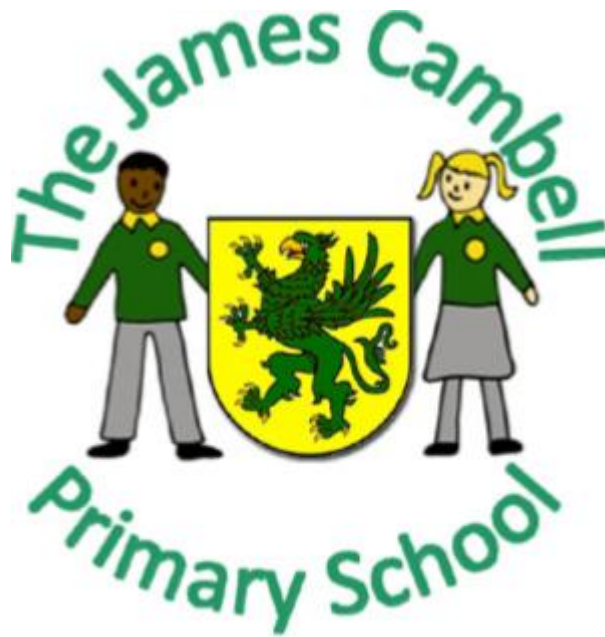


Attendance Policy

JAMES CAMBELL PRIMARY SCHOOL



Approved by:	Chloe Sullivan	Date:
Last reviewed on:	1.10.2026	
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Contents

1. Aims.....	2
2. Legislation and guidance.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3. Roles and responsibilities.....	3
4. Recording attendance	6
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence.....	10
6. Attendance monitoring.....	14
7. Monitoring arrangements.....	17
8. Links with other policies	17
Appendix 1: attendance codes	18
Appendix 2: James Cambell's escalation systems.....	15

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* guidance (updated July 2026), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Our approach to attendance

At James Cambell Primary School, we recognise that absence is often a symptom of wider barriers or difficulties. Our approach is therefore based on **supporting families to improve attendance before considering formal enforcement**, wherever appropriate.

We will:

- Build positive relationships with pupils and families.

- Identify and understand the barriers preventing regular attendance.
- Listen to pupils and parents and work with them to identify appropriate solutions.
- Provide support within school where possible.
- Signpost or refer families to appropriate external services where additional support is needed.
- Work with the Local Authority, Trust and other professionals where appropriate.
- Agree clear actions and review these regularly with families.
- Consider individual circumstances, including SEND, health, wellbeing, safeguarding and family circumstances.
- Use formal attendance processes where support has not been successful, has not been engaged with, or where formal action is appropriate.

Our approach follows the DfE's Expect, Monitor, Listen and Understand, Facilitate Support, Formalise Support and Enforce model.

The school will always aim to work with families rather than against them, while maintaining clear expectations around regular school attendance.

Where appropriate, the school will signpost or refer families to relevant internal and external support services. Further information about the support available is outlined in Section 6.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance, updated July 2026.

The school will ensure that its attendance procedures reflect the most recent statutory guidance and relevant legislation. This includes:

- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, July 2026)
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations and subsequent amendments
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Children Missing Education statutory guidance
- Relevant Local Authority attendance guidance and Code of Conduct

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where there are significant changes to statutory guidance or legislation.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools]
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising Mrs Sullivan (James Cambell's attendance lead) to be able to do so.
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader Mrs Sullivan is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher

- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Mrs Ann Colloff and can be contacted via acolloff@partnershiplearning.com

3.5 Class Teacher

The Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office within 30minutes of the start of a session.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call or message on Parentmail the school to report their child's absence before 9:30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

➤ 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register, at James Cambell we use Bromcom.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

