



We Make Camden: State of the Borough 2026

Inequalities

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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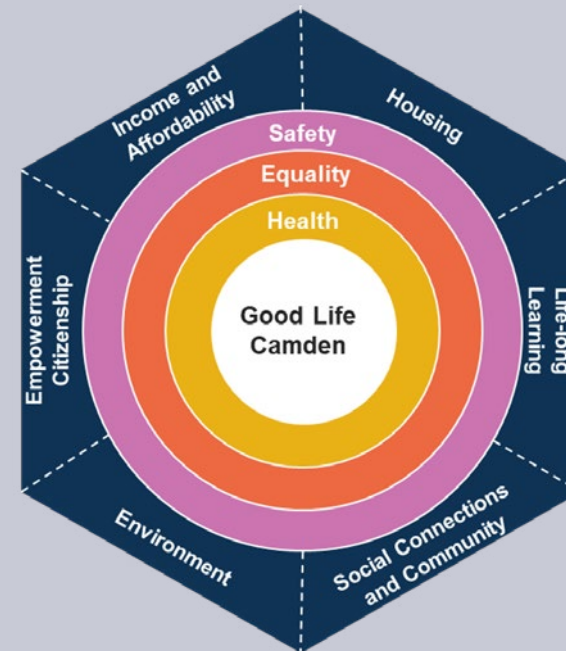
Good Life Camden

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.**



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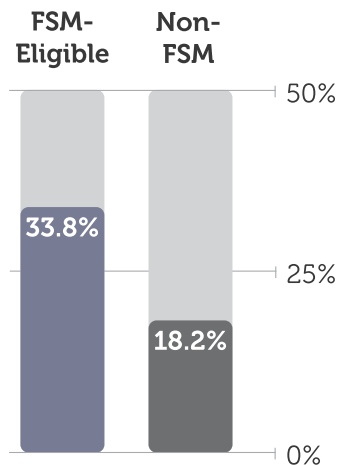
Key Insights

“
It’s a borough of contrast [...] you notice it more here.
”

-65-74 years old, Female

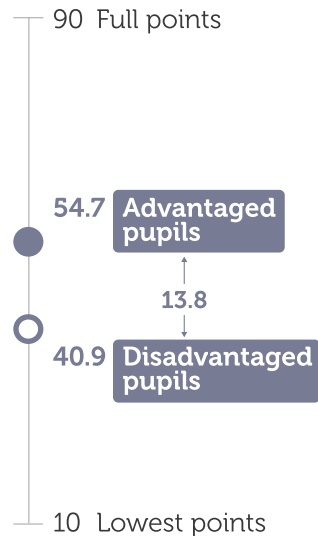
In 2023/2024

34% of secondary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) were persistently absent, almost double the rate of their non-FSM peers



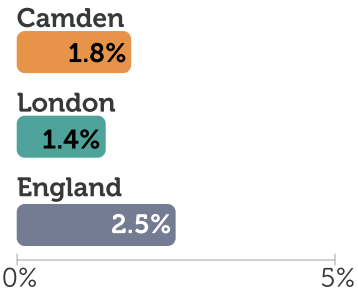
In 2023/2024

Disadvantaged pupils achieved lower GCSE outcomes, scoring 13.8 points less on average on Attainment 8



In 2024

1.8% of 16-17 year olds were NEET (not in education, employment, or training)



1,045

young people (aged 18-24) were claiming unemployment benefits in Camden

“
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

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

-48, Female

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Camden is a diverse borough in inner London, with home to people from all over the world, where different ethnicities, religions and socioeconomic backgrounds live together. It is also a place of deep material inequalities, with some of the most expensive properties in the UK alongside one of the biggest percentage of social housing in London. The borough's contrasts in wealth are striking. One resident reflected,

“ Areas of Hampstead where wealth is in your face and some of the more deprived parts, it can be quite jarring [...] the difference is becoming more prevalent [...] richer are richer, and poorer are poorer”

(35-44 , Male, Focus group discussion with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden).¹

For long-term residents, these disparities stand out:

“ It's a borough of contrast [...] you notice it more here”

(65-74, Female, Focus group discussion with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden).

These reflections show Camden as both vibrant and diverse, yet marked by visible inequalities that shape daily life.

