



We Make Camden: State of the Borough 2026

Best start

The 6 WMC
ambitions

How to navigate the document

Best viewing experience

This document is best viewed downloaded on a laptop or desktop computer. The interactivity will not work as well on tablets, iPads and mobile phones. You will still be able to view, scroll through and use some functionality such as hyperlinks, however the main navigation buttons on the right may be less effective.

Right hand navigation

The buttons on the right hand side take you to the different sections of the document. The 6 ambition sections each have their own contents for you to jump to a particular area with ease. Simply click on the button on the right to take you back to that section's contents. All other sections do not have a contents page.

Endnotes

Example:

In Camden in 2022, there were 6,389 children or 1 in 5 (19.8%) living in poverty, up from 13.5% in 2021.¹

To go to the reference of a particular Endnote, click on the number at the end of the paragraph.

Click on the number in the Endnotes to take you back to the page which the reference number is on.

Example:

- 1 Proportion of children living in low income households (60% of median income) before and after housing costs, Local indicators of child poverty, Centre for Research in Social Policy, Loughborough University for End Child Poverty (2022); Children in low income families: local area statistics, DWP (2022), <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2022>, https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local_indicators_of_child_poverty_after_housing_costs_2021_22/23523453.

Text which is in blue and underlined is an active link. This example is a URL hyperlink which will take you to a webpage. Others may open up another document or activate an email programme.

Comparison group: throughout the report, we have referred to the 'Comparison group' for simplification. This group consists of the inner London boroughs and neighbouring boroughs to Camden: Barnet, Brent, Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth, Hammersmith and Fulham, Westminster, Islington, Southwark, Newham, Hackney, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, City of London, Greenwich, Haringey, and Lewisham. We also compare to the London and England averages where possible.

List of chart and images
Click on this link to bring you back to this description of the Comparison Group.

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Overviews

These take you to individual webpages

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Good Life Camden

Camden's State of the Borough report is published annually. It brings together data and evidence from quantitative and qualitative sources, and includes national level statistics, regional data, and locally collected data. It provides a **shared evidence base about the outcomes experienced by people in Camden**, and is intended for organisations, residents and the council to increase the understanding of people's wellbeing in the borough. It is aligned to the structure of the [We Make Camden](#) vision for the borough, and uses the [Good Life Camden](#) framework to identify relevant data.

A note on timings: The 2026 report is published earlier than in previous years due to the local elections in May 2026. Due to the shorter timeline for producing the report, we did not include data that was not updated since the last report at the time of drafting.


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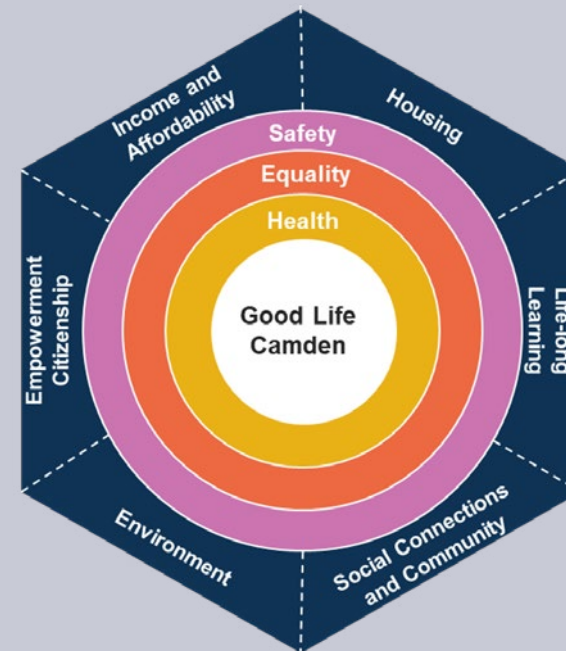
Good Life Camden

The report focuses on the outcomes that are important for living a good life in Camden, based on the co-created [Good Life Camden](#) (GLC) framework. The GLC framework was developed with residents and staff in 2022. It breaks down the concept of living a good life into nine **themes**, which people told us are most important. These are: Safety, Equality, Health, Housing, Income and Affordability, Lifelong Learning, Social Connections and Community, and Environment. The themes of Safety, Health and Housing are identified as core cross-cutting themes. The framework also spells out the **signals** that tell us if we're making progress against the different GLC themes (e.g. for Housing, a signal is that the quality of housing is high). The signals are underpinned by **measures**, which use data from a range of sources, such as official statistics or administrative data from schools, hospitals and transport.

In pulling together the data and evidence for the report, we started from the framework and looked for quantitative data that was available, preferably comparable across place and time. Mapping to the GLC framework also showed us where we have data gaps, whether for signals and measures (e.g. people feel safe in Camden) or in the breakdowns of averages (e.g. what is the experience of specific populations, like perceptions of safety of adults with learning disabilities).

Throughout the report, we have highlighted the relevant Good Life Camden signals where the data is presented.

Look out for these  **throughout the report, presenting the relevant Good Life Camden signal in each section.**



Best Start

Camden is a borough where every child has the best start in life



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The persistent absence rate (missing more than 10% of school sessions) was 22% in Camden in 2024/25, double the pre-pandemic figure. Secondary school pupils in Camden were persistently absent more than all other Inner London boroughs and among the highest in the whole country 14

Camden had the lowest rate of suspensions in primary schools in 2023/24 across the comparison group with 94 suspensions, and no permanent exclusions. In secondary schools, suspensions were lower than the England rate but close to the London rate, with 1,074 suspensions and 25 permanent exclusions 16

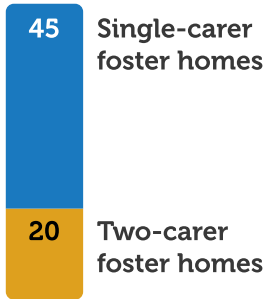
In 2025, there were 1,607 children who are Camden residents and had an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, and 1,181 pupils with EHC plans in Camden state-funded schools (not all of whom are also residents) 17

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Key Insights

In March 2024

Camden had **65** approved foster homes



“ I’m part of the LGBT adoption network, which is supportive, but it mostly meets outside Camden. When it did meet here during the protests, it was powerful to feel solidarity in such a difficult moment.

”
-65-74, Female

In 2024/2025

1,607

Camden children had an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)

“ I have an autistic child [...] I can’t work full time [...] We’re just living from check to paycheck and it’s very difficult, it is very difficult.

”
-48, Female

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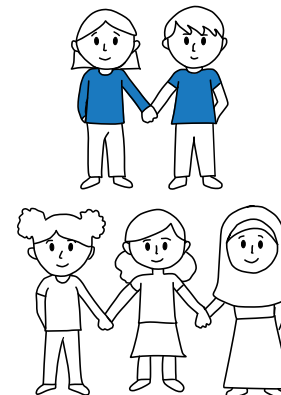
In March 2024

502

Care Experienced Young People were accessing a Camden service

In 2024,

1 in 5 children in Camden were living in relative poverty; this doubles to **2 in 5**, once housing costs are included



In 2024/2025

Childcare for children aged 3-4 cost

£11,600/yr

after free hours are applied

“ The cost of childcare, it’s the same as a mortgage.

”
-27, Female

In 2024/2025

Over **1 in 4** secondary school pupils were persistently absent, the highest share in London



Childhood is a vital time that shapes future life outcomes. It builds the foundation for lifelong health and well-being. Early experiences such as education, healthcare, and social connections, strongly influence later development. When children grow up in positive conditions, they are more likely to achieve higher education, adopt healthier habits, and access greater social and economic opportunities as adults. This chapter presents the data and evidence that was available, as well as stories and lived experiences of residents in Camden relating to the Best Start theme. It covers the Good Life Camden themes of Income and Affordability, and Education and Lifelong Learning.

