

Attendance Policy

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Document Control			
Policy Owner		Head of College	
Version	Author	Date	Changes/Updates
V1	Helen Kain	26.05.23	Policy written by Helen Kain. Approved by the Board of Trustees – 15.06.23
V2	Helen Kain	25.02.25	Updated in accordance with feedback from Leeds Due Diligence
V2	Ian Barker	27.04.26	Reviewed – no changes

Purpose of the Policy

Regular attendance at college is important to enable our students to access all the educational opportunities available and is linked to progress. Good attendance is essential if a student is to reach their full potential. This policy states clearly to all relevant parties Camphill Wakefield's expectations regarding attendance and the roles and responsibilities of all parties with respect to maintaining satisfactory attendance. This can only be achieved if there is a close partnership between home and college. Camphill Wakefield expects 95% attendance at college as a minimum.

For college students, registers will be marked late after 9:15 AM. The college session runs from 9:00 AM until 3:30 PM. All requests for leaves of absence should be sent to the Head of College for approval. Parents and carers are advised that taking students out of college will impact their education, and we aim for a minimum of 93% attendance. Whilst we fully understand the needs of our students with SEND and complexities, we do ask for notice and clear communication around time away so we can offer alternative learning to avoid lost time.

We work closely with parents and carers to support attendance, and for those students whose attendance drops below 80%, we offer welfare calls to ensure support is in place. A small number of students have Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA), and we strive to remove barriers to learning and access to improve attendance wherever possible. Data is reviewed by Welfare Leads and the Head of College, and our approach aligns with the **Working Together to Improve Attendance (WTIA) 2024 Strategy**.

Authorised Absence

There are times when absences are authorised. The Department of Education guidelines are:

- Sick or receiving medical attention
- Days of religious observance notified in advance
- Absence due to family circumstances (serious illness, bereavement)

Camphill Wakefield accepts that there will be situations other than those listed above that are unforeseen, and our professional discretion will be used to decide whether the absence can be authorised. Other authorised absences include when the college is closed at a time when students are expected to attend, for example, when college transport through the local authority is not available or a local or national emergency causes disruption to travel.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences will be logged where there is no letter or acceptable explanation of absence provided by a parent/carers. The Department of Education also classifies the following as unauthorised absences:

- A birthday or family celebration
- Caring for relatives
- Awaiting repair people and shopping

Camphill Wakefield will give careful consideration to “Special Occasions” in exceptional circumstances.

Holidays

Camphill Wakefield expects holidays to be taken outside of term time. Should holidays coincide with term time, a written request must be submitted to the student's Welfare Contact with four weeks' notice, using a college holiday request form. If leave is granted, a copy of this form will be returned to the parent/carer showing the Head of College's authorisation and a copy retained on the student file. If authorisation is not granted, this will be notified in writing and noted on the holiday request form. Should holiday leave be taken without authorisation from the Head of College, it will be logged as unauthorised absence. This may result in the local authority seeking a refund on fees paid. A written note from parents/carers does not automatically make an absence valid/justified/authorised. The final decision will remain with the college.

Education Day Students - Home and College Agreement

We ask that parents/carers and, where relevant, residential staff:

- Ensure the student arrives in time to start their session at 9:00 AM.
- If the student is travelling by taxi provided by the local authority transport team, ensure the student is ready and waiting to be collected by the taxi.
- If the student is ill, phone the college reception on the first day of sickness before 9:00 AM with an estimation of how long the absence will be for and if a GP or health professional has been contacted.
- Arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside of college time. Where this is not possible, it is important the student returns to college to complete the rest of the day's activities if this is a morning appointment. Likewise, the student should attend the morning session if the appointment is in the afternoon.
- If the student has to leave early for a medical or dental appointment, or for any other reason, please inform the reception team in writing at reception@camphill.ac.uk. If this is an emergency appointment, please phone reception on 01924 255281.

Camphill Wakefield will:

- Contact home on the first day of absence if no message has been received before 9:00 AM.
- Follow up promptly on any concerns that parents/carers have about what could be affecting student well-being or attitude to college, which results in non-attendance.
- Offer welfare calls to students whose attendance drops below 80% and work with families to improve attendance where needed.
- Monitor attendance due to sickness, unauthorised absences, lateness, and leaving early.
- Share this information with education funders and social services if they request this information.
- Notify parents and carers when there is a pattern of regular or increased absence, both authorised and unauthorised. Regular broken weeks are a cause for concern and will be followed up.

This will be discussed with the student and parent/carer, and we will advise that we will also inform the student's social worker, as the support of a community nurse or other health professional may be needed. This will also apply to partial attendance (arriving late/leaving early).

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Head of College for approval by the Trustee Curriculum & Quality Committee.