

ALBOURNE C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL



On our learning journey together.

Albourne CE School Attendance and Punctuality Policy September 2016

Article 19 All children have the right to be protected from danger

Article 28 All children have the right to a good quality education.

School Attendance

'Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated - pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.' *DFE statutory guidance on school attendance.*

The purpose of this policy is to outline procedures relating to attendance and punctuality at Albourne CE School and to provide guidelines and a structured framework to inform parents, staff and other interested parties.

Overall Aims:

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To ensure the school attendance target is achieved, through rewards and incentives for good attendance and punctuality.
- To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality - attendance of less than 95% without justifiable reason is considered a concern.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.
- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

Rights and responsibilities for attendance/punctuality:

The Legal Framework -

There are legal obligations on:

- The parent/carer to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the register
- The School to register attendance morning and afternoon, to monitor attendance and to notify the Local Authority of absence from school.
- The Local Authority to provide education and to enforce attendance.

Prolonged periods of absence, poor punctuality, unauthorised absence or frequently occurring absence will be investigated initially by the school, and concerns may be passed on to other agencies.

With these responsibilities in mind, we ask that parents and carers:

- Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day excepting when exceptional circumstances prevent this.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of the child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child's life which may impact on attendance and learning.

Arrival and registration Children should arrive for school between 8.45 and 8.55am, when the side gate is open. Children go straight into their classrooms for a period of 'Self-initiated learning time (SILT)'. This is a valuable time when children develop their independence through chosen activities and also prepare for the school day ahead. The gate will close at 9am, by which time we encourage all children to be in their classroom. Morning registration is at 9am. Afternoon registration

If your child arrives after 9am, parents or carers must bring them in to school via the front office and sign them in - with a valid reason for lateness given. Likewise if any child who is taken out of school or returned to school for an unavoidable reason (ie medical appointment), parents/carers must sign them in and out in the office. It is vital that this information is available to ensure every child's safety.

Illness and medical appointments Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.

The school office should be informed **during the morning of the first day of a child's absence** through illness and then **each morning** for the duration of the absence. If parents have not contacted school, they will receive a message asking them why the child is not at school. Unexplained absences may also be followed up by a home visit or a letter. If the reason for the absence is not explained then the absence will be marked as unauthorised. Parents will be reminded of the importance of good attendance and punctuality in newsletters, or more frequently if their child's attendance is causing concern. At the end of each term, parents of children who have missed over an hour of

lesson time due to lateness will be sent a letter from the Governors to advise of the need to ensure children are at school on time.

Holidays in term time are not an entitlement and are strongly discouraged by the Government, Local Education Authority and School. Parents should be aware that term time holidays are not an automatic right. The Headteacher can now only authorise absences for exceptional circumstances, this will be very rare.

Examples of this would be:

- Funeral of an immediate relative - 1 or 2 days depending on location.
- Religious observation on days officially set apart by the religious body to which the parents belong, or to withdraw child from school for specific religious festivals
- Wedding of a close family member - 1 or 2 days depending on location.
- Medical appointments which cannot be arranged outside the school day

Leave for exceptional circumstances will not be considered during September for any pupils or during May for Y6 pupils.

Requests for absence should be made in advance, using the school Absence Request form. All requests should provide details and reasons why the absence is considered to be exceptional. The Headteacher, in accordance with guidance published by the DFE, will determine if the absence will be authorised. All request forms are kept with a child's records.

Right of Appeal

If a parent wishes to appeal against unauthorised absence they need to do so in writing to the Chair of Governors within 1 month from receiving the unauthorised absence.

Fixed penalty notices will be issued if a pupil has 10 sessions (5days) of unauthorised absences or more in a ten week period.

Absence will not be granted retrospectively.

Parents who decide to take a holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absences for their child and may receive a FPN. These remain on a child's record and are monitored for further action by the Education Welfare Officer.

If a pupil does not return to school within ten days of the agreed return date for grant of leave in exceptional circumstances in term time, then the school will consider removing the child from the school roll by referring the pupil to the Local Authority Children Missing from Education Team. The school has the right to do this under government legislation.

Parents needing exceptional circumstances to be considered for absences for longer than ten days within one academic year should make an appointment to discuss this with the headteacher well in advance.

