



Attendance Policy

Purpose of the policy

This policy outlines Wildwood Nature School's approach to attendance. It describes why attendance is important, what is considered 'excellent' attendance, and the measures we take to help families to improve attendance. This policy outlines how Wildwood Nature School meets its statutory duty under [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) England Regulations 2006](#).

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Attendance rates
3. Flexi Fridays and holidays
4. Early intervention
5. Arrival and registration
6. Parental responsibility
7. Illness and medical appointments
8. School responsibility – the law and school attendance
9. Authorised absences
10. Unauthorised absences
11. Persistent unauthorised absences / Children missing from school
12. Coding information

Appendix 1: Public Health Exclusion Periods to Reduce Risk of Transmission of Infection

1. Introduction

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure that children feel fully part of the school community, engage in uninterrupted learning, and to enable children to keep building their relationships with peers and members of staff. At Wildwood Nature School we work collaboratively with families to ensure a regular pattern of attendance is maintained for all

children. Regular attendance at school is an essential part of committing to join, and participate in Wildwood Nature School.

We believe that Wildwood Nature School's ethos and values create an environment where children love their school and want to come in every day. When families can see their children's enthusiasm to be at school, this supports them in their efforts to ensure they get their children to school every day and on time.

2. Attendance rates

Each child's attendance can be summarised as:

95%+	An excellent level of attendance. This supports all aspects of children's development and learning and enables them to engage fully in school life.
90%-95%	There is scope to improve attendance. The child's key person will talk informally with the family to find out if there are any factors affecting attendance and what the school can do to help.
Below 90%	Absence is causing serious concern. Absence of below 90% significantly affects learning and development. We will work closely with children and their families with this level of attendance, and where relevant, external agencies.

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously, however each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. In each case, early intervention is essential to prevent any issues from worsening. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply and will always be offered as supportive solutions working collaboratively with the school.

It is really important for families to keep the school fully informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance. If attendance drops below 90%, parents and carers will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss attendance concerns and to put in place a plan for support to improve attendance.

3. Flexi Fridays and holidays

Wildwood Nature School recognises that incredible learning can take place outside of school when children are with their families.

Therefore, Fridays are offered as flexi days meaning that parents can decide not to send their children in on Fridays. This must be agreed with the co-head in advance of each half term. English and maths sessions will not take place on Fridays, so that children are not missing out on this learning. Other project work and Forest School activities will continue on Fridays.

In addition, each child is able to use up to **10 flexi days** within each academic year for personal reasons or holidays. These days must be approved by the head of school and should be requested by email in advance of days off - a minimum of a week's notice is required, but ideally longer.

Flexi Fridays and holidays are recorded as authorised absence (attendance register codes 'C' or 'H').

4. Early intervention

A key element of our school absence procedures are the systems for identifying and addressing emergent patterns of irregular attendance at an early stage.

This includes:

- First day contact with parents for all children absent without known reason by the school office;
- Analysis of individual children's attendance data to identify quickly any patterns of absence which cause concern;
- Procedures to investigate and resolve unexplained absence within a week;
- School attendance plans for children whose attendance is causing significant concern carried out by the child's key person and Attendance Lead.

5. Arrival and registration

All children should be in the school ready to register by 9.15am The school doors open at 8.50am and children and their families should aim to arrive by then. The register is taken twice a day. A day counts as 2 attendances.

Morning registration begins at 9.15am and ends at 9.30am. If a child arrives after 9.30am they will be marked as late. The school office will follow up on any missing children by making contact with parents/carers.

Afternoon registration is at 1pm.

6. Parental responsibility

It is the parent/carers' responsibility to ensure their child receives a full-time education, and this includes attending school regularly. It is also really important that children are at school on time, as lateness really impacts their ability to settle in the morning, and is disruptive for everyone.

7. Illness and medical appointments

When a child is unwell, parents should contact the school before 9am on the first day of absence informing the school of the reason for this absence.

When a child is absent, the office will record the absence in the register. As part of our Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures, the school office will endeavour to contact the parent or carer and other emergency contacts if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence.

On the rare occasion a child is too unwell to be able to attend school, it is important that parents call the school mobile on 07743 357799 to let us know every day the child is absent. Our office is open to take phone calls from 8 a.m. every day.

Please note:

- Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours;
- An appointment card or verification by the doctors/dentist/ hospital may be required;
- If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should return to school directly after the appointment. If their phase group is due to be in the woods at that time, they will need to meet them in the woods;
- If your child is absent due to vomiting or another communicable illness (please see Appendix 1 below) then they should not return to school for the next 48 hours after

the last time that the child is sick. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at school.