Good Life Camden 

Income and affordability: a good life is affordable in Camden

Residents have highlighted the strengths that make Camden a positive place to raise a family, including high-quality healthcare, children’s services, community facilities and access to nature. One resident explained:

“ I have grown up and live in [Camden] [...] It is a great place to raise a family as there is lots on offer from great hospitals, healthcare, children’s services, community centres and opportunities to connect with nature”

(30, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

Another parent described how Camden’s early years support, community spaces and sense of belonging shaped her experience of raising a young child:

“ In general I have had a good experience of living in Camden [...] I attended local antenatal classes which helped me to develop friendships and a sense of belonging [...] Camden has great facilities for parents and young children [...] I have always felt safe in Camden”

(30, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

Despite these strengths, the rising cost of living has been placing considerable strain on families with children, often forcing them to make difficult choices about food and household expenses. During a focus group with parents of young children in the borough, one parent shared how rising costs shape everyday decisions:

“ Bills are crazy [...] my special needs child is a picky eater [...] I buy on special offer. They have to be those certain ones. I usually go for the special offer [...] I eat his leftovers so I don’t waste money”

(50, Female, Focus group at Harmond Children’s Centre and Family Hub).

Another parent highlighted the added pressure of managing health-related dietary restrictions, sharing,

“ My son is gluten free [we] don’t have any support for gluten free and it’s double the price for gluten [...] it’s quite [a lot] more extra”

(42, Female, Focus group at Harmond Children’s Centre and Family Hub).

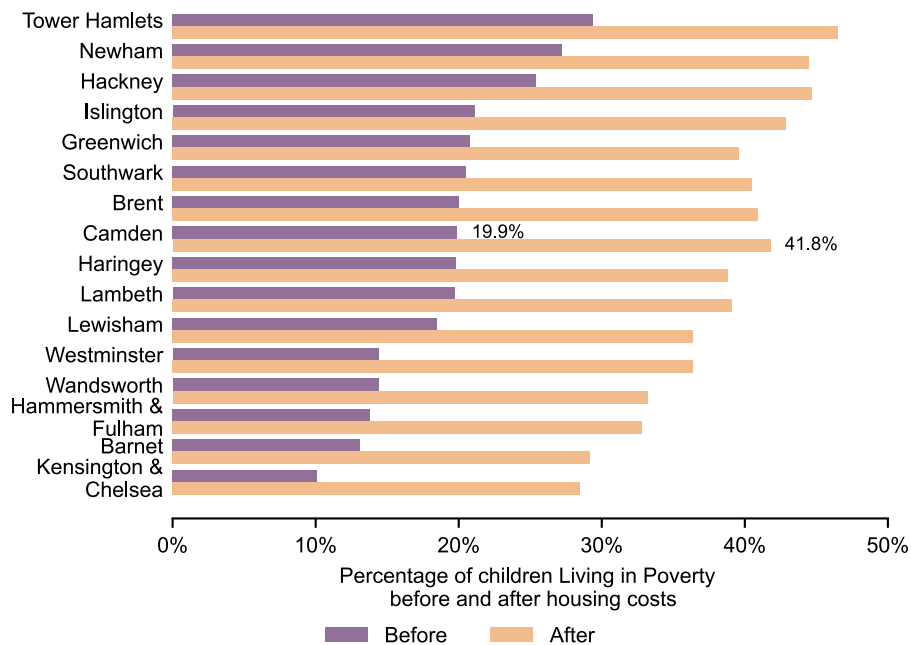
These experiences reflect the wider challenges families face in balancing affordability with the specific needs of their children. Others describe a broader picture of hardship, noting how essential costs have surged. As one parent explained,

“ It’s a very hard time for everyone because we see the poverty increased and a lot of people, homeless, children as well, people they cannot buy the same as before [...] You see the people that are very down and they need more support and the prices of food [have] changed very much”

(48, Female, Focus group at Harmond Children’s Centre and Family Hub).

In 2024, one in five children in Camden were living in relative poverty. After housing costs are considered, this rises to 2 in 5, and the rate of child poverty has been on the rise over the past 10 years

Figure 1.1: Percentage of children living in poverty, before and after housing costs



Sources: Local indicators of child poverty, Loughborough University, 2023/2024; Children in low income families: local area statistics, DWP, 2024

Camden’s child poverty rate before housing costs (percentage of children in relative low-income families, defined as 60% of the median income) increased from 13% in 2015 to 20% in 2024, a rise of seven percentage points. This is higher than the London average of 17.8% but lower than the England average of 21.8%. However, when housing costs are also included, the poverty rates are doubled in Camden, from 20% before housing costs to 41.8% after housing costs. The poverty

rate after housing costs has been consistently on the rise in recent years, from 37% in 2014/15 to 42% in 2023/24, a change of five points. This puts Camden at the higher end of the comparison group, with Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Newham at the top end (46.5%, 44.7% and 44.5%) and Kensington and Chelsea and Barnet at the lower end of the scale with 28.5% and 29.2%.

Child poverty data is also evident in the eligibility for free school meals, which is linked to income benefit entitlement. In 2024/25, Camden reported 33.1% of pupils were eligible for free school meals, which is considerably higher than the London average of 22.6% and the England figure of 20.3%. Among London boroughs, Camden is in the upper range, with rates spanning from 19.0% in Barnet to 37.4% in Hackney. Over the past decade, Camden’s proportion has risen steadily from 20.4% in 2015/16 to 33.1% in 2024/25, with sharp increases after 2019/20.

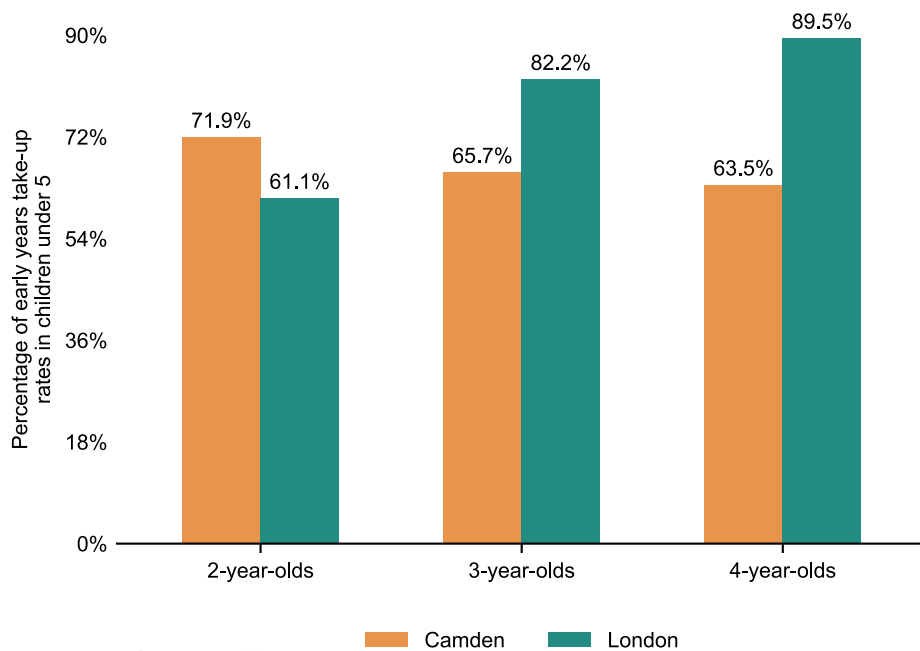
Learning from: Raise Camden report on Child Health Equity

In 2025, the [UCL Institute of Health Equity](#) published a report reviewing the underlying causes of inequalities in health for children and young people in Camden.¹ It found that there is a widening gap between children and young people in Camden, with the middle class largely leaving the borough, leaving the very rich and the very deprived. This is largely explained by the housing prices and the reduction in the value of the Local Housing Allowance, making the borough unaffordable for middle- and low-income workers. This inequality has an impact on children and young people, with over half of households with children living in at least one level of deprivation, with over 700 children living in severely overcrowded homes, around 600 children in temporary accommodation and some 40% of households with children in social housing have someone with a long-term health condition or disability. Lower fertility rates might also be affected by the rising cost of living in Camden. The report recommends tackling material deprivation, expanding affordable housing and improving health and care support in estates.

