

St Alban's Catholic Primary School

Policy on Attendance



DATE DOCUMENT PUBLISHED	September 2019
APPROVED BY	Governing Body
APPROVAL DATE	

Policy on Attendance

1 Introduction

1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised. All absences need an explanation accompanied with the appropriate symbol.

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3 If a child is absent

3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.

3.2 When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence. Notes are provided as a template to parents also parents are encouraged to ring the school to explain the absence on the first day of absence. If this does not happen a text will be sent to the parents to ask for an explanation for the child's absence- **First day response**.

3.3 A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.

3.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

4 Leave of absence & Fixed penalty notices (1st September 2015 onwards)

4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for **all** sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, e.g. a special event. We expect parents and carers to contact the school at least a week in advance, but normally this request will be granted.

4.2 In line with St Illtyd's attendance policy, St Alban's Primary School will issue a Fixed Penalty Notice if;

1) There is 1 further unauthorised absence within 15 school days of a warning letter having been issued

2) An unauthorised holiday is taken during term time (note that no warning letter will be received). This FPN will be issued immediately for anyone taking a 1 week holiday but holidays for less days could be punished with a fine if the general level of attendance is low or there has been a problem with engagement

3) The FPN of £60 will be charged by the Education Welfare Services. If two students from the same family take a holiday in term time the parent/guardian will be fined twice.

4) If the fine is not paid in 28 days then the fine will double £120. If this is not paid within the agreed amount of time then parents will face prosecution.

5 Repeated unauthorised absences

5.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services now based at St Illtyd, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

5.2 The governors, supported by the LA, through the EWO, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

6 Long-term absence

6.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

6.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

7 Rewards for good attendance

7.1 All the children who have 100 per cent attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the last assembly of the term. There are special gold certificates for any child who has 100 per cent attendance for a whole year along with prizes. Class attendance is also rewarded weekly.

7.2 Classes are rewarded with the best attendance mentioned in the newsletters and are awarded golden time (Class)

8 Attendance targets

8.1 The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The attendance targets are then agreed with the LA link advisor as well. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

9 Monitoring and review

9.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

9.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

9.3 The rates of attendance will be reported regularly in the school newsletter, website and in the annual governors' report.

9.4 Strategies for Attendance Action

Daily 1st response using text message service all pupils after 9:30am
Tracking of attendance of all pupils. Weekly attendance place on School Website and newsletter. Termly overview of attendance.

By whom

Class Teacher and Office Clerk

Office Clerk /HT/ DHT SAO/ EWO officer

When

Daily. Absences noted on SIMs. Any pupils under 90%- letters sent home SAO/ EWO informed.
Weekly - Weekly attendance place on School Website and newsletter. **Termly** - overall analysis of pupils. Pupils below 90% letters sent out to link in with SAO/ EWO. Meeting arranged with SLT.