8. School responsibility – the law and school attendance

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 the governing body is responsible for making sure that admissions and attendance registers are kept. Unless stipulated, each regulation applies to all schools in England.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 restricts authorised leave of absence to be for families with exceptional circumstances. The decision rests with the school and all applications for absence requests must be made in advance by the parent the child normally resides with.

Wildwood Nature School trustees are bound by the statutory requirement under Section 538 of the Education Act 2006 which requires governing bodies to provide information requested by the Secretary of State. This includes absence data that will be collected every term and divulged during routine school inspections.

All members of staff work to ensure that children have a high level of enjoyment and commitment to learning as a means of ensuring regular attendance. The Attendance Lead holds responsibility for attendance matters, supported by the staff team.

Attendance is recorded and data is stored and analysed using our registration system, WILDWAS.

It is a statutory duty for teachers to take a register and maintain accurate records; these are legal documents, and may be called for as evidence by a court. Teachers are legally responsible for marking their register twice per day at the start of each session.

The head of school, not parents, authorises absence; Wildwood Nature School must adhere to the DfE guidelines in authorising absence.

9. Authorised absences

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a young person has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Only a school can make an absence authorised.

Absence due to the following reasons would be authorised:

- Illness;
- Religious observance;
- Attendance at medical appointments which cannot be made outside school hours;
- Flexi days that have been authorised in advance.

10. Unauthorised absences

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without permission of the head of school. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given.

This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- Truancy before or during the school day;
- Absences that have never been properly explained;
- Holidays not agreed.

11. Persistent unauthorised absences / Children missing from school

Persistent unauthorised absences from school are a serious concern in terms of a child's welfare. This is a safeguarding concern and more details about this can be found in Section B.2 of our *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*. All staff will be made aware of any children who are known to Camden Social Services or who might be more vulnerable to persistent absences.

Once a pattern of irregular attendance is noted, the procedures outlined in Section 4 of this policy (Early Intervention) will be followed. However, if a child has unauthorised absences of 10 school days, Wildwood Nature School has to follow its statutory reporting obligations. [Camden's Pupil Attendance Service](#) will be notified on the 10th day of a child's unauthorised absence as per Camden's "[Children missing from education](#)" policy and [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) England Regulations 2006](#).

If a child returns to school, following such an absence, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Attendance Lead and the child's key person will meet with the parents/carers to find out more about the absences, and to formulate a plan to support the child and their family.

Referrals to the Camden Local Authority will likely need to be made to offer additional support.

If a child is continuously absent from school, without authorisation, for a period of 20 school days, and both the school and Camden do not know where the child is, having made reasonable enquiries, Wildwood Nature School is authorised to delete the child's name from the Admissions Register. [Camden's Pupil Attendance Service](#) will be notified straight away if this happens.

12. Coding Information

Class teachers should only use the code for 'present' (/ for am and \ for pm) and 'late' (L) when completing registers. All other attendance coding and absence follow up is dealt with firstly by school office

Other Codes (for office use only)

Code	Explanation
	<i>Authorised absences from school</i>
I	Illness - Parents must notify the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness. Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, we can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. The school can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention
M	Medical or dental appointment - Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. However, we encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the child should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment
R	Religious observance - The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, the school should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance
B	Off-site educational activity - This code should be used when young people are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school

D	Dual Registered - at another educational establishment
P	Participating in a supervised sporting activity - This code should be used to record the sessions when a child is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school
V	Educational visit or trip - This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school - this will be used for those children choosing not to attend school on Flexi Fridays. Otherwise, only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Wildwood Nature School will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request
H	Holiday authorised by the school - This includes pre-approved flexi days. The application must be made in advance to the head of school
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence - A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers
	<i>Unauthorised absences from school</i>
N	Reason for absence not yet provided - Wildwood Nature School will follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a child's absence. When the reason for the child's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a child's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation)
U	Arrived at school after registration closed - The school actively discourages late arrival, and will be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent
O	Absent from school without authorisation - If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised
G	Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head of school. If the school has not authorised a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the young person out of school,

	or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.
	<i>Administrative Codes - The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census</i>
X	Not required to be in school - This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - This code can be used where a young person is unable to attend because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; · The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the child's home is not within walking distance; · A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the child from attending school.
Z	Pupil not on admission register - This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of children joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put children on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the child will attend the school
#	Planned whole or partial school closure - This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations

Policy review

Policy created: February 2023

Last reviewed: May 2024

Last modified: May 2024

Next review date: May 2026

Appendix 1

Public Health Exclusion Periods to Reduce Risk of Transmission of Infection

(Source: [UK Health Security Agency 2010](#))

