



Attendance Policy

Waldorf Cambridge

Registered charity number: 1028116 | Companies House number: 028669850

Reviewed: September 2025 | Next review: September 2026

Endorsement

Reviewed by: Charlotte Burdett (Pastoral Lead & Designated Safeguarding Lead)

Full endorsement is given to this policy by:

Name: Anya Kingsley

Position: Trustee with Safeguarding responsibility

Approved by the Board on: 4 September 2025

Signed (Chair of Trustees, Joel Chalfen): _____

1. Aims

We are committed to a wholeschool culture that values high attendance and punctuality by promoting good attendance (96%+), reducing absence (including persistent and severe), ensuring fulltime education, acting early on patterns, and building strong relationships with families. We will also promote and support punctuality.

2. Legislation and guidance

- Working together to improve school attendance (statutory from 19 Aug 2024).
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 (including Regulation 9 grounds for deletion).
- Children Missing Education: Statutory guidance, and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 and the national penalty notice framework.

Attendance procedures are read alongside Children Missing Education (CME) guidance and KCSIE. We will make reasonable enquiries where a child's whereabouts are unknown and notify the local authority as required.

This policy aligns with Working together to improve school attendance (DfE) and statutory guidance on parental responsibility measures and reflects: Education Act 1996; Education Act 2002; Education and Inspections Act 2006; Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended); and The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. It should be read alongside KCSIE and relevant DfE guidance on attendance and mental health.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Trustees

Promote the importance of attendance across school policies and ethos.

Review and challenge attendance data; ensure staff training; hold leaders (including the DSL) to account.

3.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Implement this policy; monitor absence data; support staff with monitoring pupils; monitor impact of strategies; liaise with LA; issue fixed penalty notices where applicable.

DSL (Attendance): Charlotte Burdett — safeguarding@waldorfcambridge.uk

3.3 Pastoral Care Team

Lead attendance strategy, evaluate processes, oversee data, devise targeted strategies, build relationships with parents, and deliver targeted support and reintegration plans.

3.4 Pastoral Care Lead

Monitor/analyse data; benchmark; report to leaders; work with EWO; lead targeted actions.

Pastoral Lead: Charlotte Burdett — pastoral@waldorfcambridge.uk

3.5 Class Teachers

Record attendance daily using correct codes; submit to the office. AM register by 9.00am; PM register by 2.05pm.

3.6 School Admin Staff

Make/take absence calls; record on Satchel; alert DSL if a pupil's whereabouts is unknown after registers close and parents/emergency contacts cannot be reached.

The school maintains admission and attendance registers in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. We will notify the local authority within 5 days when a pupil is added to the admission register at a non-standard transition point, and as soon as (and no later than) the date a pupil is deleted from roll under Regulation 9, sharing the required information.

3.7 Parents/Carers

Ensure daily attendance and punctuality; report absence before 8.30am each day of absence; provide more than one emergency contact; arrange appointments outside school time where possible.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

Taken at the start of AM session (8.30–9.00am) and once in the PM session (1.35–2.05pm).

Marks: present; approved offsite activity; absent; unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Any amendment records original entry, change, reason, date, and staff member.

Entries retained for 3 years.

4.2 Unplanned absence

Parents/carers notify the school on the first day by 8.30am (and each subsequent day), giving pupil name, class, expected return, and reason (to class teacher and reception@waldorfcambridge.uk).

Illness is authorised unless authenticity is in doubt; evidence may be requested for >5 days or where concerns exist.

4.3 Planned absence

Medical/dental appointments authorised if notified in advance; please arrange outside school hours where possible and keep time out to a minimum.

For other termtime absences, submit a request as far in advance as possible; the DSL considers 'exceptional circumstances' and may request evidence.

Leave of Absence Request form is available from the website; submit to reception for DSL signoff.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Arrivals before register closes: code L.

Arrivals after register closes without good reason: unauthorised (code U).

Ongoing punctuality issues are reviewed weekly in the Safeguarding Meeting.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Call parents/carers on the morning of the first day to ascertain the reason.

If parents/emergency contacts cannot be reached, the school may seek LA support.

