure
Y1	Unable to attend – Absence due to transport normally provided not being available



<b>Y2</b>	Unable to attend – Widespread disruption to travel
<b>Y3</b>	Unable to attend – Part of school closed
<b>Y4</b>	Unable to attend – Unexpected whole school closure (different from # for planned closures)
<b>Y5</b>	Unable to attend – Pupils in the criminal justice system
<b>Y6</b>	Unable to attend – Absence due to public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Unable to attend – Any other unavoidable cause
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on roll
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure – induction days; half-terms; bank holidays; non-educational days etc)