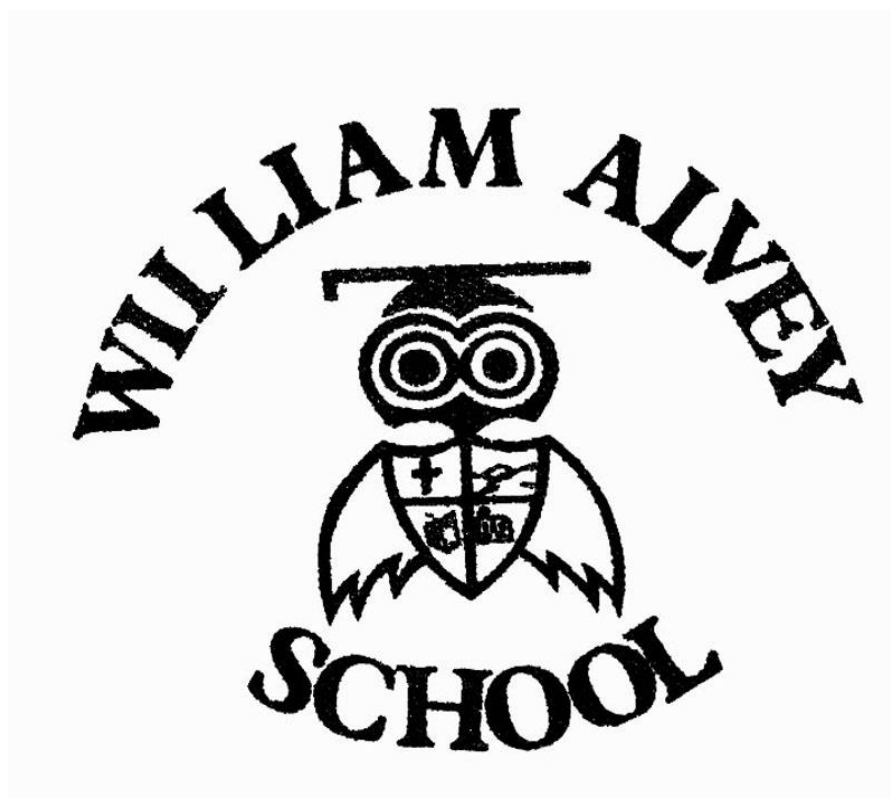


**William Alvey Primary School
Attendance Policy**



RATIONALE

There is significant evidence to support the proposition that good attendance has a direct impact on effective learning. It is certainly the case that poor attendance has a detrimental effect on children's overall performance. It is therefore imperative that as a school, every measure is taken to encourage a high level of attendance.

1. AIMS:

It is recognised that:

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations.
- No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of pupils and their parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Some pupils and their parents may need to be supported and rewarded at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Situations beyond the control of pupils and/or parents may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of parents, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these.
- Most pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

2. EXPECTATIONS:

We expect the following from all our pupils:

- That they attend school regularly.
- That they will arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- That they will tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

We expect the following from parents:

- To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- To ensure that they contact the school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever their child is unable to attend.
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check that they have done their homework.

- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's performance in school.

Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us.
- Recognition and reward for good attendance.
- A quality education.

3. ENCOURAGING ATTENDANCE THROUGH GOOD PRACTICE AND REWARDS

Attendance is encouraged in the following ways:

- Accurate completion of the registers at the beginning of each session and within 30 minutes of the start of the session.
- Attendance checks at appropriate times.
- Recognition of good attendance in The Wasp (School Newsletter).
- A certificate for 100% attendance for any one term; a 'Gold' Award for 100% attendance achieved throughout the year.
- All awards to be awarded by the Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher as appropriate.
- Identifying and supporting pupils who have attendance problems in advance of the transition between KS2 and KS3. This should include the sharing of relevant information with the destination school.
- Work with parents who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty in attending school.
- Sending specific parents termly absence reports, together with targets for improvement as appropriate.

4. RECORDING AND TRACKING:

Registration

The school keeps a computerised registration system which tracks attendance timekeeping, reasons for absence and authorised/unauthorised absence. All parents are required to inform the school by telephone or by letter if their child is absent from school. Prompt communication will allay concerns about each child's wellbeing.

The school gates open at 8:40am. Teachers can take the register from this point. Registers close at 9.10am.

Procedure for Monitoring Absences

1. A letter outlining the importance of school attendance is sent out at the beginning of each academic year and new parents will be provided with the letter when their child starts school.
2. Both class registers (paper and electronic) must be completed by 9.10 am.
3. The office staff will create a report on Integris which will identify all first day absences.
4. Parents of children with an unknown reason for absence will be contacted by the office.

5. NON-ATTENDANCE

Absence in term time

Absences are only allowed for specific reasons. These include situations where your child:

- is ill.
- has an unavoidable medical or dental appointment.
- is taking part in a religious event.
- has an exceptional family circumstance, for example, a wedding or funeral.

Children are not allowed to be absent because of, for example:

- birthdays
- visiting relatives
- shopping
- a hair appointment
- looking after other members of the family
- holidays

If you know your child is going to be absent, you must tell the school in advance with full details using the school leave of absence request form.

Term-time Holiday

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have removed the reference to holidays during term time and now provides that a leave of absence during term time will only be granted where an application is made in advance to the school and the school consider that the leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

What amounts to "exceptional circumstances" is a matter for the discretion of the Headteacher and should be judged on a case-by-case basis, but it is unlikely to amount to an exceptional circumstance if it is claimed that a holiday abroad can only be afforded in term time or that a parent is unable to take leave during school holidays.

Please note that the school is put in a difficult position when term time absence requests are submitted by one parent in a 'split' family, and this is not agreed to by the other party.

Action taken to improve attendance.

We believe a bespoke approach is the best way to improve attendance, especially for those families that have more complex issues. We review our overall attendance outcomes on a termly basis. We then review the actions arising, and their impact, on a half-termly basis. We are led by what the evidence tells us in these reviews and develop plans accordingly. We are conscious that one approach may lead to success with one family but not with another.

The outcome of a recent, termly, attendance review will illustrate our over-arching approach:

Pupils with 95-100% attendance – letter of congratulations sent.

Pupils with 90-94% - letter of awareness sent to most children in this group. Bespoke letters sent to those raising concerns.

Persistent absentees (attendance below 90%) and severely persistently absent (below 50%) – face to face meetings for most of these children. The only exceptions are if the child is absent for exceptional circumstances (e.g. heart operation) but normally has good attendance or meetings are happening on an ongoing basis.

The success of these actions is then reviewed half termly.