Identify the correct attendance code within 5 working days once the reason is known.

Continue daily contact if unexplained; consider involving the EWO.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

Attendance data is communicated halftermly and in annual reports.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Authorised: illness (including mental health), medical/dental appointments, religious observance, Traveller occupational travel, and other exceptional circumstances at DSL discretion.

Unauthorised: where the school is not satisfied with the reason; holidays taken without permission; late arrival after register closes without good reason.

Termtime holidays: not permitted other than in exceptional cases—apply in advance; decisions prioritise the child's educational welfare.

5.2 Legal sanctions (overview)

Where support has not worked or has not been engaged with, the school and local authority may use formal tools, including an Attendance (Notice to Improve) and, where appropriate, penalty notices in line with the national framework. A penalty notice must be considered when there are 10 unauthorised sessions within a rolling 10 school-week period. Current national amounts are £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days, with a maximum of two fines per parent per child in any three-year period. Penalty notices are not a first response and do not replace early help.

The school or LA may issue penalty notices for unauthorised absence for pupils of compulsory school age: £60 within 21 days; £120 within 28 days; thereafter the LA may prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Penalty notices may be issued by the Headteacher (or delegated deputy/assistant head), LA officers, or Police (context dependent).

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We prioritise partnership with families over extrinsic rewards, listening to barriers and formalising support where persistent absence occurs.

7. Attendance monitoring and data

Monitor data halftermly, termly, yearly at wholeschool and pupil level; identify concerning cohorts; compare to national data.

Use data to target support and evaluate interventions.

Persistent absence: $\geq 10\%$ missed sessions. Severe absence: $\geq 50\%$.

8. Attendance escalation process (school practice)

A staged process giving clarity on triggers and responsibilities:

Stage 0 (100–96%) – Routine: registers on Satchel; daily absence list; wellbeing call if needed (Class Teacher/Admin).

Stage 1 (93–90%) – Supportive call; followup letter confirming discussion and attendance rate (Class Teacher & Pastoral Lead).

Stage 2 – Supportive meeting with family; followup letter (Class Teacher & Pastoral Lead).

Stage 3 – School Attendance Meeting (SAM); Attendance Contract; if concerns about termtime holidays/unauthorised reasons, consider fixed penalty (Pastoral Lead & DSL).

Stage 4 (>80%) – Referral to Early Help; notify parents (DSL).

Stage 5 (>70%) – LA threshold for potential prosecution where statutory criteria are met (DSL liaising with LA).

Independent school powers: Enforcement (fines, prosecution, SAOs) sits with the Local Authority, not the school. The school's role is support, monitoring and referral/escalation when needed.

9. Procedure for lateness and punctuality

Children persistently late (e.g., two or more times a week or >10% over a term) will trigger supportive contact, with guidance and opportunities for assistance. Where patterns persist despite support, actions follow the escalation process above.

10. Uncollected child / late collection – Escalation flowchart

This addresses the specific scenario of late collection and no answer from parents, including use of emergency contacts and statutory escalation.

START → Child not collected at expected time

↓

Check authorised collectors & messages; confirm session times

↓

Call parent/carer

├ Reached? YES → Agree ETA/authorised adult → Child collected? YES → Record incident → END

| ↳ NO → Continue contacting; consider Early Help if pattern

└ NO (no answer) → Call emergency contacts in priority order

├ Authorised adult available? YES → Verify ID → Release child → Record collection → END

└ NO → After reasonable period (often up to ~1 hour) with no contact:

- Contact LA Children's Social Care (Front Door/MASH) for direction
- Contact Police if advised or immediate risk
- Keep child supervised on site by two staff until collected by parent/authorised adult or social care
- Do NOT take child home
- Record full chronology; inform DSL; consider Ofsted notification (EYFS) as required

END

Notes: This flow complements safeguarding duties under KCSIE and Working Together. Local authority thresholds and processes apply; follow advice from Children's Social Care and/or Police.

11. Links with other policies

Child protection and safeguarding

Behaviour

Data protection

SEND / Medical needs

Equality and Inclusion

Appendices

Appendix A – Leave of Absence Request (Parent form)

Parents/carers must complete this form for any request for term-time leave. Requests will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Please return to the school office.

