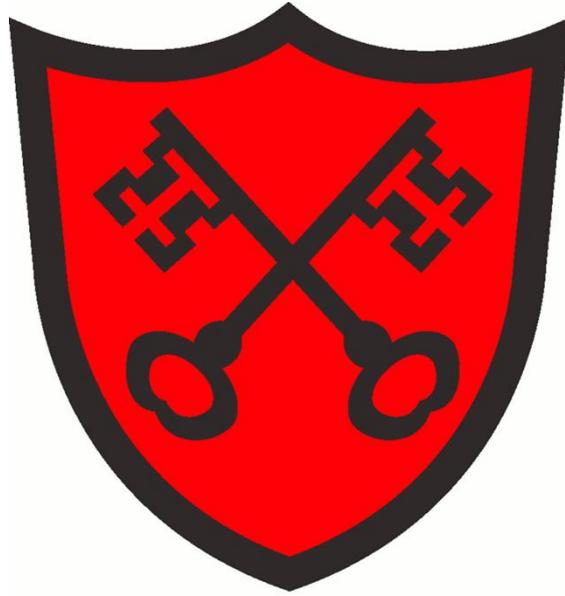


ST ALBAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Christ Be Our Light

ATTENDANCE POLICY

**This Policy was adopted by the Governing Body in
Autumn 2020**

This Policy will be reviewed in Autumn 2021

St Alban's Catholic Primary School

"St Alban's school exists to provide high quality education within a living Catholic Community which values each individual and enables every child to reach his or her full potential."

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- **Introduction**

In a Catholic School, the safety and welfare of every child is of paramount importance. It is our duty to ensure that everyone is involved in supporting the Every Child Matters agenda.

This policy is a statement of the principles and procedures to ensure attendance on a regular and full time basis at St Alban's Catholic Primary School. This policy works alongside the Home School Agreement.

- **Principles**

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the Local Authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement.

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school, rather than by the parents, as either **authorised or unauthorised**. Therefore detailed information concerning each absence is always required by the school.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason, i.e. illness or other unavoidable cause. Applications for planned absence for other reasons (for example, family holidays) will be considered on their own merits at the Headteacher's discretion.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school, namely the Headteacher, does not consider reasonable and 'no leave' has been given. This includes keeping children off school unnecessarily, truancy, absences which have not been properly explained previously and children who frequently arrive at school too late to achieve a mark in the register and are unable to give an acceptable explanation.

Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make the situation worse. The Headteacher will always be available to discuss problems with parents.

Parents are expected to contact the school at an early stage and to work with the school in resolving any problems together. This is almost always successful. If any problems cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer. He or she will also try to resolve the difficulties by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these officers can institute court proceedings to prosecute parents or can seek an Education Supervision Order on the child.

Alternatively parents may wish to contact the Education Welfare Officer themselves

in order to ask for advice. These officers are independent of the school but their telephone number is available from the School Office or from the Local Authority.

Leave may also be granted for medical appointments when requested in advance. In some circumstances proof of the appointment may be required. Every effort should be made to make such appointments during out of school time, where possible and particularly in the case of routine dental appointments. If a child is absent with a medical reason for 3 or more continuous days a medical certificate from the GP is required.

The Headteacher will grant leave of absence for external exams e.g. music, ballet.

Parents are required to make a written request using the school form. The Headteacher will reply within one week. Therefore it is important that the requests are made in sufficient time for the Headteacher to respond.

An absence will be recorded whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised.

No absence will be authorised in the first or last week of the school's academic year.

- **Lateness**

Children must attend on time to be marked as present for any session, although a mark will be given when lateness is shown to be unavoidable.

It is expected that all children will be within the school grounds by **8.55am and 12.55pm** in readiness for the school bell.

Children not present in class at the time of registration **9.00am and 1:00pm** will be marked absent with no reason yet provided for absence (N) by the teachers. However the office will amend accordingly once verification of the absence has been established. Where such children arrive after the teacher has closed the register - this will be changed to a 'late (L)' mark. Arrival after the end of the registration period will be counted as "arrived after the register has closed (U)", unless good reason is provided for this.

Any child who is arriving after **9.00am** must be accompanied by a parent/adult to the office where the adult will be asked to sign in the child with a reason for the lateness.

No child will be allowed to join assembly if they arrive late. (Assembly begins at 9.05am)

- **Collecting your child during the day and at the end of the day**

The school office must be notified in the morning if your child has a medical appointment during the day. Please refrain from making any other appointments during the day for your children. **Please do not inform the teacher.** All adults must sign the children in and out of school at the office.

If your child is to be collected by another adult you must either inform the class teacher in the morning or inform the office before the end of the day. Otherwise, your child will not be permitted to leave with the adult.

- **Monitoring**

The school expects attendance of at least 96.2%.

Registers will be checked at the end of **each week** by the school secretary to ensure that they are up to date and reflect the requirements of the policy.

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence.

When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence.

All requests for absence and notification of illness must be reported to the school secretary directly. Speaking to the teacher will no longer be sufficient. All correspondence will be placed in the child's file, record in SIMs or saved in a folder in school centrally hosted site.

Each week the school Office will inform the Headteacher of any concerns of absence and lateness, and authorised absences. If there are concerns a letter will be sent home and if there continues to be concern a further letter will be sent home indicating that the EWO will be informed.

The school Office will monitor daily the attendance and update SIMS Attendance Manager. The teacher will record electronically the attendance register during the periods identified.

If any child is not in school at the close of the register a text message is sent to the priority one contact to establish the reason. **It is important that parents contact the school and inform it of any absence before school starts.**

- **Ethos**

Good and regular attendance will be encouraged and recorded within the school. Evidence of good attendance will be regularly praised on an individual basis by the class teacher and the Headteacher. Individual attendance records will be included on the annual report to parents given at the end of each academic year.

- **Child Protection**

St Albans Catholic Primary is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and parents to share this commitment.

- **Children missing in education**

The school adheres to the statutory guidance from the Dfe.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education

The reasons why a child is missing from education and what you can do next.

A child missing from education is:

- between the compulsory school age of 5 to 16 years old
- not registered on a school roll
- not attending an alternate education provision

A child may be missing from education because:

- they failed to start in Reception Year at a school

- they did not move from school to another. For example, when moved to / from another Local Authority area
- they failed to transfer into a secondary or middle school
- they have been permanently excluded from school
- they have failed to register in a school after travelling / living overseas
- their parent(s) are military personnel
- they are part of a travelling community

A child is not missing from education when:

- registered on a school roll, but are recorded as unauthorised attendance
- being Electively Home Educated (EHE)
- attending an alternative educational provision, such as a pupil referral unit (PRU)