



## **ALP Leicester – Attendance Policy**

### **Attendance**

The school has a major role in monitoring levels of attendance and punctuality and in creating the appropriate climate in the school to foster regular attendance and excellent timekeeping all of which the school believes promotes a basis for each child to achieve their potential.

The school actively promotes good attendance by awarding a weekly trophy for the class with the best attendance. In addition, the school actively promotes parents/carers and children to work together on good attendance. Classes take part in an attendance race. The winning class at the end of each term receives a £50 prize. All children who have 100% weekly attendance will be entered into an end of term draw for a £50 voucher towards a bike or similar. Children will be entered each time they are present all week. Children will also be rewarded for improved attendance over a period of time.

We take our responsibilities seriously and carefully record all absences and lateness.

Parents are asked to notify the school on the first day of any absence, by personal call. If the school has not been notified of an absence by 9.15 am, the school will telephone or email to be reassured that a child is safe with a responsible adult.

Parents are requested to confirm absences, giving details of reason and date(s). Regulations state that if the school is not informed by parents of visits to the doctor, dentist, illness, holidays etc. then these absences can become unauthorised. It is therefore essential that any reasons for absence (even short absences) be given to the office and preferably **in writing** (with e.g. medical evidence provided).

The school keeps records of all authorised and unauthorised absences.

The Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher and all members of staff monitor attendance closely and any irregular attendances or children who are away from school for more than a week through illness or hospital attendance are brought to the attention of the Headteacher and also are discussed with the LA Education Welfare Officer who visits the school regularly and as required. The school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is a key partner in supporting

the school in this area and the regular meetings with the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher enable the school to seek further advice and guidance as required.

Following these discussions, all children who are identified as a concern in terms of attendance are noted by the Assistant Headteacher for pastoral care. These are usually children with attendance levels less than 90%. The Assistant Headteacher, after further consultation with the relevant member of teaching staff or SLT may make contact with the parents/carers of the child/children concerned to request an informal meeting to see how the school can support the parents/carers in improving attendance.

The school is very aware that issues of attendance are sometimes due to factors beyond the control of parents or carers, such as long-term illness or hospitalisation and the school is committed to working with parents to limit the impact of these events on the development of individual children. However, where attendance is due to factors within the control of parents or carers the school will seek to establish an agreed plan of action to improve patterns of attendance. This plan of action will be shared with the school's Educational Welfare Officer and the impact of such a plan closely monitored.

Should this plan not have the desired impact or if, during discussions with parents or carers, the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher identifies wider issues of concern, then the process will be formalised by either the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher wanting to outline the concerns and the required action needed or by asking the Educational Welfare Officer to contact or write to parents/carers. Where it is deemed appropriate to refer a problem to the EWO, a referral form is completed giving details of the nature of the problem, any difficulties and action already taken by the school.

At all times, the school and EWO will seek to work together with parents to respond to the issues identified. In certain circumstances, other agencies such as the school Doctor / Nurse may be called on to support the process.

The school is committed to ensuring that parents and carers are fully involved and informed about every stage of these processes. Organisations concerned with issues of attendance will not contact parents/carers before the school has raised the issue of concern itself, unless there are extreme circumstances and it is judged that this would be in the child's best interest. This approach has been very successful in helping the school and parents to work together to ensure that the welfare and development of all children in our care is supported.

### **Punctuality and Collection**

Parents/carers are requested to ensure their child(ren) arrives on time for school as poor attendance and lateness disrupt the education of the individual and other members of the class. **All learners arriving in class after 9am, not due to local authority transport issues, will be given a LATE mark. If children arrive after 9.15am, not due to local authority transport issues, they will be given an UNAUTHORISED mark.**

**A frequent number of late and/or unauthorised marks, not due to local authority transport issues, will incur Education Welfare Service intervention and a penalty notice may be issued.**

Children arriving late should enter the school via the front entrance. Parents/carers, if they have dropped their child off, are required to sign the child in (giving date and time of arrival and any reason for lateness). This also ensures an accurate record in case of fire or other emergencies on the premises.

The office staff records lateness in the class electronic register.

The Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher is made aware of any child who has three late entries within a half term/termly period. Parents may be contacted in person, by telephone or letter to discuss this matter. Persistent lateness could also be explored in regards to the local authorities transport service. Persistent lateness, not due to issues with local authority transport, will result in parents being invited to discuss the reasons with the Assistant Headteacher and any further late coming may result in a referral to the Educational Welfare Officer.

A record is also kept in the school office of any children who are collected late at the end of the school day. After 20 minutes a telephone call is made to parents/carers to determine if there is a problem or how quickly the child can be collected.

In the event that a child is regularly late in being collected from school at the end of the school day, not due to local authority transport, the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher will contact parents to request a meeting to discuss the situation. It is a parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that their children are collected promptly from school and is a responsibility which the school will actively promote.

A child who is still persistently collected late from school will be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer who will advise the school of the appropriate action to take.

#### **Requests for term time leave.**

From September 2013, no absence will be authorised unless the Headteacher considers the request to be exceptional circumstances.

Parents/carers seeking permission for term time absence will need to request a meeting with the Head Teacher, who will consider each case in the light of the individual circumstance presented.

