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Albourne C of E Primary School

## The Albourne Way – Living life to the full

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# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Reviewed by	Approved by	Date Approved	Next Review Date
Headteacher / FGB	Headteacher / FGB		

Signed: Chair of Governors

Signed: \_Headteacher

# Albourne C of E Primary School

## Attendance and Punctuality policy

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### Introduction

Regular and punctual attendance is vital to ensuring all children have full access to the learning opportunities in school. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late. This disadvantages their progress. It can also cause the children to feel isolated from their peers as they do not have the same shared experiences.

Every day in every year of a child's primary school education lays the foundation blocks for success.

This policy sets out The Hurst Education Trust's policy. Each school has its own arrangements to comply with the policy and these are set out in Appendix 2 and there are links within the relevant sections of the policy.

### 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- › Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- › Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- › Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- › [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- › [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- › [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- › [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

This policy also complies with our trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The board of trustees

The board of trustees is responsible for:

- › Promoting the importance of school attendance across the trust's policies and ethos
- › Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- › Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- › Monitoring attendance figures for the whole trust
- › Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- › Holding the headteachers to account for the implementation of this policy

### 3.2 The local governing body

The local governing body is responsible for:

- › Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- › Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- › Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data for the school
- › Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- › Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### 3.3 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy at the school
- › Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors and the trustees
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### 3.4 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance at each school

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- › Leading attendance across the school
- › Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- › Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- › Having an oversight of data analysis
- › Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- › Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- › Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

[Designated senior leader with responsibility for attendance and contact details](#)

### 3.6 Class teachers

All class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

### 3.7 School administration/office staff

School administration/office staff will:

- › Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- › Transfer calls from parents/carers to the appropriate staff member in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### 3.8 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day on time
- › Call the school to report their child's absence on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return. [How parents should notify the school of unplanned absence](#)
- › Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their children
- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

### 3.9 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- › Attend school every day on time

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

#### [Timings of school day and registration](#)

## 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by or as soon as practically possible by calling the school administration/office staff.

#### [How parents should notify the school of unplanned absence](#)

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parent/carer will be notified of this in advance.

## 4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

#### [How parents/carers should request leaves of absence](#)

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

## 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Children should be on time every day, as lateness results in lost learning time, makes it difficult for the children to understand the learning and can make it difficult for them to settle for the day.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

[How the school identifies and responds to ongoing punctuality issues](#)

## 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If we cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, we may take additional action e.g. contacting the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

## 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels.

[How the school informs parents/carers](#)

# 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

## 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

A headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The headteacher considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

### 'Exceptional circumstances'

Across the year there are just 190 school days. That means there are already 175 days set aside for weekends, holidays, family visits and rewarding days out. We believe every school day counts to give your child the greatest opportunity of attaining a good education and to support a happy and healthy future.




With 175 days already marked out as 'non-school days', you should have an exceptional reason to withdraw your child from school. The following are considered illegitimate reasons and are likely to be rejected and unauthorised.

- Trips to visit family/friends
- Your child's birthday
- Cheaper family holidays
- Tickets to sports/culture events

100% is recognised as an expected level of school attendance. If your child is out of school for 3 days each term, then their attendance is below 95% and they're spending more days out of school than in it! Should your child need time off due to illness, this figure will quickly become even lower. Because five days of school equates to 25 hours of learning, catching up with extra work out of school is unrealistic.

From a young person's perspective, missing schools means:

- Missing out on fun projects and school activities
- Struggling to catch up on work
- Disconnecting with school friends

WHAT IS GOOD ATTENDANCE?					
190 days	180 days	178 days	163 days	161 days	143 days
100%	95%	94%	86%	85%	75%
Good		Worrying		Serious Concern	
					
Only 1-2 day missed per term		Between 3-8 days missed per term		More than 9 days missed per term	

**Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated before the absence, and in accordance with the school's procedures.** [How to request term-time absence](#)

The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Physical or mental illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

## 5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carer must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

[Rewarding and improving attendance](#)

## 7. Attendance monitoring

### 7.1 Monitoring attendance

The trust and schools will:

- › Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- › Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The trust and school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the board of trustees and local governing body.

