Aldwyn Primary School
Attendance Policy

Policy Review	
Review Schedule	Annually
Implementation Date	Autumn 2026
Date of Next Review	Autumn 2027

Victorious Academies Trust

Success in education

Attendance Policy 2026-2027

Statement of Intent

By law, parents are required to ensure that children of compulsory school age are registered at school, attend regularly and are punctual. Absence should only occur when a child is unfit to learn or has a day of religious observance.

Parent and Carer responsibilities:

Throughout this policy the term 'parent' represents one parent, either parents, or carer with whom the child resides. Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure that children should of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full time basis. Parents and Carers should ensure that, if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as illness, they should contact the school as soon as possible. This may be done in person, in writing, or a phone call. (see appendix 1 – first day contact)

Arrival and registration

All children should be in the playground ready to come into school at 8.45am each day. The register is taken immediately after arrival to the classroom. Morning registration ends at 8.55am.

If a child arrives after registration, they must enter and be registered by the parent/carer at the main school reception desk and will be marked in as late. Arrival later than 9.25am will automatically be classed as unauthorised absence, unless previously discussed and agreed by school.

The afternoon register is taken at 1pm in EYFS and at 1.15pm in KS1 and KS2. The register is taken twice a day and therefore a day counts as 2 attendances.

Arrangements for absence

The Headteacher, not parents, authorise absence: Aldwyn adheres to the DfE guidelines in authorising absence. Absence for any reason during term time is discouraged. Absence known to be for the following reasons would be authorised:

- Illness (please inform school of any GP/Hospital involvement)
- Religious observance

- Attendance at medical appointments (which cannot be made outside school hours)

Medical appointments

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. You should bring a copy of the appointment letter or card to the Reception Office where it will be photocopied and placed on your child's file. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, it is expected that the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment in order to obtain the relevant attendance mark.

Leave of absence/Holidays during term time

UK Law states that no entitlement should be given to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of such leave.

Leave in special circumstances must be requested in writing to the Headteacher.

Any leave taken without consent from school will be classed as unauthorised absence.

Parents can be issued with a Penalty Notice and subsequently fined as a result of taking holidays in term time without consent.

Family bereavement and exceptional circumstances

It is accepted that sudden, serious circumstances do occur, rarely, when it is impossible for a family to bring a child to school. It is essential that school is informed by the parent of the circumstances at the time of the absence so that the appropriate code can be written into the register.

When it has become necessary to make a referral to the Senior Leader overseeing attendance, all further absences will be unauthorised pending investigation.

All calls from parents regarding absence are logged. After registration, checks are made to ensure that all children are accounted for. Telephone calls are made to parents of children who are not in school to ensure that children are safe; this forms part of our child protection procedure, and to ascertain the reason for absence.

Penalty notices for non-school attendance:

Section 444(A) of the education Act 1996 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty Notice for failure to ensure regular school attendance. Penalty Notices can be issued to parents/carers who take their child out of school during term time without schools permission or if they are late returning from an extended holiday. Parents may receive a Penalty Notice of £60 per parent, per child, which must be paid within 21 days. If payment is made after 21 days but within 28 days the penalty is increased to £120. Where a fine remains unpaid after 28 days, the matter is referred to the Borough Solicitor, who will consider instigating criminal proceedings.

In law, an offence occurs if a parent or carer fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school. Tameside Education Welfare Service, in conjunction with schools and Greater Manchester Police, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing. Parents may also receive a Penalty Notice without a warning letter for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance for the following reasons:

- If their child is stopped on a truancy sweep more than once
- If they go on holiday in term time without schools permission or are late returning from an extended holiday
- If they have not co-operated with the Education Welfare Service following a referral from school if their child fails to return to school following a fixed term exclusion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 also makes it an offence if a parent fails to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion. Penalty Notices may be issued in relation to this matter.

School responsibilities

- The school will record and monitor attendance using ARBOR in accordance with both the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress and personal wellbeing
- Registers will be taken twice daily at 8.55am and 1pm/1.15pm. Any child arriving late after the close of the registration period will be recorded as 'late' for that session
- Teachers will complete the registers in accordance with guidance given by the Headteacher. The registers will be inspected in order to ensure that they are being properly maintained and to identify any potential problems at an early stage
- Should a member of staff have any concerns about a child's attendance and punctuality (including prompt collection) then a concern form must be completed and handed to the Headteacher

- All absence notes from parents should be dated by the class teacher and given to the school office staff to record
- The Headteacher will collect attendance data regularly and together with the school attendance lead, use the data to monitor attendance levels, set targets and identify further actions
- Attendance reports for each pupil are sent out termly to inform parents how well their child is attending, or if there is any cause for concern.