These are the timings of the school day

Year Group	Opening Time	End Time	Entrance	Exit
Nursery	8.30am 12.30pm	11.20am 3.20pm	EY Gate	EY Gate
Reception	8:55 – 9.05am	3:25 pm	EY Gate	KS1 Gates
Year 1	8:45 – 8:55 am	3:15 pm	KS1 Gates	KS1 Gates
Year 2	8:45 – 8:55 am	3:15 pm	KS1 Gates	KS1 Gates
Year 3	8:40 – 8:50 am	3:20 pm	Year 3 & 4 KS2 Gate	Year 3 & 4 KS2 Gate
Year 4	8:40 – 8:50 am	3:20 pm	Year 3 & 4 KS2 Gate	Year 3 & 4 KS2 Gate
Year 5	8:40 – 8:50 am	3:20 pm	Year 5 & 6 KS2 Main Gate	Year 5 & 6 KS2 Main Gate
Year 6	8:40 – 8:50 am	3:20 pm	Year 5 & 6 KS2 Main Gate	Year 5 & 6 KS2 Main Gate

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:30am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school, who can be contacted via 0208 270 4684. Or you can log the absence on our Parentmail

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If this is the case your family will be aware they will need to provide medical evidence to authenticate the leave otherwise it will be logged as unauthorised.

Where an absence is prolonged, or where there are genuine concerns about the authenticity of an illness, the school may request appropriate medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

Where appropriate, and following a risk assessment, the school may conduct a home visit as part of its safeguarding and attendance procedures.

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

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

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

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

At James Cambell Primary School, the morning register closes at 9.30am

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- At James Cambell we will write to you if your child has 3 or more late marks in a week. If this does not improve you will be invited to a meeting with our attendance officer.

➤ 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

- Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:
- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may do a home visit or contact other relevant professionals' e.g. social services.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with the school will issue a notice to improve letter, issue a penalty notice or another legal intervention such as court proceedings

Home visits

Where a pupil is absent and the school has been unable to establish the reason for absence, a home visit may be undertaken where this is considered appropriate.

Home visits may be carried out by the Attendance Officer, a member of the senior leadership team or another designated member of staff.

The purpose of a home visit is to:

- Establish the reason for the pupil's absence.
- Check on the pupil's welfare where there are concerns.
- Speak with the parent/carer and offer support where appropriate.
- Identify any barriers preventing regular attendance.
- Consider whether further safeguarding action or support is required.

Staff undertaking a home visit should follow the school's safeguarding procedures and should not place themselves at unnecessary risk. Where possible, staff should attend in pairs or follow the school's lone-working procedures.

All home visits must be recorded on the school's attendance/safeguarding system, including:

- Date and time of the visit.
- Staff members attending.
- Whether contact was made.
- Information shared by the parent/carer.
- Any concerns identified.
- Support offered or agreed.
- Any further action required.

If staff are unable to make contact or have concerns about the pupil's safety or welfare, this must be recorded and appropriate safeguarding procedures followed. Where necessary, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed and consideration given to contacting other relevant agencies.

A home visit is a supportive attendance intervention but does not replace the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels, this will namely be during parents meetings in Autumn Term, Spring Term and then in their annual report, unless attendance is a concern.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 5 days before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, the form can be collected from the front office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school

- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

All penalty notices will be issued in line with the local authority's Code of Conduct.

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Attendance monitoring

6.1 Monitoring attendance

We meet with our Trust attendance officer fortnightly to look at trends and frequent absences.

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to our attendance data so it can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

Support services

Where attendance difficulties are linked to wider barriers, the school will work with families to identify appropriate support. Depending on the individual circumstances, this may include:

- Early Help and Family Support – where families need additional support with routines, family circumstances or wider needs.
- School Nursing Service – where health or medical needs are affecting attendance.
- SEND support – working with the school's SEND team and relevant external services where a pupil's additional needs may be contributing to absence.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Services – where emotional wellbeing or mental health is affecting attendance.
- Educational Psychology or other specialist services – where appropriate and where further assessment or advice is required.
- Children's Social Care – where there are safeguarding concerns or a family requires statutory support.
- Local Authority Attendance Support – where attendance concerns require additional advice, intervention or legal support.
- Trust Attendance Officer – to provide advice, monitoring and support with persistent or severe absence.
- Other services or agencies – where these are identified as appropriate to the individual needs of the pupil and family.

The school will discuss appropriate support with parents and pupils and, where necessary, make referrals or signpost families to relevant services. Support will be tailored to the individual circumstances and reviewed regularly to consider whether it is helping to improve attendance.