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Participation (take up) in early years education is lower in Camden than London or England at 65%, although the quality of provision is high – 99% of places rated good or outstanding. Inner London is the most expensive area in London to send your child to nursery despite free hours entitlements

Figure 1.2: Early years education uptake, 2, 3, and 4 years-olds, 2024



Early years education provides important opportunities to learn and develop which have a significant impact later in life. Early learning paves the way for learning at school and throughout life, and what children learn in their first few years of life can have long-lasting effects on their success and health as children, teens, and adults.

The [Coram Childcare Survey 2025](#) shows that the cost of childcare in Inner London is the most expensive region in England. In Camden in

2024, nursery fees were £8 per hour, in line with the London average and slightly more expensive than the national average (£6 per hour for both age groups). Sending a two-year-old to nursery part-time (25 hours a week) can cost around £80 a week, equivalent to £5,840 per year even after working parent entitlements are applied.² Full-time childcare (50 hours a week) for three- and four-year-olds could cost £160 a week, or £11,600 a year, and for parents who are not eligible for free hours, the costs are much higher. In England, the introduction of new entitlements for working parents has substantially reduced the average cost of nursery places for under-twos and two-year-olds while costs for three- and four-year-olds have increased.³

For parents who are not eligible for free hours, the costs can shape major life decisions, as one parent noted:

“The cost of childcare, it’s the same as a mortgage [...] people are choosing between working and going into childcare, versus working and buying property”

(27, Female, Focus group at Harmood Children’s Centre and Family Hub).

For some parents, especially those caring for children with additional needs, the pressures are even more acute. As one parent explained:

“I have an autistic child [...] I can’t work full time [...] We’re just living from paycheck to paycheck and it’s very difficult, it is very difficult”

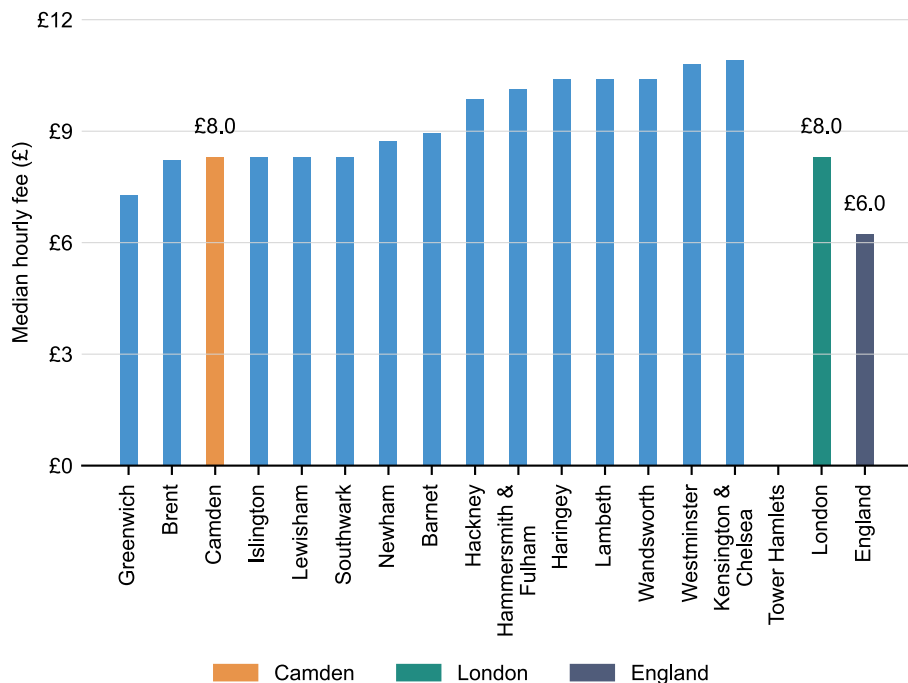
(48, Female, Focus group at Harmood Children’s Centre and Family Hub).

In Camden, the uptake of the free or subsidised provision of childcare has been comparatively lower to the London and England averages. For 2- to 4-year-olds, uptake has been falling since 2018, when it was 86%. By 2025, the overall uptake in Camden had dropped to 65%, which is much lower than the averages for London (88%) and England (96%). However, for 2-year-olds’ early education uptake, Camden performs better than average, with 72% taking up a place, higher than London (61%) and England (65%). It is the lower uptake among 3- and 4-year-olds that reduces the overall

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average, with 66% of 3-year-olds in Camden in early years education, compared with 82% in London and 90% across England. For 4-year-olds, the uptake is 64%, again well below the London average of 90% and the England average of 95%.

Figure 1.3: Early years median hourly fees, 2024



Source: Department for Education, 2025

While uptake in early years education is relatively low in Camden, the quality of provision is high. Since 2018, Camden has consistently had a higher proportion of children in high quality early years education. In 2024, 99% of Camden’s early years settings, for 2-4 year old children entitled to 15 hours, were rated good or outstanding by Ofsted, exceeding the Inner London average (92.1%) and England average (92.4%). For children registered for the 30-hour entitlement, 98.1% of Camden’s early years settings were rated good or outstanding. This

is higher than both the Inner London average (93%) and the England average (95.0%).

Good Life Camden

◆ Safety - People are safe in their homes

Camden has a higher rate of children on Child Protection Plans (42.7 per 10,000) than both London and the national average. The rate of Children Looked After in Camden is lower than the national and London averages, at 56 per 10,000

The safeguarding of the most vulnerable children is one of the most important responsibilities of a local authority. Child Protection Plans are an intervention put in place by the local authority’s social care service to help keep children safe from harm and to support families.

At the end of March 2025 there were 155 children subject to a Child Protection Plan in Camden. That has reduced from a peak of 329 in 2019, a reduction of 49%. This means that for every 10,000 children in Camden, 42.7 had a child protection plan – slightly above the 2023/24 figures for Inner London (40.5) and National rates (41.6).

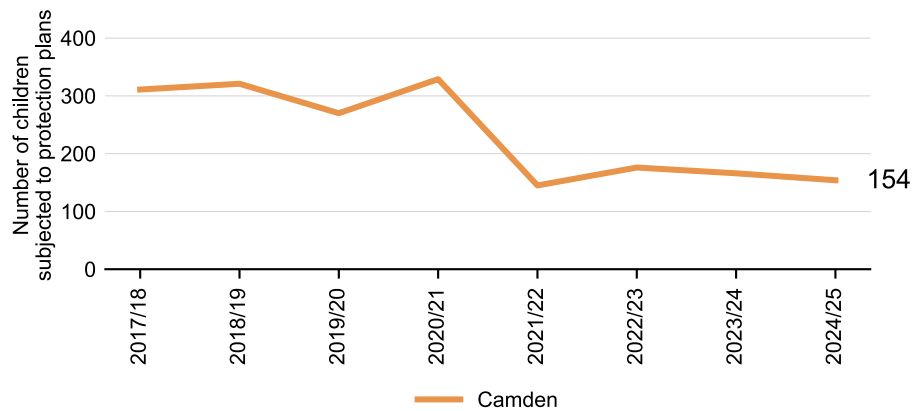
Sometimes local authority social care teams need to take children into care to prevent serious harm. At the end of March 2025, there were 205 Children Looked After (CLA) in Camden’s care. Since 2014, the number of CLA has remained relatively stable, between 185 and 220 children, despite a significant increase in unaccompanied asylum-seeking children becoming looked after during this period. The Camden CLA rate per 10,000 children at the end of March 2025 was 56, lower than the Inner London average (62) and national average rate (70).

At end of March 2025, more than a third (36%) of Camden CLA were aged 16+, though that has reduced from 46.5% in 2020/21. Although

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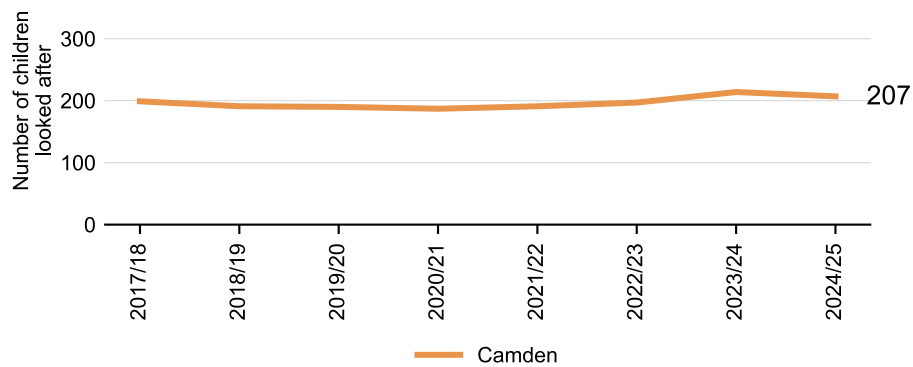
higher than the national average (27%), it is the same as the Inner London average (36%). In addition, there were 35 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children looked after by Camden (17% of Camden’s CLA cohort) at the end of March 2025. Due to the older cohort and trauma experienced by those children and young people, it means cases are becoming increasingly complex.

Figure 1.4: Number of children with a Child Protection Plan, Camden



Source: CSWW Monthly Scorecard

Figure 1.5: Number of Children Looked After, Camden



Source: CSWW Monthly Scorecard

In March 2024 there were 85 approved foster carers in Camden in 65 approved foster homes

When a child comes into care, it is often because they have faced difficult and distressing circumstances. Some may have lived through abuse or neglect, while others have experienced family illness, the breakdown of relationships, or the trauma of arriving in the UK alone, seeking safety and a fresh start. Most Camden children are cared for in-house, either in our children’s home, foster care, family and friends/ kinship care or Camden’s Young People’s Pathway.⁴

Fostering is far more than providing a child with somewhere to live; it is about providing vulnerable children with the stability, care, and understanding they need when they’re unable to live with their birth families. Whatever the reasons that bring them into care, every child deserves a safe, loving home where they can begin to heal and thrive.

Across the UK there is a shortage of foster carers and the number of mainstream fostering households continues to decrease, meaning many children have to wait for the safe and supportive home they desperately need.

In the latest data, in March 2024 there were 85 approved foster carers in Camden in 65 approved foster homes (45 households with one foster carer, 20 households with two carers e.g. foster parents). Of these, 15 placements are permanent, 40 are non-permanent and 5 are short break placements. 71% of Camden’s foster carers are over the age of 50; 47% are Black or Black British, and 29% are White.

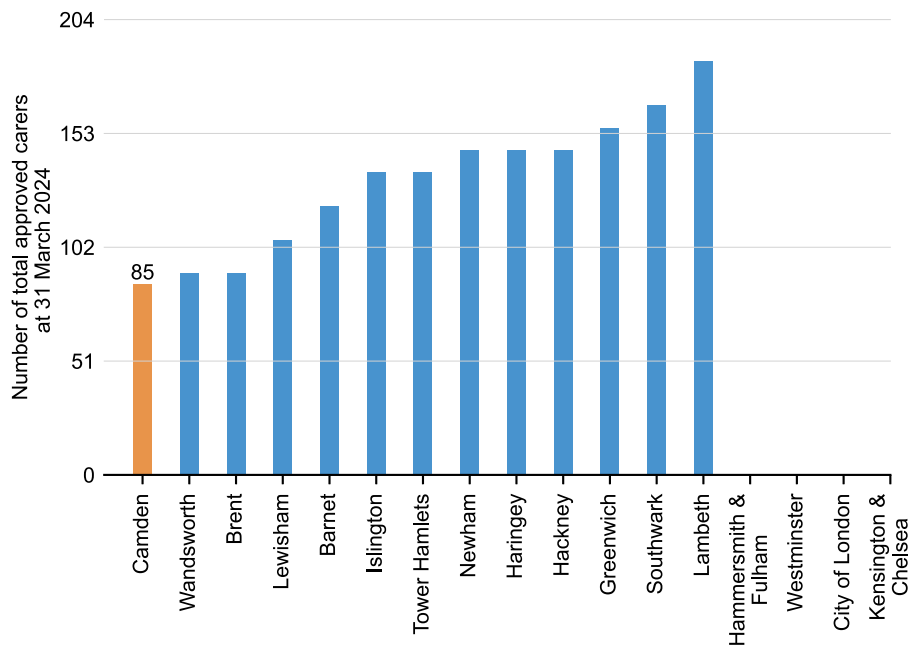
Of the foster households in Camden, 23% (15) of them are ‘friends and family’ foster carers (sometimes called kinship carers). This occurs when a child is placed in the care of a relative or close friend due to the inability of their parents to provide adequate care. Nationally, there has been a continued increase in family and friends fostering households, which now make up 21% of all active fostering households in England.

Camden also relies on external providers from Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) who are private or charitable organisations that work

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alongside Local Authorities to provide foster placements, regulated by the same fostering standards as Local Authorities and are overseen by Ofsted. As of November 2024, there were 46 IFA placements in Camden.

Figure 1.6: Number of approved foster carers, 2024



Source: Ofsted, 2023/24

In March 2024, there were 502 Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) known to services

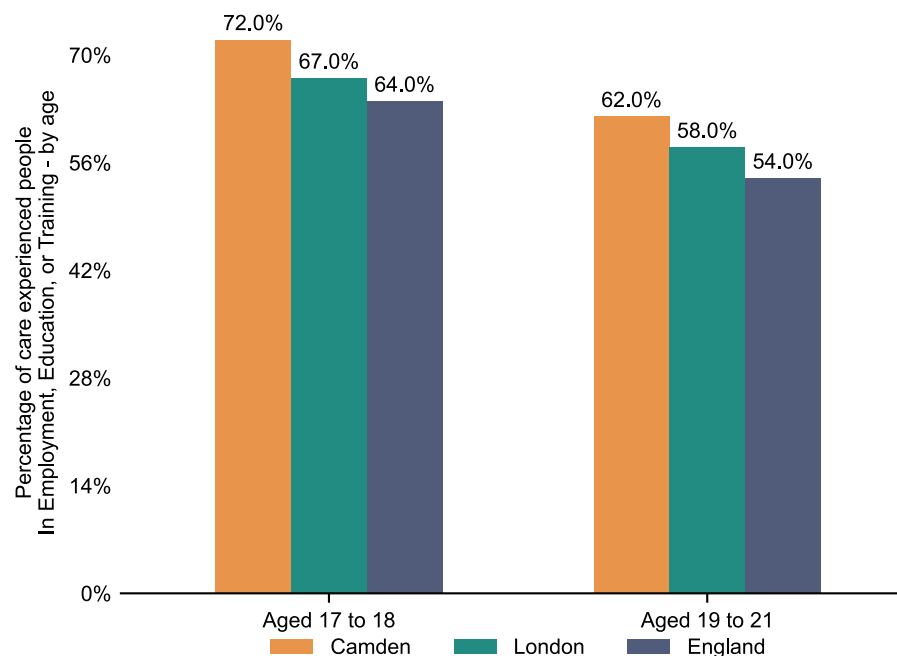
Care experienced young people (CEYP) are individuals aged over 16 who have been in the care of local authorities. This includes those who have lived in foster care, residential care, or other forms of care. The transition from care to independent living can be challenging, and care leavers often face unique difficulties compared to their peers who have not been in care. Local authorities are expected to stay in touch with care experienced young people and continue to have responsibilities

for them until they are 25, and care experienced young people have the right to various forms of support, including financial assistance, housing support, and access to education and training programs. In Camden support includes services such as housing, wi-fi and the care-leavers apprenticeship programme.

