

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 DfE.

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 LA of all new admissions and leavers.
- Trustees – approve Absence Return before issue to DfE. 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 **8.50am** for the morning session and the register closes at 9.15am. The register is taken at **1.20pm** for the afternoon session.

The register for the Kindergarten are taken at **8.50am** for the morning sessions and the register closes at 9.15am. The register is taken at **1.20pm** 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.

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 or Kindergarten before the end of a regular session.

Punctuality: If a pupil is late more than **5 times** during a half term period then the parents will receive a reminder from the School Office of the need for punctuality and that improvement should be made.

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. The School Office will ensure that the correct entry is made in the register. If no notification is received the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Persistent absence:

When a pupils attendance falls below the minimum, as a result of persistent unauthorised absences the following action will be taken.

Attendance falls between 94% - 90% - Parents will be contacted by the School Office to remind them of their responsibility for their child's attendance at school. A copy of this policy will be sent to them.

Attendance falls between 89% - 80% - The class teacher will contact parents to establish the challenges and implement an Action Plan to help improve their child's attendance.

Attendance falls below 80% - If the Action Plan is not working, parents will be invited to meet with the Education Manager and Operations Manager to address their child's unauthorised absences.

Term Time Leave

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

The DfE 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, participation in sporting or theatrical events or religious observance.

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 Education Manager, or the Operations Manager in their absence, 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

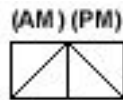
This section details how to maintain registers and record common types of absence. The manual registers contain more detailed guidelines on recording information.

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. Teachers should record authorised absence in one colour
 - b. Unauthorised absence should be recorded using a different colour. Where the reason for the absence is unknown, the pupil should be marked with an 'O', which should be later be filled with the appropriate code .
 - 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'.
3. 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. franchised pupils receiving part of their tuition offsite at another location while remaining under overall supervision of the home school.
2. The school must notify the LA if a pupil attends irregularly or is absent continuously without authorisation for ten or more school days.
3. When the school has decided to remove a pupil from their admission roll, they should notify their LA using the forms provided
4. 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.
5. 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.

6. 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:

Next Review Date: October 2020

Appendix A

Extract from the Department for Education's guidance on School Attendance July 2019

Absence and Attendance Codes

Present in School

Code		
/	Present at morning registration	
\	Present at afternoon registration	
L	Late arrival before the registration period has closed	
B	Present at an Off-site educational activity	This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any 10 absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code
D	Dual Registered at another educational establishment	
J	Interview or visit with another educational establishment	This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to further education or transfer to another educational establishment.
P	Participating in a supervised sporting activity	This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

V	Educational visit or residential trip	This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.
W	Work experience	Not relevant at Alder Bridge as work experience is only for pupils in the final 2 years of compulsory education.

Authorised Absence from School

Not present in school

Code		
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made	If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.
H	Holiday authorised by the school	The Education Manager should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the Education Manager must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Education Manager will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Education Manager's discretion.
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.
M	Medical or dental appointments	Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is

		counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.
R	Religious observance	Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.
S	Study Leave	Not relevant at Alder Bridge as study leave is only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Code		
G	Holidays not authorised by the school or exceed the period authorised	If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for a leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.
N	Reason for absence not yet provided	Not relevant at Alder Bridge, Code O used instead
O	Absent from school without	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for

	authorisation	absence they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Arrived in school after the registration period	Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.


Administrative Codes

The following codes are **not** counted as possible attendance in the School Census.

Code		
X	Not required to be in school	This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	<p>This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or • The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or • A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school. This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because: • The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity). <p>Note: This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.</p>
Z	Pupil not on the Admission Register	This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance, such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

Appendix B

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
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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, participation in sporting or theatrical event or religious observance, the form should be submitted as soon as possible. Once completed, please return this form to the school office.

The DfE recommends that schools consider the following points when deciding whether to authorise the holiday request.

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

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:

OFFICE 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)	
Education Manager comments:	
Signed by Education Manager:	Date:

If the Education Manager's 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 Education	Date form returned to office	Date Parents informed
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