While Camden is celebrated for its diversity, residents describe a mixed experience of inclusion and inequality. One noted,

“ Cromer Street was not as diverse [...] whereas on Gray's Inn Road there are people from various backgrounds and it feels more inclusive”

(26, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

Experiences of inequality have also been described by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning (LGBTQ+) residents describing exclusion and safety concerns in everyday life:

“ I've noticed [...] in secondary schools [...] LGBT bullying is going on with kids. That'll make you think twice about being open [...] young people seem more negative now than before”

(35-44, Female, Focus group discussion with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden).

Telling this story through quantitative data is challenging. We have limited data about inequalities in Camden, especially when looking at the differences across groups and identities. Ideally, we would want the data to describe how the outcomes described in previous chapters might be experienced by different people, for example safety and community connections across different ages, or health across sexes. Previous State of the Borough reports ([2024](#), [2025](#)) have reviewed data from the 2021 Census, presenting differences across groups in outcomes such as education, employment, caring responsibilities, housing, health and disabilities for different ethnicities, genders, sexual identities, and age groups.

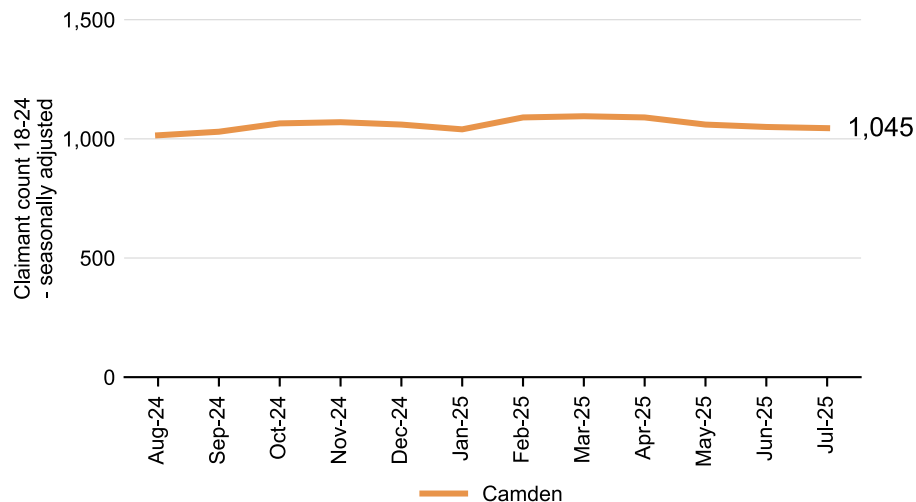
In this report, we have taken a detailed look at available statistics about education and employment for young people, as these are drivers of inclusive growth. The data show that Camden's young people face a complex landscape of opportunity and challenge. While the borough's diversity is a strength, material and social inequalities are deeply felt, especially among disadvantaged and minority groups. Barriers to opportunity are evident in education, employment and access to support, with gaps for those with special needs, from lower-income backgrounds, and among ethnic groups. It is important to mention here that the school data presented is for pupils of Camden state schools, and include out-of-borough pupils while also not including the Camden residents who attend independent schools.

In 2025, around 1,045 young people (18–24-year-olds) were claiming unemployment benefits in Camden.

Youth unemployment is a serious concern and different from overall unemployment, which can be temporary and part of changes in a lifelong career. When young people aren't working or training, it limits their opportunities. They have less money to spend, fewer chances to build skills, and little influence to improve their lives. They miss out on the opportunities to build up their experience and understanding of the job market.

Between August 2024 and July 2025, the number of 18–24-year-olds in Camden claiming unemployment benefits increased slightly, from 1,015 to 1,045, a change of about 3%. This contrasts with London overall, which rose by 10.4%, and England, which saw an increase of 6.9%. Camden's figures remained relatively stable compared to the more pronounced growth seen at the London and national levels.

