



Punctuality and Attendance Policy

The Catholic Ethos of the School

At St. Albert the Great Catholic Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a welcome to each child and family and to provide a warm, caring and safe environment within which all children can learn and develop.

Our school was founded by and is part of the Catholic Church. The school is to be conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with Canon Law and teachings of the Catholic Church, and in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Archdiocese of Westminster. At all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is thus the responsibility of all members of the school - pupils, parents and teachers, to take swift and appropriate action when relationships in our community conspicuously fail to reflect these ideals. At St. Albert the Great Catholic Primary School we are committed to improving attendance and punctuality as this will have an impact on the children's attainment. We follow the DfE and Local Authority guidelines to improve and maintain good punctuality and attendance and this policy is commended as a series of concrete courses of action to assist in this endeavour.

Doors open and Registration

The school building is open from 8.45 am for children to enter their classrooms and prepare themselves for registration at 8.55am. Children should not be left on school premises before 8.45 am or after 3.30 pm as they will be unsupervised and therefore the governors and staff of the school can accept no responsibility for their safety.

Lateness and Absence

1. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school and are on time.
2. If a child is not present for the start of registration (8:55am) then they are marked late.
3. If a child has not arrived by the end of registration (9.00am) then they are marked absent.
4. Any child arriving after 9.00am should report to the school office where a "Late" book is kept requiring the reason for the late arrival. The child will be marked absent for the whole of the session.
5. However, the child will be noted as present in the school in the "Late" book which is used in the event of a fire and to ensure the child receives a school dinner.
6. A written explanation for the absence is required. Failure to do this will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
7. On the rare occasions that a late arrival is due to circumstances outside the child's control e.g. severe road accidents, road closures, snow, the registers will be kept open for a longer period and the child(ren) marked as present. This decision will be taken by the Head Teacher.
8. The parents of children who are regularly late for school will be contacted by the Head Teacher who will work with the parent(s) to bring about an improvement in punctuality.
9. Please let us know on the first day of your child's absence and again on the third day. Thereafter you should keep us informed weekly. Once your child returns to school, notification for the absence needs to be by letter or email explaining the reason. This will be accepted from the child's parent/guardian
10. An absence may still be recorded as unauthorised even though a note has been received. This is at the discretion of the Head Teacher.
11. The school will authorise absences for the following:
 - Illness
 - Medical / dental appointments (though every effort should be made for these to be made after school or during school holidays)
 - Music or dance exams
 - Approved educational visits or trips including Year 6 visits / interviews for prospective secondary schools.
 - Exceptional circumstances e.g. death of a family member.
 - Exclusions
12. The school will not authorise absences for activities such as:
 - Shopping
 - Looking after brothers, sisters or unwell parents
 - Birthdays
 - Holidays in term time unless there are special circumstances.



- Death of a pet.
- Sleeping in

Leaving and returning to School during School Day

1. Whenever possible, parents should avoid arranging appointments for children during school time.
2. If this is unavoidable, children may not leave the school premises alone but must be collected from the School Office.
3. Parents should report to the school office staff who will then collect their child from the classroom.
4. Parents should "sign out" their child on leaving and report back to the office on return.
5. Children may not leave school early to accommodate ad hoc travel arrangements such as weekend visits or to beat bank holiday traffic.

Following up Absence

1. At St. Albert the Great Catholic Primary School we follow a 'First Day Response' procedure. Parents / carers will be contacted if their children are absent from school and the school has not been notified by 9:30am. Messages can be left on the school answer phone.
2. The school will contact you after 3 days if there has been no explanation for your child's absence.
3. Please inform the school if you regularly allow your child to come to school independently. If one of these children is absent and no message is received by 9.30am, the school office will contact the parent/ carer to check the whereabouts of the child.
4. Following your child's return to school, if no reason for your child's absence is provided, there will be a maximum of three written requests for a reason from the school. If no written explanation is forthcoming, the absence will be recorded on the register and attendance system as "unauthorised".
5. In the event of extended or regular absence, a letter will be sent home to parents/carers in the first instance. If necessary, the matter may be referred to the Attendance Improvement Officer.
6. Pupils who have less than 95% attendance at school will be monitored by the Head teacher.
7. Pupils who have less than 90% attendance at school will be monitored by the Attendance Improvement Officer (A.I.O.)
8. Pupils who have less than 80% attendance at school will be termed 'persistent absentees' and a referral will be made to the A.I.O. who will liaise with parents to support them in raising their children's attendance in school.
9. The school works in partnership with the A.I.O. to improve attendance for individual pupils. If there is an attendance issue that the school and the A.I.O. cannot resolve the school will make a formal referral to Children, Schools and Families.
10. Class teachers will discuss children's attendance with parents / carers during Parents' Evenings or when concerns arise.
11. Where the absence is unavoidable, to help children catch up the work that they have missed, class teachers will provide activities for the children to complete at home.
12. It is important that parents inform the school of the child(ren)'s date of return to school. Should a children not return on the expected date, or a return date is not given, the absence will be unauthorized and the child may be removed from the school roll by the Head Teacher. There is also a possibility of legal sanctions being taken against the parents.