### 7.2 Analysing attendance

The trust and schools will:

- › Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- › Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### 7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- › Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- › Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

### 7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The trust and schools will:

- › Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- › Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- › Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

[Strategies for reducing absence](#)



## 8. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every three years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full board of trustees.

### Document History:

<b>Attendance and Punctuality Policy</b>	
Policy Type:	Statutory – Customisable Trust Policy
Policy Source:	Based on The Key model 2023
Model Policy Approval:	HET Trust Board
Customised Policy Approval:	Individual Academy LGB
Review period:	Three years

<b>Date Reviewed</b>	<b>Amendments Made</b>	<b>Date Model Approved by Trust Board</b>	<b>Date Customised Policy Approved By LGB</b>	<b>Next Review Due</b>
Oct 2023	New Trust customisable model policy	3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2023		October 2026

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>I</b>	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
<b>\</b>	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
<b>L</b>	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>B</b>	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>J</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## Appendix 2 – School specific information

# Albourne C of E Primary School Attendance and Punctuality Arrangements

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is: **Fiona Keeling** and can be contacted via [head@albournecep.co.uk](mailto:head@albournecep.co.uk)

### Timings of school day and registration

School gates open at	8.45 am
Doors open at	8:45 am
Gates will be closed	8:55am
School day starts - morning	8:45am
Child deemed late – before register closed (L)	Before 9.30 am
Afternoon session starts	1:15pm
Day ends	3.20 pm

### Planned absence

#### Medical and Dental appointments:

- A copy of the appointment letter or similar should be provided to [the class teacher]. The minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment will be authorised.
- Other absences, including urgent same day medical appointments, will be considered on a case by case basis.

#### 1. Importance of regular Attendance

- Regular and punctual attendance is vital to ensuring all children have full access to the learning opportunities in school. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late. This disadvantages their progress. It can also cause the children to feel isolated from their peers as they do not have the same shared experiences.
- Every day in every year of a child's primary school education lays the foundation blocks for success.

#### Withdrawal from Learning for Exceptional Circumstances:

- Parents must complete and return the Absence Request Form as soon as absence is anticipated and at least two weeks prior to the planned absence. A copy of the form is available on the website or from the school office.
- The Headteacher will consider the request, this may include a telephone or face to face interview.
- Parents will be informed whether the absence had been authorised or is unauthorised.
- If the absence is unauthorised then legal sanctions may be imposed. [5.2. Legal sanctions](#)

### Punctuality

Children should be on time every day, as lateness results in lost learning time, makes it difficult for the children to understand the learning and can make it difficult for them to settle for the day.

The school gates open at **8.45 am** and **children are expected to be in classrooms by 8:55am**. Register is closed at **9:00 a.m.** Any child not in class at this time is recorded as absent. The child then has to report to the office to receive a late mark.

- Each pupils punctuality and attend
- attendance will be monitored.
- If there are concerns regarding a pattern of lateness then this will be discussed with the parents/carer.
- A 'Late warning letter' will be issued to each parent.
- Meeting with a member of SLT to address the concerns.

### **Reporting to parents/carers**

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via half-termly written reports that will be emailed out to families.

We upload these to the child's MyConcern record as it can be a safeguarding concern for the school.

### **Strategies for promoting attendance**

- Our monthly newsletter highlights excellent attendance from particular classes.

## **2. Reporting absence**

- Parents are requested to contact school on the first morning of absence by telephone or through an email message before 9.00 a.m.
- The office will phone the parent from 9.20 a.m. if no message has been received.
- Messages should be left for each day of absence before 9.00 a.m.

## **ALBOURNE C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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Headteacher: Ms F Keeling

«address\_block»

Dear «salutation»

**Re: «forename» «surname» (Class «year\_reg»)**

I have just completed a review of pupils' attendance for the last term and I am writing to inform you that I am concerned at «forename»'s level of attendance. I have calculated «his\_her» percentage attendance for the term as «percentage\_attendance»%, a figure which, I am sure you will agree, is a cause for concern.

