



Attendance Policy

Person responsible: Headteacher

Date adopted: November 2023

Review date: November 2024

Introduction

Alban City School is committed to achieving excellent levels of attendance for all pupils. Underpinning this is the belief that if children attend school regularly and punctually, they will be best able to take advantage of the educational opportunities we provide for them.

We expect all pupils to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We work closely with the parents and carers of the children attending our school and put in place appropriate procedures and adjustments if necessary.

We work closely with the Local Authority Attendance Team to monitor attendance levels and provide support where necessary. We follow HCC guidelines for attendance.

The attendance Lead is Mrs Cathy Carter.

Target

The school attendance target for Alban City School is 97%.

Role of the attendance lead

The attendance lead will monitor attendance weekly. They will monitor absences, reasons for absences, patterns in attendance and punctuality. They will meet with the Local Authority to discuss whole school attendance and individual cases. The attendance lead will communicate with parents regarding their child's attendance through face-to-face conversations, phone calls, letters, and formal meetings.

Arrival and Registration

At Alban City School, we begin the day with Soft Start. This starts at 8:30am when the gates open and finishes at 8:50am, when registration opens. During this time, children and parents can enter school and participate in activities within their child's classroom.

At 8:50am, registration opens. At this time, the class teacher will call the register and record the attendance of the class. The register closes at 9:00am. If a child arrives after registration has closed, he/she will be marked as **Late**. After 9:15am this will become an unauthorised absence. The afternoon register is taken straight after the lunch period has ended.

Illness and Medical appointments

If your child is arriving and leaving school outside the normal hours, a parent/carer should accompany him/her. The signing in/out book is kept at the school office. However, every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside the school hours. If this is necessary, then the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment. If your child has a medical appointment during school hours, please provide a photocopy of the appointment letter or send us a photograph to the admin email address.

If your child is unwell, the school office should be made aware of their absence by 9am that morning. Reporting absence should be done by telephoning school or by emailing admin@albancityschool.herts.sch.uk . If your child's absence continues, it is very important that you continue to inform us daily and keep us up to date.

Any other reasons for absence should also be reported to the school office but only illness will usually be authorised. It is the Headteacher's decision as to whether absence is authorised and the following reasons for absence will not be authorised:

- Visiting relatives or relatives visiting
- Birthday celebrations
- Day trips
- Family holidays during term time
- Holidays that overlap the beginning or end of term including half term holidays

Repeated Unauthorised Absence and lateness

Unauthorised absences remain on the child's record and may be reported to the Attendance Officer. Attendance and punctuality are monitored by the school's attendance lead and the Attendance Officer.

If a child has a repeated number of late arrival marks the following procedure will apply:

- Pupils with two or more late marks in a week will receive an Arbor notification from a member of the school office.
- Pupils who are consistently late will receive a phone call home from the attendance lead. During this call the attendance lead may arrange a meeting or phone call for a week's time to discuss progress and any support we can offer as a school. If appropriate, the attendance lead will also speak with the child in school about their punctuality.

If a child has some unauthorised or unexplained absences, the school will always seek to make contact with parents to discuss. This will be an informal opportunity to clarify the absences with the parents and will either be a face-to-face conversation or via a phone call.

If a child has repeated unauthorised or unexplained absences the school will:

- Make contact with the parent to discuss the absences via a phone call. This will be followed by a letter detailing the child's absence percentage and the date the attendance lead spoke with the parent. If the child's attendance is 90% or lower the letter will also detail the impact the absence is having on the child's education.
- We may ask the parents to attend a meeting with the attendance lead in school if we feel this is necessary. We will document this meeting and any targets which are set.
- The attendance lead may choose to discuss the case further with the Attendance Officer
- Our Attendance Officer may call the parents or organise a meeting with them to discuss their child's attendance.
- Unauthorised absences of 15 (half day) sessions will trigger a Breach Warning letter which may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

At the end of each half term, formal letters will be sent to any parents of children whose attendance is 90% or lower.

The Attendance lead will liaise with colleagues and wider support services when reducing the barriers to attendance. We will always strive to overcome barriers and help to support families with attendance issues.

Attendance will always be part of a parent consultation meeting and will always be included in every child's end of year report. Whole school attendance will always be part of the Headteacher's fortnightly newsletter to parents.

Fixed Penalty Notices are not something we take lightly and will make every effort to work with the parents to improve their child's attendance before this notice is issued. Breach Warning letters will be sent to any parents of children who are absent because of term time holidays.

If after working with the school there is a significant improvement to your child's attendance, the school will send you a letter of acknowledgement for your help and support in ensuring your child is attending school every day.

Religious Observance

Alban City School will authorise absence that is due to religious observance.

Requesting Term Time Leave

Holidays during term time are discouraged by the school and the local authority. Holidays during term time cannot be authorised by the Headteacher and will result in a Breach Warning letter. This could lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice. Parents/Carers needing to take their child out of school during term time must complete a form. Only exceptional absences will be authorised by the Headteacher. The leave of absence form can be found on our school website under the parents' information section, and we ask that you complete this with at least 2 weeks' notice of the absence.