Figure 7.1: Claimant count, 18–24-year-olds



Source: Office for National Statistics, August 2024 - August 2025

While data for Camden's youth employment rate for 2024–25 estimated at 55.5% according to the Annual Population Survey,² it is caveated by a very wide confidence interval of ± 18.2 percentage points, giving a range from 37.3% to 73.7%. This means the true value could be significantly lower or higher than 55%, reflecting high uncertainty. By comparison, London's rate of 42.3% has a narrower interval (± 3.2), and England's 50.4% is even more precise (± 1.0). When interpreting the data for Camden, it is important to consider that the large confidence intervals mean the figures may not be statistically significant.

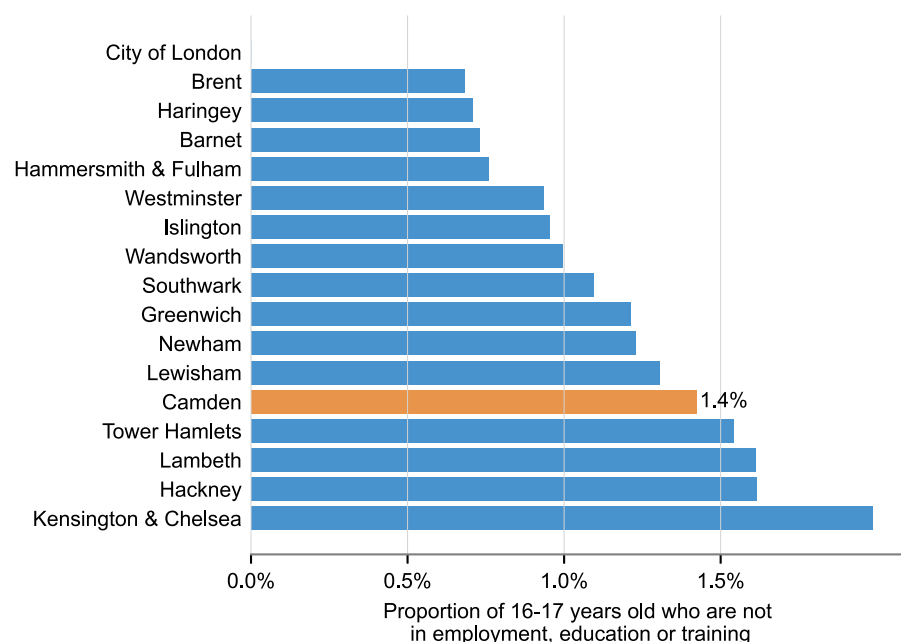
In 2024, 1.8% of 16–17-year-olds were not in education, employment or training (NEET), higher than the London average but lower than England

Young people (16-17 year olds) who are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) are in a crucial time in their life, missing out on both skill-building and work experience, which means starting adult life from a disadvantaged position with lower education and income. It can have a long-lasting negative impact on job prospects, earnings, and even on physical and mental health. This makes it harder for them to join the labour market and society.

In 2024, Camden recorded 1.83% of 16–17 year olds as not in education, employment or training (NEET). This is higher than the London average of 1.4% but below the England figure of 2.5%. Among the comparison group, Camden is in the mid-to-upper range, with rates varying from 0% in the City of London to 2.71% in Westminster. Over time, Camden's NEET rate has fluctuated: it fell from 1.42% in 2019 to 1.17% in 2022, before rising again to 1.83% in 2024. This indicates a recent upward trend following earlier improvements.

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Figure 7.2: Percentage of 16–17-year-olds not in education, employment or training (NEETs)