The necessary paperwork (Appendix 1) should be completed during the meeting, if it has not already been completed and the Head Teacher will make a decision to grant the request or otherwise

#### **Circumstances for Issuing a Penalty Notice:**

The Education Welfare Service will generally only consider it appropriate to issue a Penalty Notice if, following assessment, a parent/carer is judged capable of but unwilling to secure the required improvement in their child's school attendance.

A Penalty Notice will be issued when either:

A learner has at least 20 unauthorised absences recorded against their name within the previous 120 school sessions (i.e. equivalent of 10 school days in any 12 school week period), or

A learner has leave of absence in term-time for which no permission has been sought from the school, or permission sought but refused, (that is unauthorised) or child has not returned by the agreed date (and no acceptable reason for delay has been received), or

A child has been encountered on more than one truancy patrol and the absences were unauthorised.

Unauthorised absence is where the school or college has either not received a reason for a pupil's absence, or the reason provided is not accepted as valid. It is the Headteacher or authorised person who determines whether an absence is authorised, in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Note: Under Regulation 11 of the 2024 Regulations, Headteachers are prohibited from granting leave of absence unless an application has been made in advance, and they consider that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the request. Leave may also be granted in certain specified situations, such as to attend an interview, to prepare for or sit a public examination, or for participation in a regulated performance or employment abroad. Any absence that is not authorised in line with these provisions will be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Payment of Penalty Notices**

Under the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2024, which came into force on 19 August 2024, a penalty notice may be issued to a parent or carer when a pupil's absence from school is unauthorised. The penalty is £80 per parent or carer per child if paid within 21 days of the date of issue, increasing to £160 if paid between 21 and 28 days. If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a three-year period, the amount payable is £160, with no reduced early payment rate. A maximum of two penalty notices may be issued to the same parent for the same child within any three-year period. Failure to pay a penalty within 28 days may result in prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for the offence of failing to ensure a child's regular attendance at school.

**The policy agreed by the LA Attendance Strategy Group with regards to parents who repeatedly take their children on holidays, trips etc without the Headteacher's agreement is that a parent is taken directly to court and no Penalty Notice is issued at the point of the 3rd unauthorised holiday for that child**

The following is from advice from the Local Authority

- Parents are required to complete a holiday request form, they are required to provide full details of their  
1.) intended destination and 2.) reason for the trip
- Where we have reason to believe a child was absent and had been away/on holiday etc, where this information is from a third party (eg from the child or other children

in the class), we will write to parents to say that we **understand the child was on holiday etc, and therefore, they may be issued with a Penalty Notice (per parent for each child) or, their case may be referred by the Local Authority directly to the Magistrates' Court.** (If parents don't come back at this point to challenge the information and prove the child wasn't taken away, the letter sent will be used as evidence in court.)

The school's current target for learner attendance is 96%, which is high and reflects the importance that the school and parents attach to regular attendance.

#### **Request for absence for religious observance**

In line with DfE guidance, for all religious observance, it is expected that only one day is to be authorised for each religious celebration and then only where it falls on a school day. Parents should request this absence from the Head teacher beforehand.

**A reminder of this policy will be sent out at the beginning of each academic year in the Key Stage handbooks and in newsletters.**



## **Applications for leave of absence Guidelines**

ALP Leicester is very reluctant for a learner to miss any part of his/her education.

1. In line with the Government guidance, the school management and its governors are unable to authorise any term time absence, unless our view is that there are **exceptional circumstances. Please note holidays taken in term time will NOT be authorised.**
2. If permission is granted, photocopies of airline or travel tickets will be required by the school office **before** you travel. If your request has been agreed, failure to provide this information will mean that the request is no longer agreed and your child's absence will be classed as unauthorised.
3. We may also request copies of other travel related documents from you. We will advise you if this is the case. Where we do not receive copies of documents requested, this is likely to mean that we will not authorise some or all of any absence your child has in relation to this request.
4. If permission is granted, learners must ensure that they are up to date with their school work before they leave and in addition, it will be parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure that their son/daughter makes up any missed work in his/her **own time** upon return.
5. **The decision made by the school is final.**

**Please note**

**If your child has unauthorised leave of absence you will either be issued with a Penalty Notice of £160 per parent per child (discounted to £80 if paid within 21days), or, your case will be referred by the Local Authority directly to the Magistrates' Court.**

**Application form for learner's leave of absence (Appendix 1)**

**Please read the information on the previous page before completing this form.**

For your request to be considered, the form must be completed with the Head teacher of ALP Leicester at least two weeks before you plan to leave.

**Please do not book any flight tickets etc until you have received confirmation from school that leave has been authorised.**

Name of student:	Form:
First day of absence:	Date of return to school:
Date of Request/Form Submitted to School:	

I request authorised absence for my above son/daughter for the following reason/s:

Full Destination Address:

Date you plan to travel: \_\_\_\_\_

Date you plan to return: \_\_\_\_\_

**(Please note the application will not be considered without all the above information).**

**I confirm that I have read and understood the information above and the guidelines (see over).**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ parent/guardian

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Head Teacher

Absence authorised from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Absence unauthorised from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed (Headteacher) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

