

Absence and Registration

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that all teaching staff are informed about the process for registration and the recording of pupil absences and that parents are informed of their responsibilities regarding pupil attendance.

Background

This procedure has been drawn up with reference to the Education Act 1996, and the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, as amended, which states that attendance registers have to be called at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and pupils are to be marked as present, absent or attending an approved educational activity. These records form the basis of our legal requirement to provide an annual Absence Return to the DfES.

Scope

This procedure applies to all Alder Bridge School teaching personnel and to parents of School and Kindergarten pupils.

Responsibilities

The following responsibilities are defined:

- Teachers (including Kindergarten teachers) – take morning and afternoon registration (as appropriate) recording the presence / absence of each pupil as appropriate. The Teachers Groups are also responsible for using this procedure in making decisions on what is authorised and unauthorised absence. When there is a significant problem, for example repeated unauthorised absence that could lead to prosecution, the College of Teachers needs to be informed.
- School Office – ‘First Day Calling’ action when necessary. Collate registration details and complete annual Absence Return when required. Write to any new school if a child is to be transferred to confirm that the transfer is legitimate. Informs the LEA of all new admissions and leavers.
- Trustees – approve Absence Return before issue to DfES. To meet requirements for Safeguarding regarding Children Missing from Education and those removed from the Admissions Register.

Specific Instructions

Regulation 10 of the Education (Schools and Further Education) Regulations 1981 states that the school day must be in 2 sessions. This will involve separate morning and afternoon sessions for all schools.

Registers: The registers for the Lower School classes are taken at **9.00am** for the morning session and at **2.00pm** for the afternoon session

All pupils are expected to be in class on time: they should arrive at school by **8.50am** - at which time the school bell is rung.

The registers for the Kindergartens are taken at **9.00am** for the morning sessions and **1.30pm** for the afternoon session.

Health & Safety: for H & S purposes, particularly in regard to Fire Evacuations, each register has an extra registration sheet for teachers to record times when pupils leave School/Kindergarten before the end of a regular session.

Punctuality: If a pupil is late more than **6 times** during a half term period then the parents will receive a reminder – from the Class/Kindergarten Teacher or School Office - of the need for punctuality for their child. If insufficient improvement is made the school has a duty to inform the Local Authority's Education Social Worker. Parents will be informed of this accordingly.

Absence: Parents are expected to contact the office on the first day that their child is absent from school or Kindergarten, preferably by telephone, before 9.30am **and** provide the reason for their child's

absence.

The school's safeguarding duty means that action must be taken if a pupil who travels independently is absent and the teacher has not been informed of the absence – the teacher will consequently request that the office investigates; 'First Day Calling' will then be put into action and parents will be telephoned to inform them that their child is absent and to request the reason.

Regarding other pupils: if parents do not ring the office on the day of absence by 9:30am, the office will call the parent to establish the reason for the absence. The Class/Kindergarten Teacher must be informed as soon as possible afterwards, either verbally or in writing, of the reason for absence so that the correct entry can be made into the register. If no notification is received the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Persistent absence, particularly unauthorised, will result in the parents receiving a reminder – from the Class/Kindergarten Teacher or School Office - advising them of the need to inform the office of reasons for absences and informing them that if their child's attendance does not improve the school will be required to inform the Education Social Worker.

Term Time Leave

Alder Bridge School has a policy of not authorising holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The DfES requires all schools to record attendance and absence, both authorised and unauthorised. Pupils do not, by law, have an automatic right to take an unauthorised leave of absence from school for holidays during term-time, however parents can ask a school to authorise absence for this purpose and for reasons such as medical appointments, bereavement, interviews.

The following points will be taken into account when a decision is made:

- previous absence during the school year
- the effect of the absence on the pupil's education
- any special circumstances of the request.

If parents wish to take their child out of school during term time they must complete the appropriate request form (see Appendix 2 - available from the school office) at least two weeks before the proposed absence. They will receive back a copy of the form signed by the relevant Teachers Group and this will indicate whether the absence has been approved and is therefore 'authorised' or not approved and is therefore 'unauthorised'.

Guidance on Attendance Registers

This section details how to maintain registers and record common types of absence. The manual registers contain more detailed guidelines on recording information.