Child's Name: _____

Class/Year: _____

Dates Requested: _____

Reason: _____

Supporting Evidence Attached: Yes / No

Parent/Carer Signature: _____

Date submitted: _____

Designated Safeguarding Lead's Decision: Authorised / Unauthorised

Comments: _____

Designated Safeguarding Lead Signature: _____

Appendix B – Attendance information for parents (summary letter)

Attendance Summary for Parents/Carers

Date: [Insert date]

To: Parents and Carers of [School/Phase/Class]

Dear Parents/Carers,

At Waldorf Cambridge we want every child to thrive. Strong, regular attendance is one of the biggest factors in your child's progress, wellbeing, and friendships. Our whole-school aim is 96%+ attendance for every pupil, with punctual arrival each day.

Everyday expectations

School day: [Insert start–finish times]. Please arrive by [time] so children are ready for learning.

Registers: Taken at the start of the morning session (8:30–9:00) and once in the afternoon (1:35–2:05).

Punctuality: Arrivals before registers close are marked L (late). Arrivals after registers close, without good reason, are unauthorised (U).

If your child is absent (unplanned)

Tell us by 8:30am each day of absence: email reception@waldorfcambridge.uk and your class teacher, with your child's name, class, reason, and expected return date.

Illness is usually authorised; for absences over 5 days or where we have concerns, we may ask for supporting evidence.

Planned absences and appointments

Please arrange medical/dental appointments outside school hours where possible and keep time out to a minimum.

For any other term-time absence, please submit a Leave of Absence Request (available from reception/website) as early as you can. The DSL will consider requests under exceptional circumstances only.

Term-time holidays

Holidays during term time are not authorised except in truly exceptional cases. Unauthorised leave may lead to Local Authority penalty notices in line with statutory guidance.

Keeping children safe

Please provide at least two emergency contacts and keep details up to date.

If a child is not collected on time and we cannot reach parents or emergency contacts after a reasonable period, we will follow our Uncollected Child procedure, including seeking advice from Children's Social Care (and the Police if advised or if there is immediate risk).

How we monitor and support attendance

We review attendance regularly and will contact you if patterns or barriers appear.

Persistent absence is defined as 10% or more of sessions missed; severe absence is 50% or more.

Our approach is supportive and solution-focused; we may offer meetings, plans, or Early Help. Where unauthorised absence continues, we will liaise with the Local Authority.

Communication and data

We share attendance updates in reports and may contact you earlier if concerns arise.

Attendance is recorded using DfE codes and retained in line with data protection requirements.

Need help?

If you're facing challenges with routines, health, transport, or anything else that might affect attendance, please reach out—early conversations help us support you and your child.

Key contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Attendance): Charlotte Burdett -
safeguarding@waldorfcambridge.uk

Pastoral Lead: Charlotte Burdett — pastoral@waldorfcambridge.uk

School Office: reception@waldorfcambridge.uk | [01223 882727]

Thank you for your partnership in helping every child attend, learn, and flourish.

Warm regards,

Charlotte Burdett
Designated Safeguarding Lead (Attendance) & Pastoral Lead
Waldorf Cambridge

Appendix C: Attendance Register Codes (England) – In force from 19 August 2024

Part-time timetables (Code C2) will only be used in very exceptional, time-limited circumstances. They must be agreed with parents/carers, set out in a written reintegration plan, reviewed regularly, and must not be used as a behaviour management tool.

This summary lists the statutory registration codes introduced by The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and common DfE definitions.