In March 2024, there were 502 CEYP in Camden who are accessing a service.⁵ Of these, 272 were aged 17-21 years old, 64% (174) of them were in education, training and employment, 25% (68) were not, and for 11% (30) the information wasn't known at the time. 86% of them are in accommodation deemed as suitable.

Among the 230 young people aged 22-25, 43% (99) were in education, training or employment, while 22% (55) are not engaged in these activities and for 35% (81) the information was unknown. Overall, 64% of this age group are living in suitable accommodation.

Figure 1.7: Care experienced young people in Employment, Education or Training, by age, 2024



Source: Department for Education, 2024

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Learning from: Camden Giving Youth Futures Fund

The Youth Futures Fund (YFF) follows the Future Changemakers programme and invests in long-term youth initiatives. It is funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Share Gift, individual donors, Labs and Autotrader. Learnings and reflections from this fund have highlighted that participatory approaches, such as youth advisory boards, peer-led reporting, and flexible, trust-based funding, are important parts of engagement and empowerment.

In the 2025 activity report, it records awarding 4 grants totalling £321,200 to St Mary's, Kings Cross Brunswick Neighbourhood Association (KCBNA), Coram's Fields, and Somali Youth Development Resource Centre (SYDRC). The report describes the actions and learnings from these organisations over the past year. These provide mental health support, mentoring, skills development, health and exercise and opportunities for leadership. They address systemic challenges including exclusion from education, harmful gender norms, racism, and unemployment, while also providing practical support such as counselling, employability workshops, and safe environments for personal growth. Consistent relationships with youth workers and long-term funding are highlighted as key factors in sustaining positive outcomes and building resilience among young people.

The report also highlights that funding insecurity, staff burnout, and the cost-of-living crisis, which are faced by the sector across London and nationally too, continue to threaten the stability of youth services. Young people and organisations call for multi-year, flexible funding, more support for staff wellbeing, and greater advocacy for youth spaces.

Good Life Camden ☺

Education and lifelong learning: Young people have good opportunities when they leave school

Children achieve good levels of educational attainment at Key Stage 2 (aged 11), less so at Key Stage 4 (aged 16)

Please note – data is based on all state funded school pupils in Camden, not Camden residents. Some Camden school pupils live outside the borough, while some Camden residents go to school outside of the borough or to independent schools. 'All state funded' includes Local authority maintained, academies, free schools and state-funded special schools (including hospital schools).

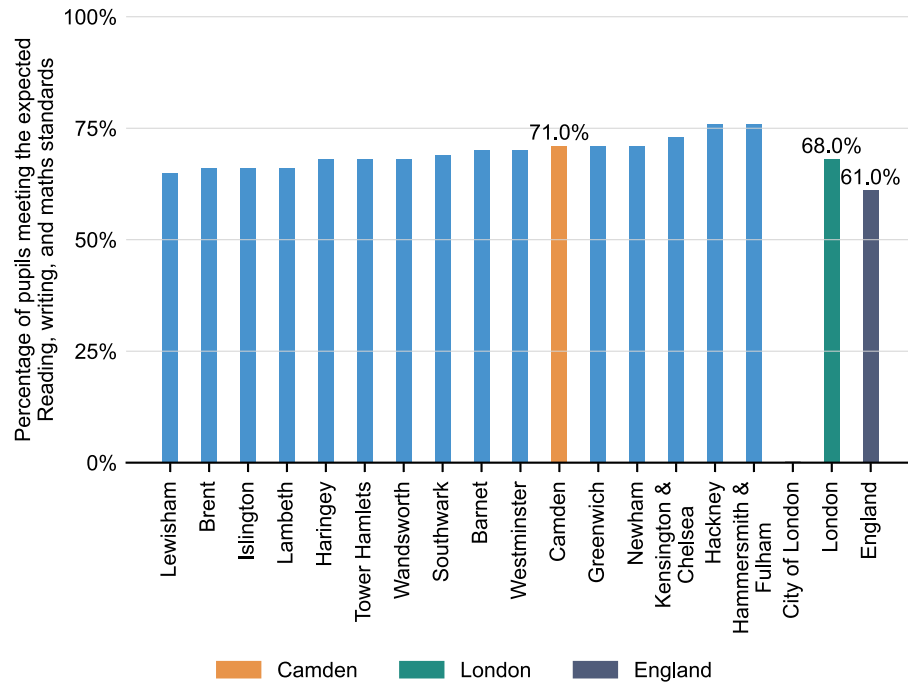
In 2025, at Key Stage 2 (KS2), the provisional⁶ figure for pupils in state funded schools in Camden achieving the expected standard in combined reading, writing and maths is 71%, a slight decrease on 72% the previous year.⁷ Still, this represents a higher proportion of pupils who met the expected standard at KS2 than the provisional averages for London (68%) and England (61%).

Attainment 8 is the Key Stage 4 performance measure to assess the average academic achievement of secondary school students. It is calculated by adding together the scores from eight GCSE subjects. At Key Stage 4 (KS4),⁸ provisional Attainment 8 average was 46.8 in 2025 in Camden's state funded schools, slightly lower than last year's figure of 47.9. Camden is ahead of the national average (45.9) but behind the London average (50.5). See the Inequalities chapter for more detail on these outcomes.

The provisional average result for pupils in Camden state funded schools achieving a grades 4 or above in English and maths at GCSEs is 46.6% in 2025, lower than London (52.6%) but higher than England (45.2%).

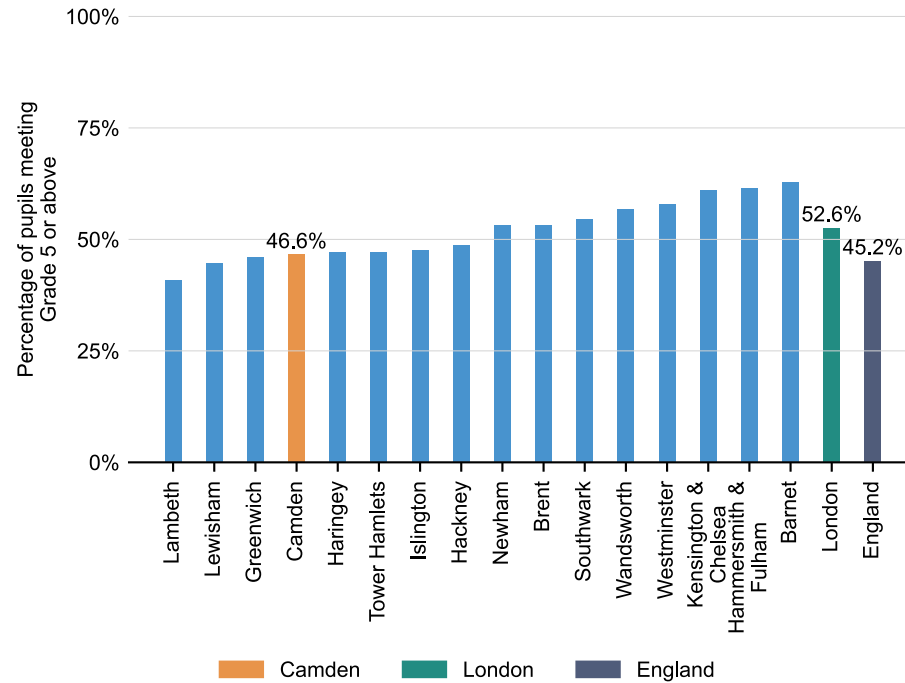
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Figure 1.8: Percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in reading, writing and maths, Key Stage 2, 2024/25



