

- The school will always call parents if a child is not well enough to be in school (so parents should always bring children to school if they are unsure!). 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 85%.
- 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

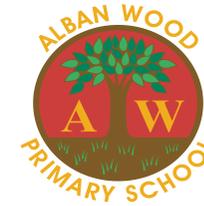
The following judgements are made by Ofsted, and are in line with Hertfordshire expectations for attendance. This is how individual pupil data (for example, annual reports) and school data will be analysed and communicated. Class and school data will be regularly reported to the Governing Body, the Local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

Needs attention or inadequate 94.9% or less  
 Acceptable 95.0% - 95.9%  
 Very good 96% - 97.9%  
 Excellent 98% +

### And Finally.....

Returning to the Rationale for this Policy, it is essential that at the heart of the systems and procedures described is the child's wellbeing. Research has clearly shown that children who attend school regularly and punctually achieve at a higher level, are happier, and are better equipped for secondary school and their futures.

*Policy revised: June 2014*



## Alban Wood Primary School – Attendance Policy

### Rationale

Alban Wood Primary School 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.

### Aims

Through this policy we aim to :

- 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, 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.

## **Responsibilities—The School**

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 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 (see across).
- 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.

## **Responsibilities—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 (having had a healthy and satisfying breakfast!).
- 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, and especially if the child has a contagious illness such as chicken pox or measles. If a child is off school for more than one day, then in most cases it will be necessary to take them to the doctors, primarily to ensure as speedy a recovery as possible, but also to explain the absence to the school. 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' in the school office. Repeated instances of poor punctuality can lead to the procedures described over. Arriving very late can result in an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

## **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 (by the attendance prefects)
- 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.
- A 96+% termly bicycle raffle, and 100% books annual prize.

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.
- Attendance data will be analysed by the Headteacher on a weekly basis, and meetings will be arranged for any child whose attendance falls below an acceptable level (see over).
- A member of Senior Management will always 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.