Code	DfE description (short)	Category (statistics)	Notes
/	Present at school – morning session	Present	
\	Present at school – afternoon session	Present	
L	Late arrival before register closes	Present	Counts as present for the session
B	Approved educational activity (other)	Approved educational activity	Record nature of activity
P	Sporting activity (approved)	Approved educational activity	
W	Work experience (approved)	Approved educational activity	
V	Educational visit or trip (school-arranged, supervised)	Approved educational activity	
K	Education arranged by local authority	Approved educational activity	s.19 EA 1996 / CFA 2014; record nature of provision
D	Dual registration – attending another school	Approved educational activity	
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised absence	
C1	Regulated performance / employment abroad	Authorised absence	New 2024
C2	Part-time timetable leave (compulsory school age)	Authorised absence	New 2024
E	Excluded – no alternative provision	Authorised absence	

I	Illness (not medical/dental appointments)	Authorised absence	
M	Medical or dental appointment	Authorised absence	
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	
S	Study leave	Authorised absence	
T	Traveller absence (authorised)	Authorised absence	
J1	Interview for employment/admission	Authorised absence	New 2024
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Unauthorised absence	
N	Reason not yet provided	Unauthorised absence	Resolve to a final code where possible
O	Absent without authorisation	Unauthorised absence	
U	Arrived after registers closed (no acceptable reason)	Unauthorised absence	
X	Not required to attend this session	Not counted	Use where statute says attendance not required
Q	Unable to attend – lack of access arrangements	Not counted	New 2024
Y1	Unable to attend – transport normally provided not available	Not counted	New 2024
Y2	Unable to attend – widespread disruption to travel	Not counted	New 2024
Y3	Unable to attend – part of school closed	Not counted	New 2024
Y4	Unable to attend – unexpected whole-school closure	Not counted	New 2024
Y5	Unable to attend – pupil in criminal justice system	Not counted	New 2024
Y6	Unable to attend – public health guidance	Not counted	New 2024

	or law		
Y7	Unable to attend – other unavoidable cause	Not counted	New 2024; add note of reason
Z	Pupil not yet on the admission register	Administrative (not counted)	Pre-admission only
#	Planned whole/partial school closure	Administrative (not counted)	e.g., INSET day; elections; planned closure

Appendix D – Template letter addressing lateness

[INSERT DATE]

Dear [INSERT PARENT NAMES],

Reminder: Arriving on time – [INSERT CHILD'S NAME]

Part of my role as Pastoral lead is to help monitor attendance and follow up on any persistent patterns of absence and lateness, offering support to class teachers and families in order to help bring about positive change.

In my recent review of Lower School attendance, I noticed that [CHILD'S NAME] has been late on several mornings so far this academic year (NUMBER OF OCCASIONS). Arriving on time makes an enormous difference to how your child settles in the morning and their readiness to participate in class activities. At the same time, it shows respect for all the preparation and care the teachers take in planning the school day. At Cambridge Waldorf School we expect all children to arrive promptly for school, between 8:15am-8:25am, so that they can be ready to start the day when the bell rings at 8:30am.

I hope that you can help support [INSERT CHILD'S NAME], his/her classmates and his/her teacher by ensuring that he/she arrives on time each morning. I look forward to seeing all improvement as I continue to monitor his/her punctuality.

I recognise that there are many varied reasons that lateness might occur and that despite one's best efforts to get to school on time each day, particular family circumstances can make this a challenge. If this is the case, I urge you to get in touch so that together we can help find a way forward.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to reflect and respond to this.

Yours sincerely,

Charlotte Burdett
Pastoral Lead
Waldorf Cambridge
01223 882727

Appendix E – Template letter addressing latendance

[Insert date]

Dear [parent names],

Reminder: Attendance – [Child's name]

Part of my role as Pastoral lead is to help monitor attendance and follow up on persistent patterns of absence and lateness, offering support to class teachers and families to help bring about positive change.

In my recent review of Lower School attendance, I noticed that [child's name's] attendance has been affected by illness [adapt as needed] this year; he/she has missed [...] sessions this year to date ([... unauthorised – omit if none]). We aim for 100% attendance for each student; however, we realise students do get ill and therefore, we set a 96% target, which equates to 14 missed sessions over the academic year. We will continue to monitor [child's name's] attendance, but in the meantime, if you have any concerns about work [child's name's] might have missed in class, or would like to discuss the matter more generally, then please do not hesitate to contact either myself or his/her class teacher.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to reflect and respond to this.

Yours sincerely,

Charlotte Burdett
Pastoral Lead
Waldorf Cambridge
01223 882727

Attendance data sharing

We share daily attendance data with the Department for Education (and, where required, the local authority) in line with national data collection guidance and data protection requirements.