Source: Department for Education, 2024/25 - provisional data

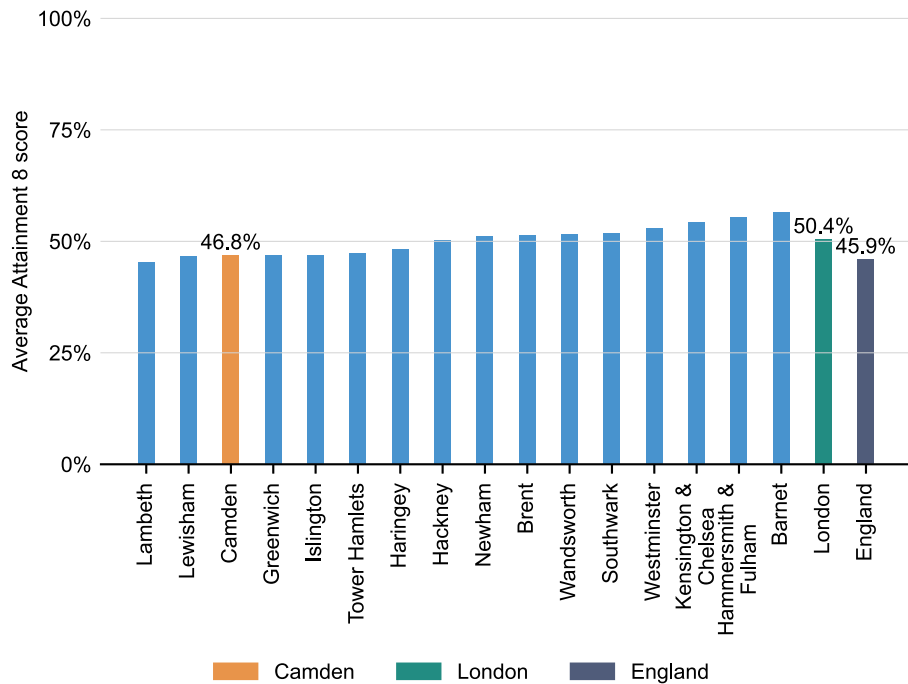
Figure 1.9: Percentage of pupils meeting grade 5 or above in English and Maths, Key Stage 4, 2024/25



Source: Department for Education, 2024/25 - provisional data

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Figure 1.10: Attainment 8 score, average, 2024/25



Source: Department for Education, 2024/25 - provisional data

In 2023/24, 90% of Key Stage 4 Camden pupils progressed to sustained education destinations

The latest data in this release covers students who left key stage 4 in 2022/23 and follows their destinations in 2023/24. After completing key stage 4 (after year 11), 91.3% of pupils from Camden mainstream schools progressed into further education, work, or apprenticeships.⁹ This is a decrease from 95.4% last year, matching the national average (91.3%) but below the London average (92.9%) for 2023/24. Last year, Camden had the highest rate among the comparison group, this year, it ranks 6th. 90.1% of pupils went on to sustained education destinations

(continuous participation for at least six months), above the national average (85%), slightly below the London average (90.9%), and down from 94.5% last year.

Since all Camden secondary schools have sixth forms, a large proportion - 65% of pupils - continued into their school's own sixth form. This is much higher than both the national average (37%) and the London average (57%). As a result, fewer Camden students progressed to further education colleges (20%) or sixth form colleges (4.7%).

The importance of personalised support in helping young people navigate these transitions was highlighted by residents. One young person described how local services guided her during a critical stage in her education journey:

“ CAMHS [Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services] has helped me a lot with my mental health. The social workers especially helped with choosing my college and education path” (17, Female, Regent's Roots Festival).

This reflects the role that mental health support and trusted relationships can play in helping young people stay engaged with education and make informed choices about their future.

Good Life Camden ☺

Education and lifelong learning: Schools are safe, inclusive and accessible

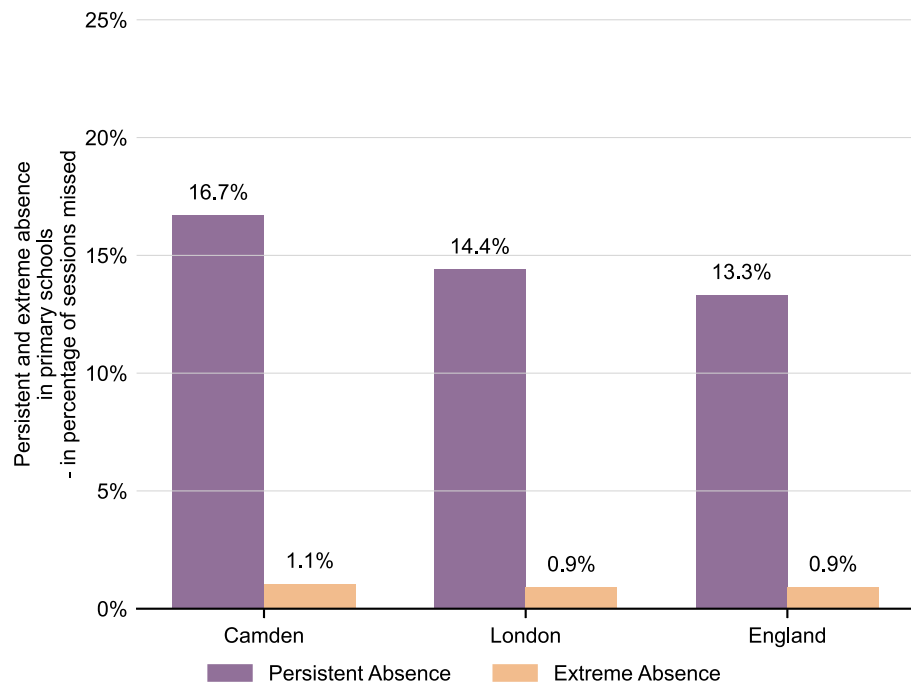
The persistent absence rate (missing more than 10% of school sessions) was 22% in Camden in 2024/25, double the pre-pandemic figure. Secondary school pupils in Camden were persistently absent more than all other Inner London boroughs and among the highest in the whole country

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Missing school can lead to significant academic, social, and emotional consequences for pupils, particularly affecting their long-term success and well-being. Absence rates are linked to attainment, with pupils with lower educational attainment also missing school more often. It has been a challenge both locally in Camden, and nationally to recover school attendance to the levels seen before the COVID 19 pandemic.

Persistent absence from school is defined as attendance below 90% of sessions. The latest data for Autumn/Spring terms 2024/25 indicates that 1,391 primary school pupils in Camden were classified as being persistently absent. This represents 17% of Camden primary school pupils, higher than the London rate of 14% and the national rate of 13%.¹⁰