6.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

6.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis

- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding lead and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

6.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated yearly.

8. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home

		and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason

		given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2: James Cambell Primary School – Attendance Escalation Systems

James Cambell Primary School adopts a **graduated response** to attendance concerns, in line with the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* guidance (**updated July 2026**) and the Local Authority Code of Conduct. The purpose of this escalation system is to:

- Identify attendance concerns early
- Work in partnership with families to remove barriers to attendance
- Provide appropriate support before sanctions are considered
- Ensure legal interventions are applied fairly, consistently, and proportionately

The attendance percentages outlined below are indicators to support early identification and intervention. The school will consider individual circumstances, patterns of absence and any underlying barriers when deciding the appropriate level of support or intervention.

Stage 1: Universal Support (Attendance 95% and above)

Focus: Promotion and prevention

All pupils and families receive:

- Clear communication of attendance expectations
- Regular reminders about the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Access to whole-school attendance initiatives and rewards
- Attendance information shared at parents' evenings and through reports

No formal intervention is required at this stage.

Stage 2: Emerging Concern (Attendance below 95%)

Focus: Early identification and informal support

Actions may include:

- Informal conversation with parents/carers by the class teacher or attendance officer
- Attendance letter or message highlighting attendance levels
- Monitoring of punctuality and patterns of absence
- Offer of advice or signposting to early help where appropriate

Attendance will be monitored closely for improvement.

Stage 3: Targeted Support (Attendance below 90% – Persistent Absence)

Focus: Barrier identification and structured support

Actions may include:

- Formal meeting with parents/carers and the attendance officer
- Exploration of barriers to attendance, including health, SEND, family circumstances or wellbeing
- Development of an **Attendance Support Plan** or reintegration plan
- Referrals to internal or external support services (e.g. Early Help, school nurse, SEND services)
- Regular review meetings and agreed targets

Support will be personalised and reviewed regularly.

Stage 4: Notice to Improve

Focus: Final opportunity to engage with support

If:

- The national threshold is met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10-school-week period), **and**
- Support has been offered but not engaged with, or attendance has not improved

The school may issue a **Notice to Improve**, in line with the Local Authority Code of Conduct.

The Notice to Improve will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record
 - The legal responsibilities of parents under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996
 - Support already offered and opportunities for further support
 - Clear expectations for improvement
 - A defined improvement period of **3–6 weeks**
 - A warning that a penalty notice may be issued if improvement is not made
-

Stage 5: Legal Intervention – Penalty Notice

Focus: Enforcement where attendance does not improve

If attendance fails to improve following a Notice to Improve, the school may request the Local Authority to issue a **Penalty Notice**, or issue one directly where authorised.

Penalty notices will:

- Be issued in line with the **Local Authority Code of Conduct**
- Be considered on a **case-by-case basis**
- Take account of:
 - Safeguarding concerns
 - SEND and Equality Act 2010 duties
 - Whether a penalty notice is the most appropriate tool

Penalty notice amounts:

- First penalty notice: £80 (if paid within 21 days), rising to £160 (within 28 days)
- Second penalty notice (within 3 years): £160
- A third penalty notice will not be issued; alternative legal action may be taken

Stage 6: Legal intervention and court action

Where attendance remains a significant concern following appropriate support and previous attendance interventions, and the legal requirements for further intervention are met, the school may work with the Local Authority to consider further legal action, including prosecution.

Before requesting prosecution, the school will ensure that:

- Attendance records are accurate and up to date.
- The reasons for absence have been established wherever possible.
- The school has considered any safeguarding, SEND, health or other relevant circumstances.
- Appropriate support has been offered and documented, unless formal enforcement is appropriate without further support.
- Parents have been made aware of concerns regarding their child's attendance.
- Previous interventions and the impact of these have been recorded.
- The school has followed the relevant Local Authority attendance procedures and Code of Conduct.

Where appropriate, the Local Authority may consider legal action under **Section 444 of the Education Act 1996**.