Holidays in Term Time

1. St Albert the Great Catholic Primary School strongly discourages parents from taking family holidays during term time. Please see our additional information 'Is your child missing out?' on our website or request a copy from the office. Dates are published well in advance to help parents plan their holidays accordingly.
2. In **special circumstances**, the Headteacher is permitted to authorise up to 10 days leave of absence in an academic year. A decision by the Headteacher is made taking into account the particular pastoral circumstances around the request and therefore parents are asked to meet with the Headteacher to discuss their needs. Attendance history will need to be considered for such requests. Other issues that will be taken into account when considering the leave of absence are:
 - a. the amount of time requested;
 - b. the age of the pupil;
 - c. the proximity of SATs and public examinations;
 - d. the pupil's ability to catch up the work;
 - e. the pupil's educational needs;
 - f. the general welfare of the pupil;



3. Term time holidays will not be authorised under any circumstances for pupils during Statutory Tests in May.
4. It is very unlikely that requests for holiday that would extend the school's published holidays will be authorised.
5. Exceptional circumstances in which holidays during term time may be authorised do not include birthdays, anniversaries or cheaper travel and holiday options. An appropriate amount of time can be authorised in exceptional circumstances. This is in accordance with the policy recommended by the local authority.
6. The request must be made by the parent with whom the child normally resides and be made at least 3 weeks before the intended holiday.
7. A retrospective request for a Term Time holiday or a request made less than 3 weeks before the holiday will be unauthorised.
8. the Head Teacher will respond to all requests for holidays in term time in writing and outline the reasons for authorizing / unauthorising the absence. Details of the expected date of return and what actions will be taken should the children fail to return on the given date will also be included.

Celebrating high attendance and good punctuality

At St. Albert the Great Catholic Primary School we celebrate high attendance and good punctuality in a variety of ways:

- a. Attendance certificates for 100% attendance at the end of the school year
- b. Class attendance rewards – a points system which leads to one class each half term being awarded £30.00 to spend on resources of their choice or to save in the school bank
- c. Attendance Winners teddy bear to be kept in class
- d. Letters to parents acknowledging improvements in attendance and punctuality

Date approved: Spring 2011

Date for Review: Spring 2013

Acknowledgements

Resources for Primary Schools to Improve Attendance and Punctuality (November 2007)

www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolattendance

DfES Keeping Pupil Registers (June 2008)

Education Act 1996

Data Protection Act 1998

Children Act 2004





St Albert the Great Catholic Primary School

"The more I learn about the world in which I live the closer I grow to God"



Application for Leave of Absence

Authorisation for planned absence can only be given by the Head teacher, on behalf of the Governing Body, who has discretion to authorise up to 10 days absence in a school year due to the special circumstances relating to that application. This form must be completed and returned to the Head teacher at least three weeks before the first day of planned absence. The second part of this form will then be completed and the form will be returned. A copy will be retained on file.

I wish for my child (ren): _____

To be absent from Year(s) _____

From _____ / _____ 20__ to _____ / _____ 20__

1. I have attached a letter addressed to the Head Teacher explaining the request for the absence.
2. I understand that it is my parental responsibility to ensure that my child / children attend school regularly.
3. I agree to contact the school if anything prevents my child(ren) from returning to school on the date stated above.

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian) _____ (Date)

To be completed by the office:

Attendance percentage this academic year _____

Authorised Absence _____% / Unauthorised Absence _____%

Application has been made by parent with whom the pupil normally resides Y/N

Application has been made in advance of leave of absence Y/N

To be completed by the Head teacher:

The special circumstances relating to this application have been considered in line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and the Governors' Policy.

The leave of absence is: Authorised /Unauthorised
Comments:

The expected date of return: _____. Parents are expected to contact the school if circumstances delay the children returning to school on this day. If the child / children fail to return on this date the following action will be taken:

- The absence will be unauthorised
- There is a possibility that the school will delete the child / children from the school roll
- There is a possibility of legal sanctions against the child / children parents / carers.

Signed on behalf of the School Governors

Mrs L Fleming (Head teacher)