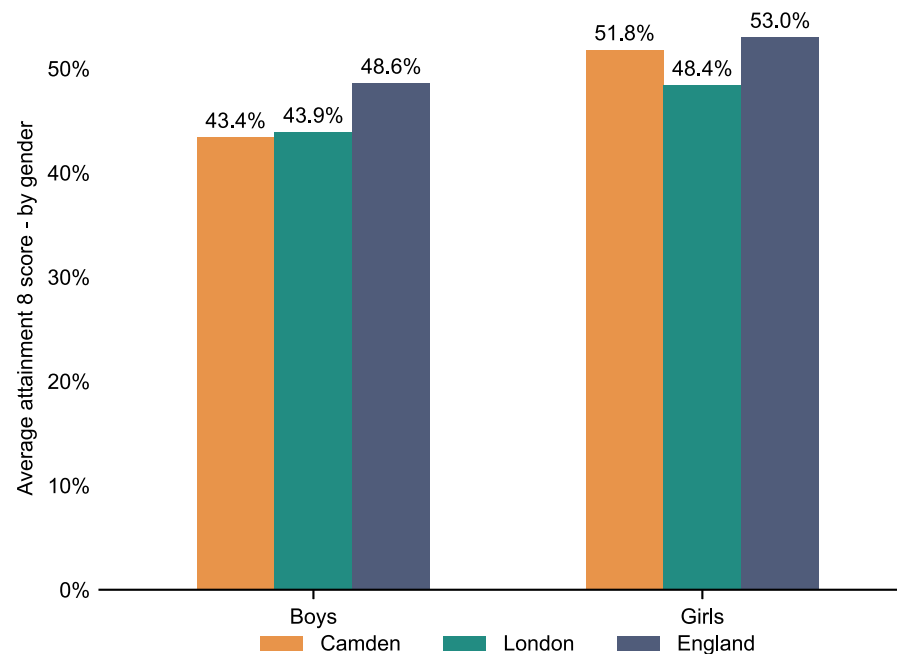
Source: Department for Education, 2024

While overall attainment at KS4 (Attainment 8 score) is better than England but worse than the London averages, Camden girls outperform their peers significantly more than in other boroughs

Attainment 8 is a way of measuring how well pupils do in key stage 4, which they usually finish when they are 16 years old. It is a score that adds together the results across 8 GCSE subjects. While Attainment 8 measures the average GCSE scores across eight subjects, the Progress 8 score shows how much progress pupils make compared to others with similar starting points.

In 2025, the provisional Attainment 8 score (an average across 8 GCSEs) for pupils in Camden’s state funded schools was 46.8, slightly lower than in 2023/24 (47.9).³ Camden is ahead of the national average (45.9) but just slightly behind the London average (50.4). However, when the Attainment 8 scores for different groups is examined, it reveals inequalities across different groups.

Figure 7.3: Attainment 8 score, by gender



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

Camden’s Attainment 8 results by gender show strong performance for girls, consistently above England averages although below the London average, from 52.7 in 2018/19, to 51.8 in 2023/24, while in the same year girls in London averaged 53, and in England 48.2. Boys in Camden have been consistently close to the average for England boys but well below boys in London, with the latest scores at 43.4 in

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2023/24, compared to 43.7 in England and 48.6 in London. The gender attainment gap was 8.4 points in 2023/24, the largest among the comparison group and nearly double the national and London averages of around 4.5 points, although lower than the 10-point gap that was in 2018/19.

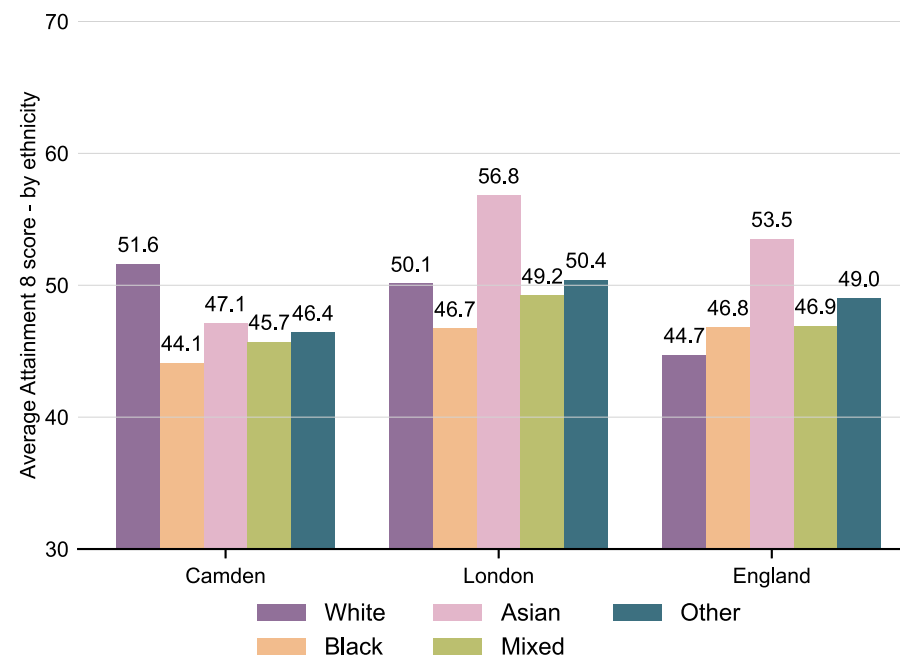
Progress 8 tells a different story: in 2018/19 it was 0.09 (a score above 0 means better than national averages), but then dropped to -0.14 in 2023/24, indicating less progress than expected, while London overall improved to 0.29. This recent decline contrasts with the generally positive trend seen across many London boroughs, where scores continued to rise post 2021/22.