A figure of 80% attendance would mean your child would miss more than a term each year. At this rate, over a child's school career, they will have missed 2 whole years of education. As a parent or carer, you are legally responsible for your child's regular school attendance.

I would be grateful if you could contact me as soon as possible, so that we can arrange a mutually convenient time to meet, to discuss how we can work together to support «forename» in an attempt to improve «his\_her» attendance.

I look forward to hearing from you within the next week.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

## Unauthorised absence following a 4 day holiday

Dear

### Re:

Thank you for your recent request for an absence in term time for 4 days from x x 2020 returning to school x x 2020 for your son/daughter NAME

Under guidance from Government and the Local Authority, I will not be authorising your request as I do not consider the reason provided for the requested absence to be special circumstances.

I realise that you will be disappointed by my decision, but from September 2013 new Government guidance meant that, as a Headteacher, I am no longer able to authorise any requests for children to be taken out of school unless there are extremely special circumstances.

Please be aware of the following:

### If you take your child out of school for a holiday of less than 5 days.

- If your child is sick immediately before/after the holiday or has extra days off immediately before/after it, we will ask for a copy of your holiday booking or a doctor's certificate to confirm the dates of your holiday or the dates of any sickness.

Failure to produce this evidence will result in the School referring you to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice of £120 per child, per parent. Please note that once a Penalty Notice has been issued there is no right of appeal.

I hope you will understand and support our efforts in sustaining high attendance and attainment at Albourne C of E Primary School

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Dear XX

**Re: XX CLASS**

Thank you for your recent request for an absence in term time from x x 2020 returning to school x x 2020. I will not be authorising your request as I do not consider the reason provided to be special circumstances, as required by the Local Authority.

I realise that you will be disappointed by my decision, but from September 2013 new Government guidance meant that, as a Headteacher, I am no longer able to authorise any requests for children to be taken out of school unless there are special circumstances.

The consequence for your child taking an absence during this period is that it will be recorded as unauthorised. An absence from school for 5 days or more will incur a referral for a Penalty Notice, imposed by the Local Authority, of £120 per child, per parent.

Please note that once a Penalty Notice has been issued there is no right of appeal.

I hope you will understand and support our efforts in sustaining high attendance and attainment at

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



Dear Name

**Student name and form**

**Current % attendance: %**

### **WARNING OF POTENTIAL ISSUE OF PENALTY NOTICE**

We are concerned to note that there is a pattern of unauthorised absence emerging in relation to **Name's** attendance to school. In order to avoid this becoming a serious problem we would urge you to ensure that **Name** attends school each day and registers promptly.

If you have any medical evidence which states **Name** was unfit or so unwell **he/she** could not attend school, please send this information into school immediately.

Regular attendance, which includes punctuality, is not only an important educational requirement but is also a legal requirement.

**Please be advised that if punctuality does not improve and a further 10 sessions of lateness, and any other unauthorised absence, accrues during the next 10 weeks, we will refer the matter to the Education Support, Behaviour & Attendance Service and a Penalty Notice will be issued. Please note that if a Penalty Notice is issued this will be to *each* parent (for each child) incurring a fine of £120 which decreases to £60 if not paid within 21 days.**

If there are any issues you would wish to discuss please do not hesitate to make contact with me.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Dear

I have just completed a review of students' attendance and at the time of writing XX is classified as a persistent absentee (PA student) as his/ her total attendance for the current school year is below 90%.

XXs attendance as of today's date is XX%

When looking into the reasons why XX has been absent from school, we noticed that the majority of the absences were linked to illness.

I must now ask that if any further absences occur, evidence must be received by the school showing that XX is medically unfit to attend and is being supported by a doctor, consultant or medical professional.

This can mean asking for:

- A letter from your GP.
- Evidence of an appointment in the form of an appointment card signed by a receptionist.
- Appointment letter from the hospital.
- A photocopy or picture of medication prescribed.

If this evidence is not supplied when XX returns to school after any illness or medical absence the absences will be recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in a referral being made to the Education Welfare Service.

We would appreciate your support to ensure XX's attendance improves.

If you wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me through the school office at any time.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher





