



Altmore & Lathom Schools Federation

Attendance Policy

ALTMORE AND LATHOM SCHOOLS FEDERATION ATTENDANCE POLICY

“Attendance matters...”

The Federation holds the highest expectations regarding attendance and punctuality. We aim for 100% attendance and zero lates for every child, understanding that excellent attendance at school supports excellent outcomes.

As a school we aim to:

- Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance.
- Celebrate good attendance
- Improve punctuality
- To raise level of achievement
- Maximise opportunities both in school and in later life

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school

As a parent you can help us by:

- Ringing on the first morning of all absences with the reason and saying when the child will return – before 9.15am
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks
- Bringing your child to school before and returning them after a hospital or other medical appointment
- Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness

The Federation schools shall take various measures in order to safeguard children by:

- Following up unexplained absences after registration, with a phone call on the first morning
- Reminding parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, and the Home-School agreement
- Publishing our attendance rate in the school prospectus and the Governing Body's School Profile
- Acknowledging and rewarding good attendance in weekly assemblies
- Publishing your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report
- Letting you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance
- If we continue to have concerns make a referral to the School Educational Welfare Officer (EWO), who visits the school regularly to review and support attendance matters supported by our team from the Children Centre.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as “authorised absences”. For example: if a child is ill; there is a family bereavement; for religious observance.

We realise that there are *rare* occasions when there might be a particular concern that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are *not* permitted by law. These are known as “unauthorised absences”. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Going shopping, or for a hair cut
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Unapproved Holidays
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.
- Parents are unwell (*call us, we can help to get your child to school*)

Supporting such absences is against our school ethos

Unauthorised Absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service may contact you and consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.

Punctuality

- At Lathom our gates open at 8:30am every morning.
- At Altmore our gates open at 8:45am for Nursery children and 8:55am for Year R and KS1, allowing parents to support us with transitions between home and school.

- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only late parents.
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.
- Children who are not picked-up on time at the end of the school day will join our After School provisions; staff will try to contact parents, or those listed as second/emergency contacts.
- After School childcare is provided until 6:00 p.m.

Lateness

- All children arriving the gates are locked **must be accompanied to the school office by the parent /carer**, where they will be asked to sign them in.
- Lateness is monitored regularly. Where children have persistent lateness problems the Head will invite the parents into the school to a formal meeting with our Attendance officer or one of our Family Outreach workers.

Holidays and Term Time Leave of Absence

The school support the view that every lesson counts and discourages parents from taking holidays in term time. We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils miss as a result of family holidays.

There is no entitlement to time off in term time.

It is our policy:

- That only in exceptional circumstances will holidays be allowed and then only up to a maximum of two weeks. (The cheaper cost of holidays in term time is not an acceptable reason for an application)
- Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence for term-time holidays need to fill in an application form well in advance and before booking. Please ask the school office for a form; the head teacher will consider your request and advise you of her decision, (possibly asking to meet with you to discuss) further time than allowed will be unauthorised.
- No holiday requests will be granted for children in year 2 and 6 during SAT's week. Notification of the date will be given to parents as early as possible in the academic year.
- If the school does not agree and you take your child on holiday, the absence will be unauthorised.

Please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A **good** understanding of the work can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom.

School visits and residentials

Opportunities for children to attend these activities are provided. If they do not go, the children **are expected in school**, where alternative arrangements will be made for them.

Governors and the school **will not authorise** absence if the child does not attend school during this time, unless there is a valid medical reason or medical certificate provided or there are exceptional family circumstances.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Throughout the year parents will be kept informed of school expectations and procedures through e-folio newsletters

The school employs strategies to encourage good attendance.

- At the end of the year, certificates are awarded to children with 100% attendance at our Governors' Achievement Award Ceremony.
- Trophies are given to the classes with the highest attendance percentage and punctuality on a weekly basis.

Procedures

- Registers of all classes are kept and monitored by staff daily
- CP Designated Lead monitors 6 weekly register checks and checks of school logs for persistent lates and absences
- Log kept of children who arrive late
- Log kept of all children daily for whom no notification for absence has been made and of phone calls made
- Log kept of phone calls received from parents and reasons given.

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full-time attendance at school of registered pupils. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make provision for holidays in term time only with the permission of the Headteacher. The regulations state that holidays in term time should only be authorised under special circumstances & that save under exceptional circumstances, no more than 10 school days should be authorised for a holiday. It will be at the Executive Headteacher's discretion to authorise a holiday.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.

Every day counts!