Key stage 4 attainment 8 score varies across ethnic backgrounds, with White pupils the highest performing group in Camden and achieving higher than their peers in London and England, while Black pupils had the lowest attainment in Camden and Asian, Other, Mixed and Black pupils perform below the London and England averages

Camden’s Attainment 8 scores show differences across major ethnic groups and over time. In 2023/24, White pupils performed the highest with scores of 51.6, close to their pre-pandemic score (51.3 in 2018/19). White students in Camden scored above the London (50.1) and England (44.7) scores. Black students in Camden, who performed the lowest in 2023/24 scored 44.1 (and 44.9 in 2018/19), lower compared to London (46.7) and in England (46.5). Asian pupils in Camden scored 47.1 in 2023/24 and also below London (53.5) and England (56.8) averages for this group, Mixed (45.7) and Other (46.4) ethnicities in Camden had small changes over time, generally staying below London and England averages.

Compared to London and England, Camden tends to perform lower for most major ethnic groups, particularly Asian pupils, who outperform White pupils in most other boroughs and in London and England. Borough-level comparison places Camden in the lower half of London boroughs for overall attainment, with boroughs such as Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, and Hammersmith and Fulham consistently achieving higher averages. However, gaps are different in England, with White pupils having the lowest scores and Asian pupils with the highest, while in London, Asians are still the highest performing group, but Black pupils are the poorest performing group.

Figure 7.4: Attainment 8 score by major ethnicity groups, Camden, London and England



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

Disadvantaged pupils underperform in KS4 compared to other pupils (Attainment 8 score 40.9), although they do better than their disadvantaged peers nationally (England score 34.7)

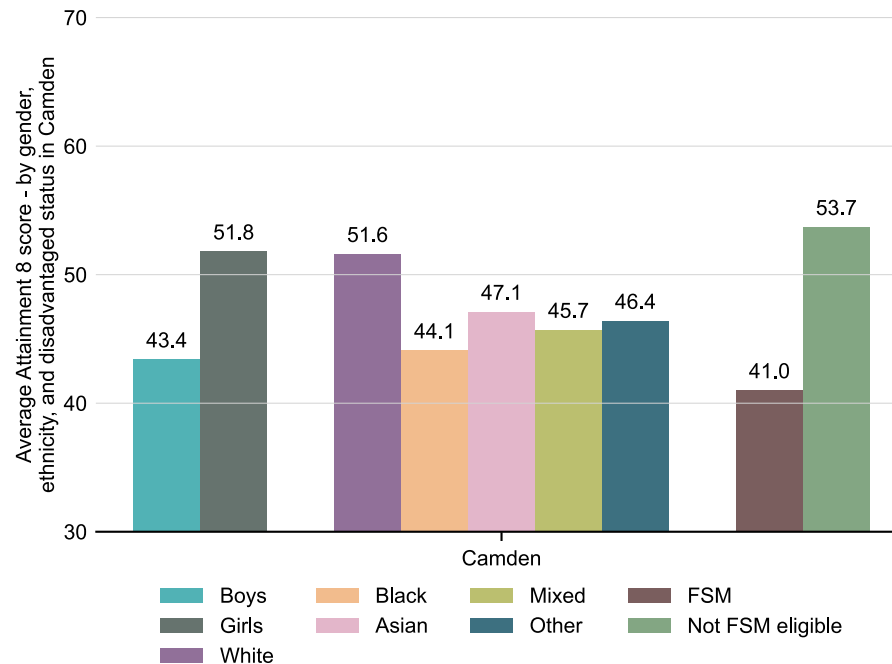
The Department for Education defines disadvantaged pupils as pupils who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) at any point during the previous 6 years, along with any adopted children, looked-after-children and children with parents in the armed services. In the national statistics, disadvantaged pupils achieve lower levels of attainment at all stages.