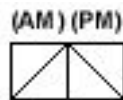
The school may keep registers manually or on computer. In both, the original entry in a register and any subsequent correction must be clearly distinguishable. Both the original entry and the correction should be preserved so that, on retrieval, the entries appear in chronological order.

If computers are used for attendance registration, staff must print the attendance register at least once a month. At the end of each school year sheets must be bound into annual volumes and, like manual registers, kept for a minimum of three years.

1. The law requires regular attendance. The school is required to take an attendance register twice a day, at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The register shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent.

2. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, the register must show whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.
 - a. Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence.
 - b. All other absences must be treated as unauthorised.
3. Parents may not authorise absence, only the school can do this. The school may authorise any absence but inappropriate use can be just as damaging to a child's education as unauthorised absence. The table at the end of this Appendix shows types of absences, which schools may treat as authorised.
4. Pupils present at registration

An oblique stroke usually records presence, with a stroke in the reverse direction for the afternoon session (see illustration).



1. The school must differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence.
 - a. Schools should record authorised absence as 'O'.
 - b. Unauthorised absence should be recorded using a different coloured 'O'.
 - c. The school must also record separately if the pupil is on an approved educational activity (see below).
2. The absence of pupils taking part in supervised educational activities outside the school is recorded as 'approved educational activity'. This is equivalent to 'present' for performance table purposes.

The following activities show when the approved educational activity category can be used:

- a. field trips and educational visits, in this country and overseas;
 - b. participation in or attendance at approved sporting activities;
 - c. interviews with prospective employers or for a place at a further or higher education establishment (Year 11 only);
 - d. link courses, whereby pupils attend an FE college for part of the time;
 - e. franchised pupils receiving part of their tuition offsite at another location while remaining under overall supervision of the home school.
2. Where the school has to close due to severe weather conditions, fire or other structural damage or for in-service training, no attendance registers are needed.
 3. The school must notify the LEA if a pupil attends irregularly or is absent continuously without authorisation for ten or more school days.
 4. When the school has decided to remove a pupil from their admission roll, they should notify their LEA using the forms provided
 5. If a pupil is to be taken off the admissions register because the child is moving to another area or school, staff should first find out the name and address of the new school and when the pupil will start, confirming this information with the receiving school. School staff should be concerned:
 - a. if the parents do not name the receiving school; or
 - b. if a pupil has 'disappeared' from the area without explanation; or
 - c. if a pupil has not returned to school within ten school days of the agreed return date after a family holiday in term-time.
 6. If the school is concerned they should alert the area child protection representative without delay. If the school has good reason to believe that a crime may have been committed, they should contact the police directly.
 7. If a pupil is absent or missing, or if the child has been removed from the school's admissions register, the Local Authority Children Missing Education (CME) officer must be informed. If a pupil

is removed from the School register for the purpose of Elective Home Education (EHE), or if there are concerns around abuse or neglect the Local Authority EHE must be informed.

Further information can be seen in Appendix A

Approved By: Operations Manager

Next Review Date: November 2019

Appendix A


Table from DCSF Document: Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities on Absence and Attendance

This table shows types of absences that schools may treat as authorised: -

Reason for Absence	Remarks
Illness, medical and dental appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is authorised absence. Pupils should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. Sight of an appointment card is advisable if a pupil is an irregular attender. If a pupil is present for registration but has a medical appointment later, or returns home because of illness, no absence need be recorded for that session. Schools should keep a record of pupils leaving or returning to site in case of an emergency. A pupil receiving medical treatment on site should be marked `present`.
Days of religious observance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals. Parents should be encouraged to give advance notice.
Interviews with prospective employers, or for a that place at another school (including entrance examinations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff should normally ask for advance notice and proof of the appointment, e.g. a letter of invitation. If the interview takes place during Year 11 and the school is satisfied it is linked to future education or employment prospects, absence can be recorded as `approved educational activity`
Study leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study leave should be used sparingly and only for Year 11 pupils during mock and public examinations. Study leave should not normally exceed 15 school days during Year 11. If possible the period of study leave should be less than the examination period. Regard should also be paid to the individual pupil's ability to manage study leave and benefit from it. Unsupervised study leave is not an `approved educational activity`. It is authorised absence.
Dual Registration involving Pupil Referral Units (PRUs or special schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The law allows for dual registration of pupils at both a PRU or special school and another local school. This helps, for example, to ease a phased return to mainstream education. Where a pupil is dually registered at institution X and Y, institution X marks the pupil authorised absent while they are attending institution Y and vice-versa. Both institutions share responsibility for the child. Failure to attend either institution at the proper time without good reason is unauthorised absence.
Family holidays during term-time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents should not normally take pupils on holidays in term. Each request for holiday absence should be considered individually, taking account of: the age of the child; the time of year proposed for the trip; its