Infection	Exclusion period	Comments
Athlete's foot	None	Children should not be barefoot at their setting (for example in changing areas) and should not share towels, socks or shoes with others.
Chickenpox	At least 5 days from onset of rash and until all blisters have crusted over.	Pregnant staff contacts should consult with their GP or midwife.
Cold sores (herpes simplex)	None	Avoid kissing and contact with the sores.
Conjunctivitis	None	If an outbreak or cluster occurs, consult your local health protection team (HPT).
Respiratory infections including coronavirus (COVID-19)	Children should not attend if they have a high temperature and are Unwell. Children who have a positive test result for COVID-19 should not attend the setting for 3 days after the day of the test.	Children with mild symptoms such as runny nose, and headache who are otherwise well can continue to attend their setting.
Diarrhoea and vomiting	Staff and students can return 48 hours after diarrhoea and vomiting have stopped.	If a particular cause of the diarrhoea and vomiting is identified, there may be additional exclusion advice, for example E. coli STEC and hep A. For more information, see Managing outbreaks and

		incidents.
Diphtheria*	Exclusion is essential. Always consult with your UKHSA HPT.	Preventable by vaccination. Family contacts must be excluded until cleared to return by your local HPT.
Flu (influenza) or influenza like illness	Until recovered	Report outbreaks to your local HPT. For more information, see Managing outbreaks and incidents.
Glandular fever	None	
Hand foot and mouth	None	Contact your local HPT if a large number of children are affected. Exclusion may be considered in some circumstances.
Head lice	None	
Hepatitis A	Exclude until 7 days after onset of jaundice (or 7 days after symptom onset if no jaundice).	In an outbreak of hepatitis A, your local HPT will advise on control measures.
Hepatitis B, C, HIV	None	Hepatitis B and C and HIV are blood borne viruses that are not infectious through casual contact. Contact your UKHSA HPT for more advice.
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted or healed, or 48 hours after starting antibiotic treatment.	Antibiotic treatment speeds healing and reduces the infectious period.
Measles	4 days from onset of rash and well enough.	Preventable by vaccination with 2 doses of MMR. Pregnant staff contacts should seek prompt advice from their GP or midwife.

Meningococcal meningitis* or septicaemia*	Until recovered	Meningitis ACWY and B are preventable by vaccination. Your local HPT will advise on any action needed.
Meningitis* due to other bacteria	Until recovered	Hib and pneumococcal meningitis are preventable by vaccination. Your UKHSA HPT will advise on any action needed.
Meningitis viral	None	Milder illness than bacterial meningitis. Siblings and other close contacts of a case need not be excluded.
MRSA	None	Good hygiene, in particular handwashing and environmental cleaning, are important to minimise spread. Contact your UKHSA HPT for more information.
Mumps*	5 days after onset of swelling	Preventable by vaccination with 2 doses of MMR.
Ringworm	Not usually required	Treatment is needed.
Rubella* (German measles)	5 days from onset of rash	Preventable by vaccination with 2 doses of MMR. Pregnant staff contacts should seek prompt advice from their GP or midwife.
Scabies	Can return after first treatment.	Household and close contacts require treatment at the same time.
Scarlet fever*	Exclude until 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment.	Individuals who decline treatment with antibiotics should be excluded until resolution of symptoms. In the event of 2 or more suspected cases, please contact your UKHSA HPT.
Slapped cheek/Fifth	None (once rash has	Pregnant contacts of case should

disease/Parvovirus B19	developed)	consult with their GP or midwife.
Threadworms	None	Treatment recommended for child and household.
Tonsillitis	None	There are many causes, but most cases are due to viruses and do not need or respond to an antibiotic treatment.
Tuberculosis* (TB)	<p>Until at least 2 weeks after the start of effective antibiotic treatment (if pulmonary TB).</p> <p>Exclusion not required for non-pulmonary or latent TB infection.</p> <p>Always consult your local HPT before disseminating information to staff, parents and carers.</p>	<p>Only pulmonary (lung) TB is infectious to others, needs close, prolonged contact to spread. Your local HPT will organise any contact tracing.</p>
Warts and verrucae	None	Verrucae should be covered in swimming pools, gyms and changing rooms.
Whooping cough (pertussis)*	2 days from starting antibiotic treatment, or 21 days from onset of symptoms if no antibiotics	Preventable by vaccination. After treatment, non-infectious coughing may continue for many weeks. Your local HPT will organise any contact tracing.

*denotes a notifiable disease. Registered medical practitioners in England and Wales have a statutory duty to notify their local authority or UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) HPT of suspected cases of certain infectious diseases.