Camden’s data shows a consistent attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, alongside overall declines since the pandemic. In 2018/19, disadvantaged pupils averaged 43.1 in Camden, compared to 55.4 for all others, a gap of 12.3 points. After Covid-19, scores fell for both groups, but most sharply for disadvantaged pupils, dropping to 40.9 in 2023/24 compared to 54.7 for other pupils, widening the gap to 13.8 points.

Compared to London and England, Camden mirrors the broader pattern: disadvantaged pupils consistently score lower, and gaps have widened slightly since the pandemic years. While Camden’s gap is smaller than Barnet’s (16.1) or Wandsworth’s (16.5), it remains above the London average of 13.0 and close to the national average of 15.4.

Attainment 8 scores for pupils with SEN in Camden have remained in the lower 30s in the last couple of years, 31.7 in 2023/24, while scores for pupils without SEN are in the mid-50s, 52.2 in 2023/24. The attainment gap between these groups in Camden was 20.5 points in 2023/24, slightly below London (22.5) and England (22.0) averages. The gap has narrowed modestly in recent years, and Camden ranks mid-range among London boroughs for equity, with gaps smaller than those in Barnet and Hammersmith & Fulham but larger than in Southwark and Haringey.

Figure 7.5: Attainment 8 score, by sex, Free School Meals and major ethnicity groups



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

School absence is relatively high in Camden, but that changes across ethnic groups, with Black and Asian pupils having the lowest severe absence rates in secondary schools. Severe absence rates are close to the London rates in Camden for boys and girls, but lower than the England rates

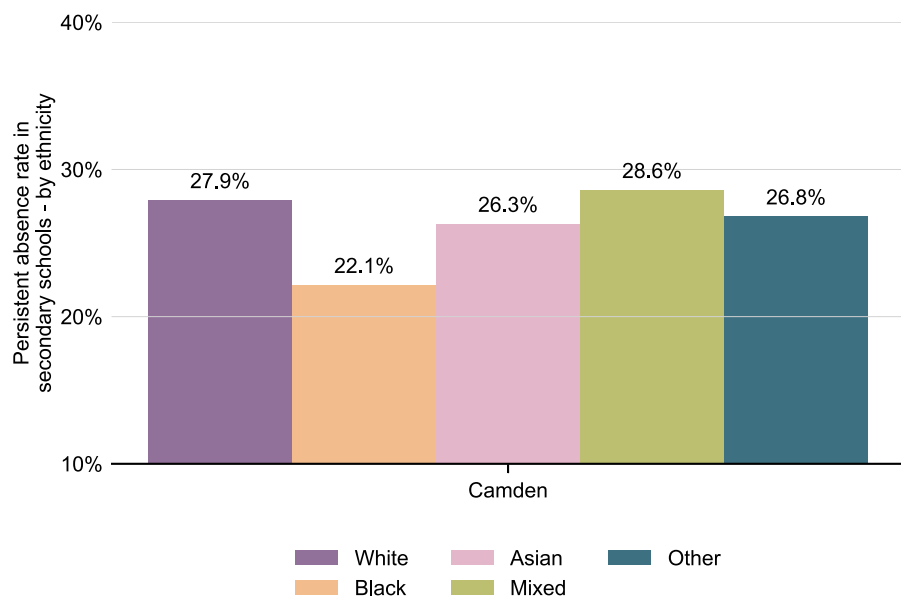
Persistent absence from school is defined as absence of 10% of sessions, and severe absence is defined as 50% of sessions. Overall, including pupils from primary, secondary and special school Camden’s

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rate of persistent absence in 2023/24 was 22%, higher than London’s rate of 18% and the national rate of 20%. Severe absence was also higher in Camden compared to London but lower than England, at 1.75% in Camden whereas it is 1.52% in London and 2.3% in England.

