

NAME OF POLICY:	Attendance Policy
STATUS:	Non-Statutory
DATE ISSUED:	Summer 2021
REVIEW DATE:	Summer 2023
APPROVED BY:	Academy Governing Body
APPROVED DATE:	Summer 2021

Aims

- Ensure that legal requirements are met.
- Give a high priority to attendance and punctuality.
- Provide clear procedures for any necessary absence from school, as well as procedures for where the school is unable to authorise absences.
- Identify a range of supportive strategies to ensure that improvements are being made, both for individual targeted pupils and for the school as a whole.
- Establish clear lines of communication, between home and school; and with outside agencies (for example, our Attendance Improvement Officer).
- Ensure consistency and responsibility for the whole staff to actively promote good attendance.
- Support all families, with sensitivity, to ensure the best for all pupils.

Rationale

Alban Wood Primary School and Nursery is committed to achieving excellent levels of attendance for individual children and for the school as a whole. Underpinning this commitment is the belief that if children attend school regularly and punctually they will be best able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. To achieve this, parents/carers and all school staff must aim to work in partnership. The purpose of this policy is to provide an agreed framework within which consistent practices and procedures can be applied.

Responsibilities of Alban Wood

Schools are responsible for supporting the attendance of their pupils and for dealing with any problems that may lead to non-attendance. Alban Wood is fully committed to providing this support promptly and effectively.

The school must:

- Take electronic attendance registers at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session, to record whether pupils are present, absent or on an approved educational activity (for example, a school trip).
- Discriminate between absence that is authorised and unauthorised.
- Work actively to maximise attendance rates - both in relation to individual pupils and for the pupil body as a whole - as one of their key tasks.
- Be sensitive to the needs of individual parents and families. Staff at Alban Wood understand that some children and parents may be very anxious about attendance and/or have difficulties understanding policies and procedures. Our role is to provide support *and* to ensure that improvements are being made.
- Produce a school attendance policy which is consistently applied and clearly communicated to all parents, pupils and staff.
- Follow Integrated Services for Learning 'Children Missing from Education guidance and referral form' to comply with its statutory responsibilities.

Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient and appropriate education; most parents achieve this through registering their child at a school. When this is the case, parents are then responsible for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school.

Parents should:

- Ensure that their children arrive at school on time, smartly dressed and ready to learn.
- Instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly.
- Work in partnership with Alban Wood to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance.
- Ensure that they are aware of the attendance policy.

- Notify Alban Wood if their child is absent. This should be done as soon as possible, and certainly on the first day of absence. They should also provide an explanation for the absence. If a child is off school for more than two days, they should visit the office on the child's return, preferably with written confirmation of the child's illness.
- Avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours wherever possible.
- Avoid booking holidays or arranging any other leave of absence during term time - it is not possible for the school to authorise these absences.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

A child's absence from school can be authorised if the child is not well enough to be in school, especially if the child has a contagious illness such as chicken pox or measles. Particular Religious Observances will also be authorised. Absences cannot be authorised for holidays or any other leave of absence from school (for example, birthdays, illness of a parent or sibling, non-emergency appointments or parents' appointments). It is the responsibility of the school, and not the parent, to make decisions and judgements about whether attendance is authorised or unauthorised.

Punctuality

Arriving at school on time is also essential, primarily to ensure that each child has a settled and positive start to their day. If children arrive after 8.50am, then they will be recorded as late. Arriving very late can result in an unauthorised absence for the morning session. All children can arrive for a soft start between 8.40 and 8.50am.

Strategies to strive for and support improvements

The following will be rewards for pupils for achieving good attendance:

- Stickers to be given to individual pupils when good or significantly improved attendance and/or punctuality is noted
- Weekly class attendance certificates, awarded to the class with the highest attendance in the previous week.
- 100% attendance certificates awarded to individual pupils at the end of each term and at the end of the school year.

The following systems will be implemented by the school:

- First-day phone calls will be made to all parents if a child is not in school.
- Monitoring of attendance on a regular basis.
- A member of the senior leadership team will be available at the start of the day, to provide support if there are any reasons why a child is upset about coming to school.
- The school will always call parents if a child is not well enough to be in school. Our welfare officer will always ensure that children are well cared for.

Procedures for Unacceptable Attendance

In the first instance a meeting between the Headteacher and parents will always take place where a child's attendance has dropped to a concerning level. In many cases there are supportive measures that can be put in place to quickly bring about improvements. In addition, there are occasionally exceptional circumstances which need to be discussed. However, the following are steps and measures that will be taken in cases where concerns remain. Our aim is always to act and intervene at the earliest possible stage.

- The local authority Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) will meet with parents to agree on the necessary actions which will bring about improvements. This meeting may be followed up by a home visit, if appropriate, and could include referrals to other professionals if this may be supportive: for example, counsellors.
- Persistent absenteeism will especially be tracked; the national definition of persistent absenteeism is where attendance drops below 90%.
- A penalty notice can be issued, especially if a parent has failed to engage in any supportive measures.
- Legal proceedings will begin if there is no other course of action which is having a prompt and positive impact (for example, a parent that is persistently refusing to co-operate with the agreed measures put in place by the school and/or the AIO).

Evaluation of Data

The following judgements are in line with school expectations. This is how individual pupil data (for example, annual reports) and school data will be analysed and communicated. Class and school data will be regularly reported to the Governing Body and parents (school newsletters).

Persistent Absentee -90%

Satisfactory 90%

Good 96% +

Excellent 98% +

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body bi-annually.

This policy was last reviewed in summer 2021 and agreed by the Governing Body.

It is due for review summer 2023.

Signature(Head Teacher)

Date

Signature(Chair of Governors)

Date



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Alban Wood Primary School and Nursery



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