Figure 1.11: Persistent and severe absence in primary schools, 2024/25

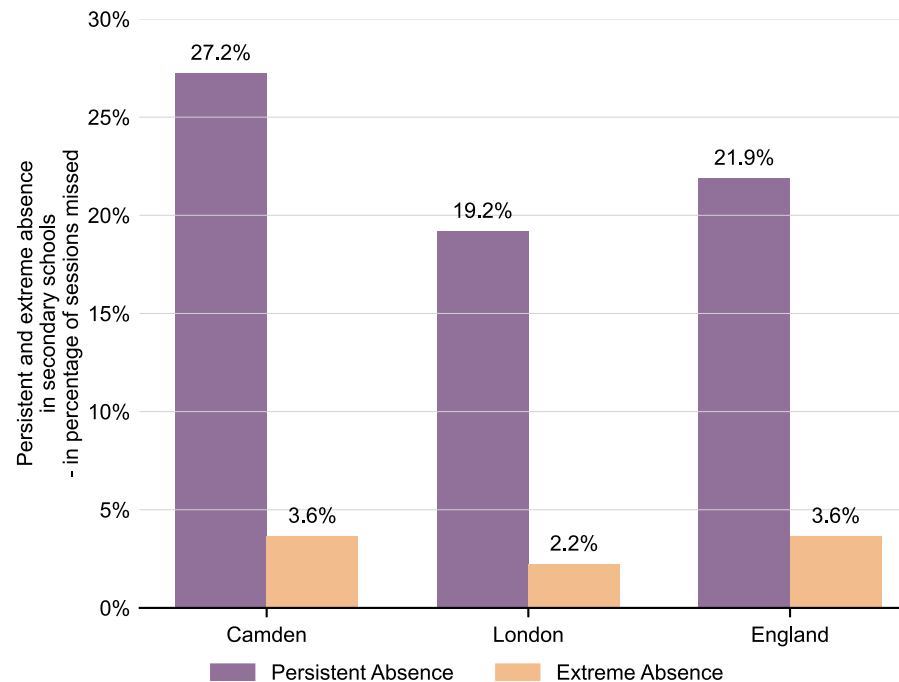


Source: Department for Education, 2024/25 - Autumn and Spring terms

For the same period, in secondary schools there were 2,056 Camden pupils persistently absent, which equates to 27%, the highest in all of London and among the highest in the whole country. England average rate was 22% and London 19%.

Overall, including pupils from primary, secondary and special school Camden's rate was 22%, higher than London's rate of 17% and the national rate of 18%. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic Camden's persistent absence rate was 11%, half what it is now.

Figure 1.12: Persistent and severe absence in secondary schools, 2024/25



Source: Department for Education, 2024/25 - Autumn and Spring terms

Severe absence is defined as when a pupil misses 50% or more of their possible school sessions. Such students may face significant challenges in their education and may require additional support. Similarly to

persistent absenteeism, Camden’s average is higher than the London and England averages, especially in secondary schools where Camden, at 3.6% is again the highest in London (London average is 2.2% and England average 3.6%).

Camden had the lowest rate of suspensions in primary schools in 2023/24 across the comparison group with 94 suspensions, and no permanent exclusions. In secondary schools, suspensions were lower than the England rate but close to the London rate, with 1,074 suspensions and 25 permanent exclusions

A pupil may be excluded from school behaviour that occurs either in or outside school, though this should only be as a last resort. Exclusion is considered appropriate only when the headteacher feels that if the pupil stayed in school, it would cause serious harm to the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

There are two types of exclusion - a fixed term (also known as a suspension) or permanent exclusion. A fixed period exclusion is where a child is temporarily removed from school. This is usually between one and three days, but can be up to 45 days in any one school year. A permanent exclusion is when the headteacher decides that the child should not return to that school at all.

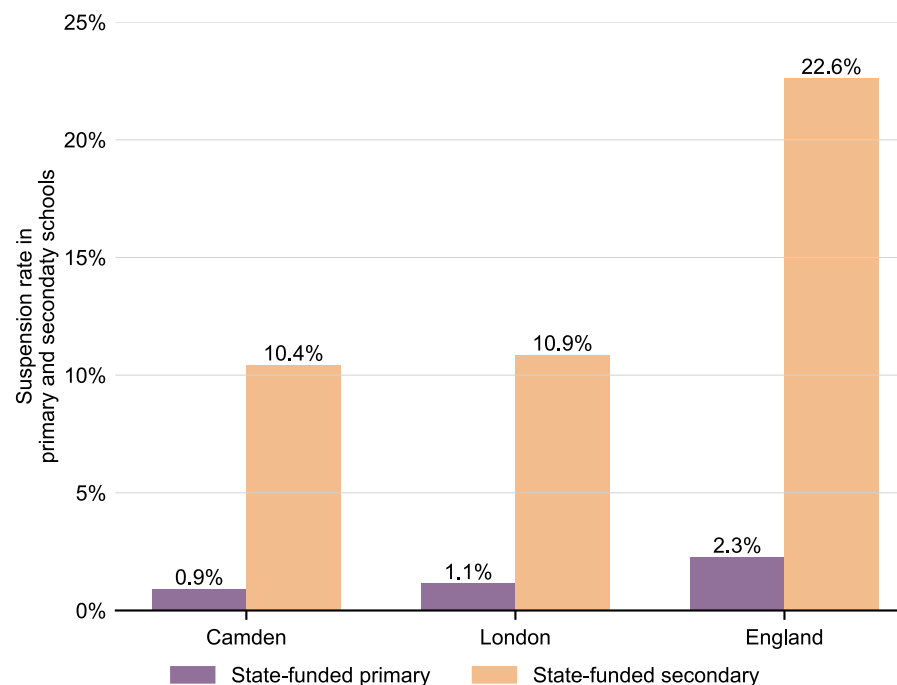
The latest release of data was for the academic year 2023/24. In Camden primary schools there were 94 suspensions in the year (a rate of 0.9 per 100 pupils). When comparing with other local authorities, Camden’s rate was one of the lowest in the comparison group, behind only Newham, and lower than London average, which had a suspension rate of 1.1 per 100 pupils, and also lower than the England average of 2.3 per 100. In addition, in 2023/24 Camden had zero primary permanent exclusions.

For secondary schools there were 1,074 fixed term suspensions in

Camden in 2023/24 at a rate of 10.4 per 100 pupils. This was just lower than the London rate (10.9) and much lower than the England rate (22.6 per 100 pupils). There were 25 permanent exclusions in Camden secondary schools (0.24) which is high when compared to London (0.14) but just lower than the England average (0.25).

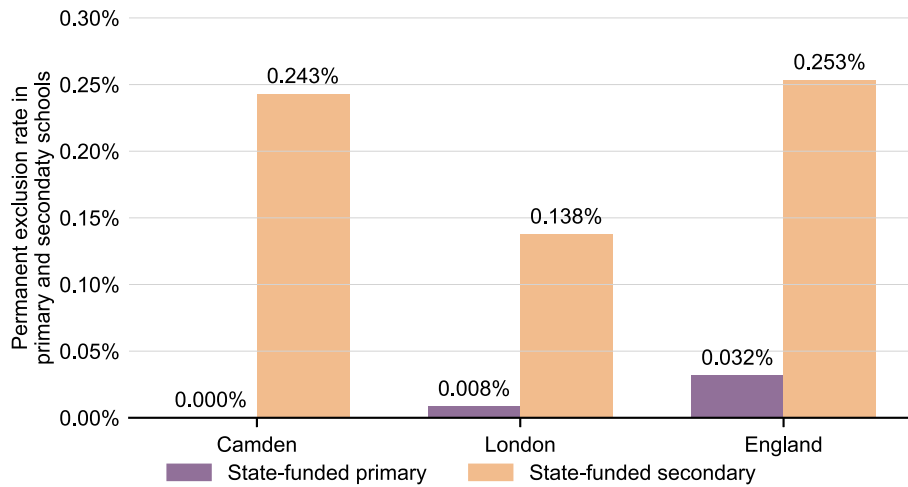
Overall, of children receiving any form of exclusion across primary and secondary school, there were more boys (62%) than girls (38%). There were more disadvantaged pupils (eligible for free school meals, FSM) (68%), than those that were not. Almost half, 48%, of those pupils had an Education, Health and Care (ECH) plan or Special Educational Needs (SEN) support. Pupils with mixed ethnicity (39%) and White (38%) made up the highest proportions of ethnic groups.

Figure 1.13: School suspensions in primary and secondary schools, 2023/24



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

Figure 1.14: School exclusions in primary and secondary schools, 2023/24



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

Young people and families have shared concerns about the wider environment, particularly the lack of accessible activities and support outside school hours.