In secondary schools in Camden, where persistent and severe absence rates are higher than in primary schools, absence rates vary by ethnicity. For severe absence (missing 50% of sessions), ‘Other’ (3.54%) and ‘Unclassified’ (4.38%) ethnicities have a notably higher severe absence rate compared to most groups, while Asian pupils have the lowest rate (1.31%). For persistent absence, there are higher rates for Mixed (28.6%) and Asian (26.3%) pupils compared to London averages (25.5% and 16.7% respectively) and England averages (27.5% and 19.2%).

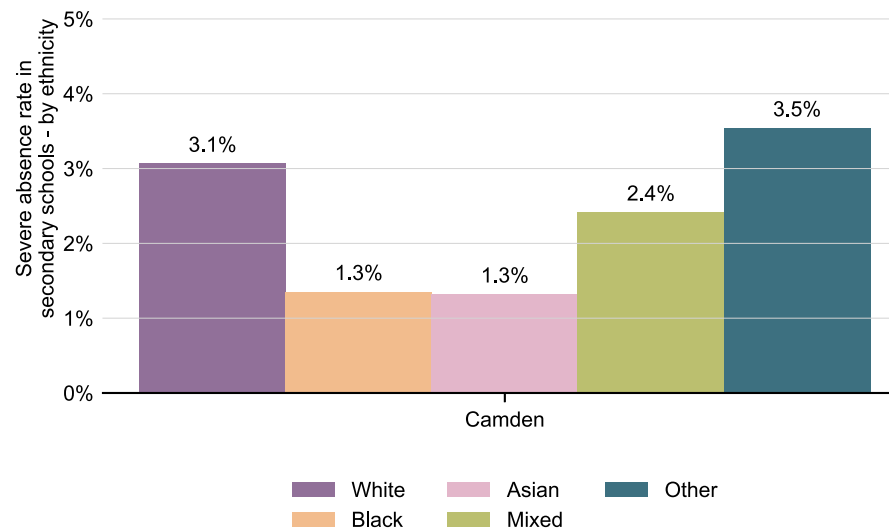
Figure 7.6: Persistent absence rates, secondary schools, by major ethnicity groups



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

Overall, Camden’s persistent absence rates are above London averages for most ethnicities and close to or slightly above England levels, particularly for Asian pupils. Borough comparison places Camden among those with higher overall absence, similar to Islington and Newham, while boroughs like Wandsworth and Hammersmith & Fulham report lower averages.

Figure 7.7: Severe absence rates, secondary schools, by major ethnicity groups



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

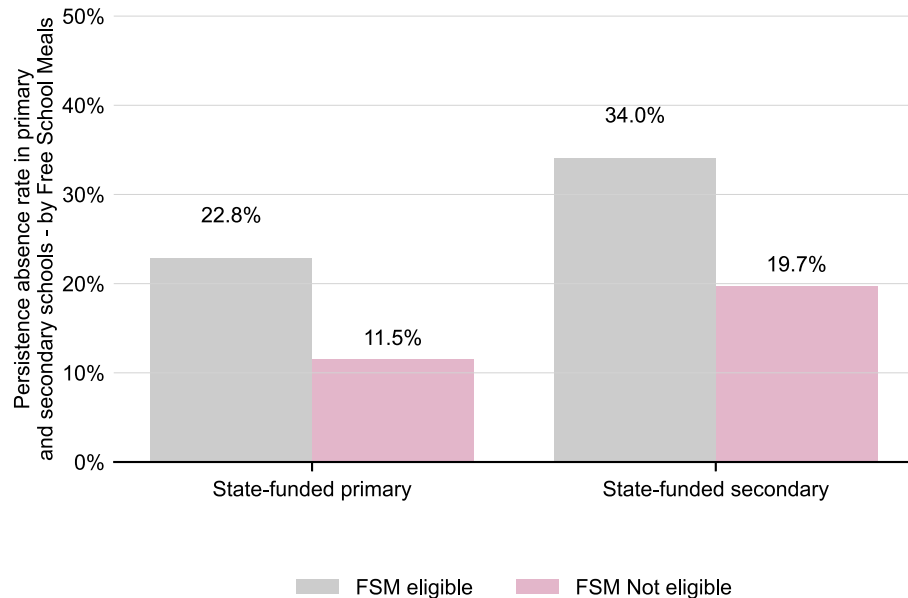
Absence rates are higher in Camden for both boys and girls when compared to London and England, particularly in secondary schools and for the persistent absence. Boys generally had slightly higher rates than girls in both primary and secondary schools.