	<p>nature and parental wishes; the overall attendance pattern of the pupil; the child's stage of education and progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a school does not agree absence and the pupil goes on holiday, absence is unauthorised. • If parents keep a child away for longer than was agreed, any extra time is recorded as unauthorised. • Schools may delete from roll a pupil who fails to return within 10 school days of the agreed return date unless there is a good reason for the continued absence, such as illness. • Schools should only, exceptionally, agree absence of more than 10 school days in a school year (and should not regard 10 days as the norm).
Exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pupil excluded for a fixed period remains on roll and the absence should be treated as authorised as it results from a decision taken by the school. Similarly, the absence of a permanently excluded pupil is treated as authorised while any review or appeal is in progress. • If a permanent exclusion is confirmed, the pupils name should be removed from the school roll on the school day either: after the appeal committee's confirmation of permanent exclusion; or on expiry of the time allowed for appeals to be made; or, if before that, the pupil takes up a place elsewhere. Meanwhile absence should be recorded as authorised. • Teachers are responsible for setting work for an excluded pupil who remains on the school roll.
Traveler child when the family is traveling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help ensure continuity of learning for Traveler children, dual registration is allowed. This means that a school cannot remove a Traveler child from the school roll while they are traveling. • While the Traveler is away, the base school holds the place open and records absence as authorised. • Distance learning packs for Traveler children are not an alternative to attendance at school.
Family bereavements or child caring for a sick or disabled family member (young carers).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should respond sensitively to requests to attend funerals or associated events and have discretion to authorise such absences. • Similarly, schools may authorise limited duration absence for young carers until other arrangements can be made (see also Section 3 of the Circular).
Special occasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should consider each request individually. Only exceptional occasions warrant leave of absence. For example, attending the wedding of a family member would be acceptable, but a day's absence for a birthday or a shopping trip in school hours would not. • Schools should consider: the nature of the event; its frequency (is it a one-off, or likely to become a regular occurrence?); whether the parent gave advance notice; the pupils overall attendance pattern.
Public performances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Authority must licence a pupil to take part in a public performance. • Agreed participation should be treated as authorised absence.
Birth of a child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support should be directed to keeping the pupil in school wherever possible, and to her return to full-time education as soon as possible after the birth. • A pupil who becomes pregnant should be allowed no more than 18 weeks authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child. After that time, any absence should be treated as unauthorised.

Request for Term Time Leave Form - Available from the School office.

Request for Term Time Leave <i>To be completed at least 2 weeks before the proposed absence</i>	 Alder Bridge Steiner-Waldorf School
--	--

Alder Bridge School has a policy of not authorising holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. In such a situation, or if leave is required for other reasons, eg, medical treatment, bereavement, interview, Parents should complete this form requesting, "authorised absence" at least two weeks in advance of the proposed date. Once completed, please return this form to the school office.

The DfES require all schools to record attendance and "unauthorised absences" accurately, holidays should therefore not be taken during term time. The DfES recommends that schools consider the following points when deciding whether to authorise the holiday request.

- Approval will not be given for pupils with poor attendance records.
- Long weekends and occasional days off will not normally be authorised as term time holiday.
- Effect of proposed absence on child's education.

PARENT TO COMPLETE

Name of Pupil:		Class
Start date of absence:	Date of return to school:	No. of days/hours of absence:
Reason for absence during term time:		
Signed by Parent(s)/Guardian:		Date:

TEACHERS GROUP TO COMPLETE

Has holiday during term time been requested previously and if so when:	Percentage of attendance (12 school weeks prior to request)
ABSENCE APPROVED / NOT APPROVED (please indicate)	
Teacher's Group comments:	
Signed On Behalf of the Teachers Group:	Date:

If the Teachers Group approval is not given and the leave is still taken, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and may be referred to in any references given by the school.

For Office use only

Date form received in office	Date given to Teacher	Date form returned to office	Date Parents informed
------------------------------	-----------------------	------------------------------	-----------------------