As one resident shared:

“As a young person it is difficult to find local and affordable leisure centres/activities. I usually end up going out of the borough to access cheaper leisure facilities”

(26, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

Young people expressed similar concerns about affordability and limited local opportunities, noting that although Camden has many attractions, these are often too expensive to access regularly, and while opportunities for training and education exist, these are not always engaging.

“We need more activities that are fun [...] youth clubs don’t offer anything special [...] they can offer educational activities to help teenagers stay away from crime”

(15, Male, Camden Mela 2025).

These concerns were further echoed by adults in the community who highlighted the impact of reduced youth services and training opportunities.

“For the youth, there are not enough resources [...] there needs to be a better offer of training and employment services”

(43, Female, Pearly Sari at The People’s Museum).

In 2025, there were 1,607 children who are Camden residents and had an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, and 1,181 pupils with EHC plans in Camden state-funded schools (not all of whom are also residents)

An Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is a legal document which describes a child or young person’s special educational needs, the support they need, the outcomes they would like to achieve and the placement they should be in. The data on children with EHC plans in Camden is available both for children who are in Camden schools (but not necessarily residents) and children who are Camden residents (but not necessarily in Camden schools) and who have their plans provided by the local authority.

In January 2025, there were 4,605 children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Camden state funded schools (nurseries, primaries, secondaries, special, pupil referral units (PRUs) and in alternative provision). Of those, 1,181 pupils had an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. Another 3,424 pupils were receiving Special Educational Needs (SEN) support in school (16.3%). This rate has increased significantly in the last 10 years, more so than the London

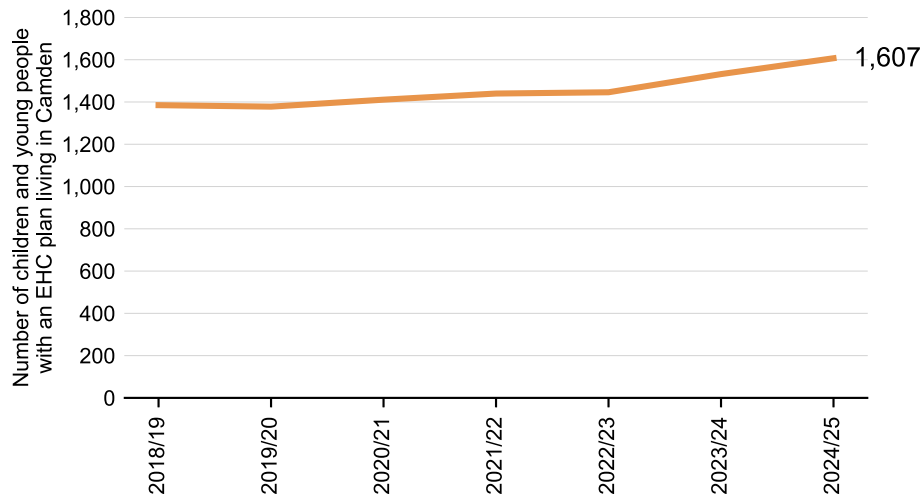
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average (13.2%) and the England average (14.2%). See figure 1.16. Overall, pupils with EHC plans and pupils receiving SEN support made up 22% of the total number of the Camden school population.¹¹

In January 2025, there were 1,607 children with EHC plans **living in Camden**, whether in Camden schools or others. Over the last decade there has been a steady increase in EHC plans in Camden. Some 70% of Camden children with EHC plans are boys, partially explained by the fact that girls are generally assessed later than boys. In terms of ethnic groups, 34% of Camden students with EHC plans are White, 20% are Asian or Asian British, 19% are Black or Black British, 13% of Mixed ethnicity and 13% other ethnicities or unclassified.¹²

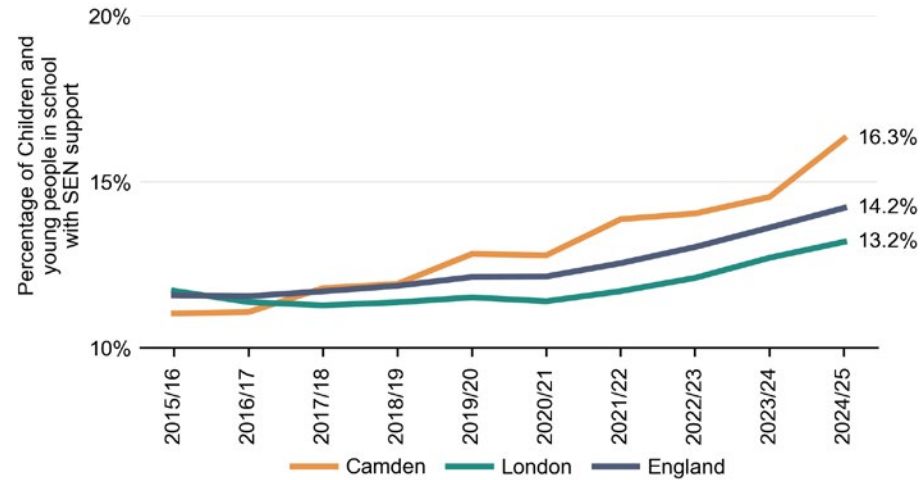
42% of Camden’s children with EHC plans have Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) recorded as the primary need. 16% have Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and 15% have Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. This is broadly in line with the rates seen within School Census data in London, though nationally the ASD rate is 33%.

Figure 1.15: Rate of children with EHC plans



Source: Department for Education, 2018/19-2024/25

Figure 1.16: Rate of children in state-funded schools with SEN support, 2015-2025



Source: Department for Education, 2015/16-2024/25

Parents of children with special needs face unique challenges that go beyond daily care, often requiring tailored support and affordable access to activities. One parent shared,

“ local youth workers encouraged me to do things out of the house and attend the Carers Partnership Board [...] My husband is visually impaired and my daughter is on the spectrum and I feel very supported by family and friends in the area”

(42, Female, Regent’s Roots Festival).

While community support is vital, cost remains a major barrier:

“ There should be extra support for parents with special needs kids [...] swimming £36 for 30 mins, football £120 [...] too expensive”

(48, Female, Focus group at Harmond Children’s Centre and Family Hub).

These experiences highlight people’s desire to access inclusive support that caters to children with additional needs.

Endnotes

- 1 Raise Camden - Child Health Equity Data Audit, <https://www.instituteoftheequity.org/resources-reports/raise-camden---child-health-equity-data-audit>
- 2 From September 2024, all eligible working parents of children aged from nine months up to the age of three can get 15 hours free childcare and education for 38 weeks a year, as well as parents who are not working and receive certain benefits. All 3- and 4-year-olds in Camden can get 15 hours a week during term time, and some families are eligible for an extra 15 hours. As of September 2025, the criteria has changed again so that all eligible working parents of children under five in England can claim 30 hours free childcare (term time only). We will follow the update in the next State of the Borough Report.
- 3 <https://www.coram.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/ChildcareSurvey2025-1.pdf>
- 4 Corporate Parenting Report 2023/24 <https://camden.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s122670/Appendix%20-%20Corporate%20Parenting%20Service%20Annual%20Report%202023-24.pdf>
- 5 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions/2024>
- 6 These figures are provisional, and final results will be published in Dec 2025, though historically there is very little change in the overall figures.
- 7 Key Stage 2 (KS2) covers Years 3 to 6 of primary school for children aged 7 to 11, focusing on core academic subjects. The attainment scores are based on the national assessments known as SAT taken by pupils in year 6. [Key stage 2 attainment, Academic year 2024/25 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)
- 8 Key Stage 4 (KS4) is a crucial stage in the UK education system where students typically aged 14 to 16 work towards national qualifications, primarily GCSEs. [Key stage 4 performance, Academic year 2024/25 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)
- 9 [Key stage 4 destination measures, Academic year 2023/24 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)
- 10 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england/2024-25-autumn-and-spring-term>
- 11 [Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2024/25 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)
- 12 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-health-and-care-plans/2025>

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