For persistent absence (missing 10% of sessions), Camden shows 24.8% for girls in secondary schools and 28.5% for boys, above London averages (girls: 22.3%, boys: 20.6%) and England (girls: 26.8%, boys: 24.3%). At primary level, rates in Camden are 16.4% for girls and 17.8% for boys, again higher than London and England.

Severe absence rates (missing 50% of sessions) are 2.6% for girls in secondary schools and 2.3% for boys, slightly higher than London (girls: 2.4%, boys: 2%) but below England (girls: 4.2%, boys: 3.5%). Primary school severe absence rates are lower overall, at 0.8% for girls and 0.9% for boys.

Absence rates for pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) are higher than for those not eligible across all measures. For primary schools in Camden, severe absence is 0.5% for FSM pupils compared to 0.1% for non-FSM, and persistent absence is 23% vs 11%. In secondary schools, severe absence is 2.5% vs 1.6%, while persistent absence rises sharply to 34% for FSM pupils compared to 19.7% for non-FSM.

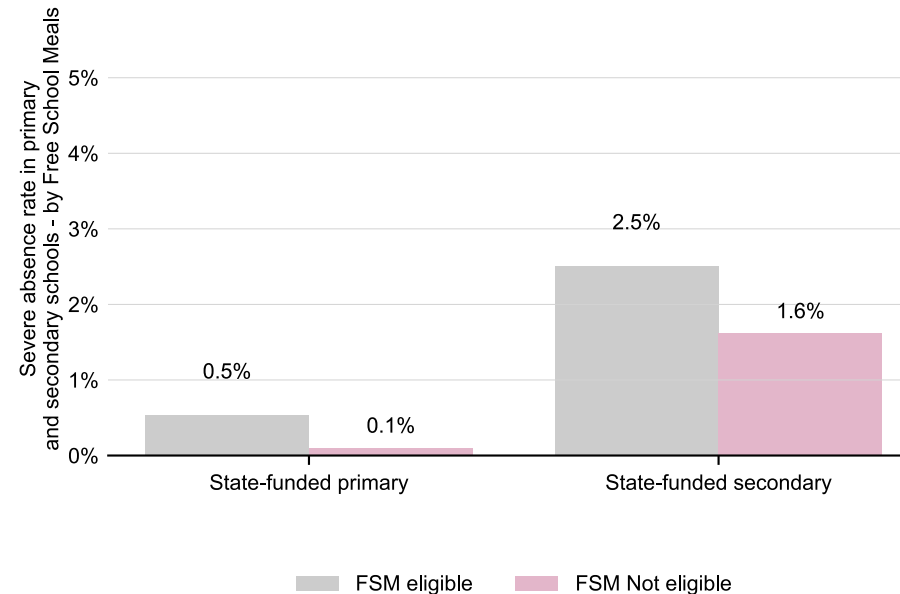
Figure 7.8: Persistent absence rate, by Free School Meals eligibility, secondary and primary schools, 2023/24



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

In secondary schools, persistent absence in London (31.56% for FSM pupils and 15.84% for non-FSM pupils) and England (42.54% and 18.31% respectively) follows a similar pattern to Camden, though rates for FSM pupils are slightly higher. The gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils in Camden is notable, particularly in secondary schools, where FSM pupils are almost twice as likely to have persistent absence. Overall, Camden aligns with national and London trends of higher absence among FSM pupils, but its secondary FSM absence is above both benchmarks.

Figure 7.9: Severe absence rate, by Free School Meals eligibility, secondary and primary schools, 2023/24



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

Endnotes

- 1 LGBTQ+ is used here as shorthand for different sexualities and gender identities. Categories are designed to support consistency in data collection and reporting, but we recognise that these do not always reflect the full complexity of how people identify or live their lives. Individuals may experience their identity, circumstances or needs in ways that cut across, change over time, or sit outside formal classification systems.
- 2 According to the Annual Population Survey, <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/lad/1778385166/report.aspx?town=camden>
- 3 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-4-performance/2024-25>

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camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report



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