Possible legal interventions may include:

- A penalty notice, where the relevant criteria are met.
- Prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.
- Other legal interventions available to the Local Authority.

Any decision to proceed with legal action will take account of the individual circumstances of the case and will be made in accordance with the Local Authority's procedures and the relevant statutory guidance.

The school will continue to work with the family and relevant professionals throughout the process, including where legal action is being considered.

Safeguarding and SEND Considerations

At **all stages**, the school will:

- Consider whether absence is linked to safeguarding concerns
- Act in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
- Work closely with families of pupils with SEND
- Make reasonable adjustments and consider alternative support where appropriate

Absence is recognised as often being a **symptom of wider need**, and the school will prioritise support wherever possible.



ATTENDANCE MONITORING & ABSENCE PROCEDURE

ABSENCE RESPONSE PROCESS

DAY 1 ABSENCE

Parent/carer expected to notify school before 9:00am

- ? No reason received
- Telephone call made
- Text/email sent
- Attendance Team follows up
- Safeguarding procedures followed where required



DAY 2 CONSECUTIVE ABSENCE

Attendance Team contacts family

- ✓ Arrange a GP appointment if absence is expected to continue
- ✓ Parents/carers informed that medical evidence may be required



DAY 3 CONSECUTIVE ABSENCE

Attendance Team contacts family

- ✓ Medical evidence requested
- ✓ Parents/carers advised to expect a home visit as part of normal attendance procedures



HOME VISIT

Attendance Team Welfare Visit

- ✓ Welfare check completed
- ✓ Attendance concerns discussed
- ✓ Support offered where appropriate



Daily
absence
message
sent on
Class Dojo
by teacher

- ✓ Teacher to send daily message to parent and update attendance team

STAGE 4: ATTENDANCE MEETING

- Attendance concerns reviewed
- Barriers identified
- Attendance improvement plan agreed

STAGE 5: ATTENDANCE CONTRACT

- Formal attendance targets agreed
- Progress monitored
- Additional support provided



STAGE 6: FORMAL REFERRAL

Referral to Attendance Officer / Education Welfare Service

- Further intervention considered
- Multi-agency support where appropriate
- Statutory attendance procedures may be initiated

SAFEGUARDING & VULNERABLE PUPILS

Immediate DSL Notification Required
Where a pupil is:

- ◆ Early Help
 - ◆ Child in Need (CIN)
 - ◆ Child Protection (CP)
 - ◆ Child Protection Plan (CPP)
 - ◆ Looked After Child (LAC)
 - ◆ Identified as vulnerable
- The Attendance Team and DSL must be informed immediately on the first day of absence.

The DSL will determine whether:

- ✓ Welfare checks are required
- ✓ a home visit is required
- ✓ other professionals should be informed
- ✓ Safeguarding procedures need to be escalated

DUAL REGISTERED PUPILS

For pupils dual registered with a mainstream school:

- ✓ CPC lead or attendance lead will liaise with the mainstream school regarding all absences
- ✓ Attendance information will be shared promptly
- ✓ Attendance concerns will be monitored jointly
- ✓ Interventions and support plans will be coordinated
- ✓ Safeguarding concerns will be communicated between settings

Notice to Improve (NTI)

A Notice to Improve may be issued where:

- ✓ Attendance remains a concern despite school support.
- ✓ Parents/carers fail to engage with attendance interventions.
- ✓ Attendance targets are not met following an Attendance Meeting or Attendance Contract.

The NTI provides:

- Clear attendance expectations.
- A monitoring period.
- An opportunity for improvement.
- Continued support from the school.

Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)

The school may request that the Local Authority consider issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice where there is:

- Unauthorised absence.
- Unauthorised term-time leave.
- Continued poor attendance following intervention.
- Failure to engage with attendance support and improvement plans.

Any FPN will be issued in accordance with the Local Authority's Attendance and Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

IMPORTANT

The school reserves the right to accelerate attendance procedures where:

- Safeguarding concerns exist
- A pupil is considered vulnerable
- Attendance patterns indicate significant concern
- A child's welfare may be at risk

Enhanced monitoring, welfare checks, home visits and referrals may be initiated at any stage.