Arrangements for absence in other circumstances We understand that family bereavement and exceptional circumstances do occur, although be it rarely, when it is impossible for a family to bring a child to school. It is essential that school is informed

of the circumstances so that the appropriate code can be written in the register, and also in order that we may offer the appropriate support and understanding to the child and family.

Where a family emergency arises, it is not always in the best interest for the child, nor appropriate for them to miss school, whilst adult family members are dealing with this. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

Celebrating attendance Records of attendance and punctuality are scrutinised by the Head teacher regularly. Every half term, overall class attendance is published in the school newsletter, and the class with best attendance is given a certificate and is allowed 5 minutes extra playtime as a reward.

Children with 100% attendance for the half term are given a certificate to celebrate this. At the end of the school year, those children who have maintained this record are given a 100% attendance medal.

| Every School Day Counts | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Your Child Deserves an Education | | | | | |
| 190 school days in each year | 10 days absence | | | | |
| | 180 days of education | 19 days absence | | | |
| | | 171 days of education | 29 days absence | | |
| | 161 days of education | | 38 days absence | | 47 days absence |
| | | 152 days of education | 143 days of education | | |
| | 100% Excellent | 95% Good | 90% Poor | 85% Very Poor | 80% |
| This is the best chance of success. Get your child off to a flying start. You should be aiming for 96% and above. | | WORRYING Less chance of success. It's harder for your child to make progress. | | SERIOUS CONCERN Not fair on your child. Could lead to court action or Fixed Penalty Notice. | |

Appendix I

USE OF Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)

FPNs are a measure to address non-attendance at school and are issued by WSCC when a pupil has 10 unauthorised sessions of absence (5 school days - a school day is two sessions AM and PM) in a 10 school week period.

Absence is recorded as unauthorised in the following situations:

- A holiday or period of absence in term time, which has not been authorised by the Headteacher. The Government has directed that Head teachers may only grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to come into line with many of the secondary schools and primary schools in the locality and across West Sussex, Albourne CE School will now be making referrals to WSCC for the issuing of FPNs for unauthorised holidays.
- If you withdraw your child/children from school during term time without authorisation being requested in advance.
- School refusal or truancy or frequent late arrival to school
- Frequent or lengthy absence due to illness without supporting medical documentation

Please note that Fixed Penalty Notices are issued to **both parents** and is **£60 per parent per child** if paid within 21 days.

This policy was agreed by the Governing Body April 2016 and will come into play from September 2016



Albourne CE Primary School Request for Absence from School

- **Permission for leave must be obtained from the Headteacher in advance of any absence (except sickness)**
- Please use this form for all requests for absence other than sickness (e.g. music examinations, planned hospital appointments etc.)
- Return the form to school before the date of requested absence

**Pupils attend school for 190 days per year leaving 175 days for other activities
90% attendance represents 1 day off school per fortnight
80% attendance represents 1 day off school per week
(If persistent, this is the equivalent of 53 school weeks lost during the child's primary school years)**

Please note:

- There is no entitlement to absence from school for the purpose of holidays. Holidays in term time will not be authorised.
- Pupils will not be granted leave of absence for reasons such as day trips, visiting relatives, birthday treats etc.
- **If a parent still decides to take their child out of school during term time for the reasons above it is vital that the school is informed so that we know of the child's whereabouts.**

Parent / Carer to complete:

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| Name of Child: | Class: |
|----------------|--------|

| | | | | |
|------------------|-------|-----|--|--|
| Dates requested: | From: | To: | Number of school days absence requested: | |
|------------------|-------|-----|--|--|

Reason for seeking absence during term time:

| | |
|---------|-------|
| Signed: | Date: |
|---------|-------|

School Office to complete:

| | | |
|----------------------|------------|---|
| Current % Attendance | | |
| Green | 95% + | Attendance satisfactory to good |
| Amber | 85% to 95% | Attendance needs some improvement |
| Red | Below 85% | Attendance unsatisfactory – child at risk of becoming a 'persistent absentee' |

Headteacher to complete:

Your request is approved and the absence as set out above is duly *authorised*.

The code placed in the register will be:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|
| Medical/Dental Appointment | M | Attending Interview | J |
| Approved Sporting Activity | P | Religious Observance | R |
| Educated Off Site | B | Other Authorised Circumstance | C |

Your request is **not** approved. If your child is absent as proposed above, the absence will be recorded as *unauthorised* for the following reason:

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| Signed: 7 | Date: |
|-----------|-------|