Persistent absentees and concerns

Persistent absentees are defined as children whose attendance is below 90% and where unsatisfactory reasons are given for absence. This may also apply to children whose attendance is above 90% but where there are concerns about deteriorating attendance or where patterns are emerging, e.g. regular absence on particular days or persistent lateness.

Children whose attendance falls below 90% will be asked for medical evidence in order to authorise further absences. Parents may be invited into school to complete an attendance agreement.

The parents of children who are persistently absent for unauthorised reasons may receive a penalty notice warning or a penalty notice from the Local Authority for failing to ensure regular attendance.

Children living with medical conditions

We understand that the attendance of children living with medical conditions may be affected and we work closely with families and the educational welfare team to support children who are unable to attend school.

Children Missing Education

Children who are not receiving suitable education are potentially exposed to higher degrees of risk and this can include engagement in anti-social or criminal behaviour, social disengagement, forced marriage or FGM, radicalisation and/or sexual exploitation.

Aldwyn Primary School follow Tameside Child Missing Education guidance. School will inform the LA about the details of:

- All pupils admitted or removed from the roll of their school in accordance with The Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2026. This is usually done via data or migration reports
- However, if the pupil's whereabouts are not known, the school and LA must make joint reasonable enquiries. This will require a CME referral (Appendix 1)

- Any pupil who has been absent without school's authorisation for a continuous period of 20 days or more

Rewards

The prime benefit derived from regular attendance is that continuity and progression in learning are ensured. Where positive impact is required, all staff in contact with the child must take extra care to welcome the child each morning, praise punctual attendance and acknowledge the effort the child has made. It is also appropriate to recognise the effort the parent has made to secure the child's attendance.

As a school, we recognise where pupils attend regularly or make significant improvements. This is acknowledged in a variety of ways, including celebrating awards in assembly, individual rewards from the Headteacher and SLT and year group celebration in the weekly newsletter.

Equality

This policy is linked to our Equality Policy.

We aim to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2020
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not

At Aldwyn, we will continuously strive to ensure that everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Each person will be given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential regardless of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief – including lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Safeguarding

At Aldwyn, the welfare and safety of our children is our paramount concern. We will promote the health, wellbeing and safety of the pupils in all that we do. All our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school. We take seriously our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in our care.

Safeguarding children is everyone’s responsibility.

Appendix 1

Procedure for absence

First Day of Absence

The parent/carer should contact Aldwyn to inform of the reason for absence, discuss any relevant issues and possible date for a return.

If no message is received from the parent/carer

The school office will contact the parent/carer by telephone/email regarding the pupils absence.

Late Arrival

- All pupils arriving after the playground doors are locked at 8.55am should enter by the main school office entrance
- All late arrivals must be signed in by the parent/carer at the reception desk
- Any pupils arriving after 9.25am will receive a late arrival mark

Notification of absence letter

In cases of persistent absence or if attendance is less than 92% parents/carers will receive a letter from school explaining concerns and school attendance targets as advised by the government.

Ongoing absence

Parent/carer will be requested to attend a meeting at school with the attendance lead to raise concerns again, discuss any barriers to regular attendance, suggest strategies and agree an action plan. If parent/guardian is unable to attend, a home visit will be made to discuss issues in respect of absence. Pupils will be placed onto a period of monitoring during which attendance rates would need to improve.

Attendance below 80%

Referral will be made to the SLT, attendance lead and Education Welfare. A meeting/home visit to be undertaken to discuss attendance issues, identify and implement plan of action. During a period of school intervention a number of strategies may be used including:

- Written communication
- Information to parents/carers of the impact of absence on achievement

- Information to parents/carers of their legal requirements and obligations
- Face to face contact with parents/carers via meetings within school
- Home visits
- Provision of support from school
- Short period referral to other support groups or agencies
- Implement a punctuality agreement
- Meeting involving senior leader/Education Welfare Officer
- Legal interventions, including instigation of Penalty notices and Court action

Appendix 2

First Day Contact Guidelines

First day contact is a widely used practice in schools and has been shown to improve attendance rates. The procedure at Aldwyn is:

- Should a child be absent, the class teacher will mark the child as absent
- The register marks will be matched against the late record
- Anytime a child is not accounted for their attendance in school will be checked by visiting the child's classroom
- If the child is not in school and no contact has been made by the parent then a call out will be made
- The parent/carer will be asked for the reason for absence
- In the case of minor ailments, the Parent or Carer will be asked to send the child to school with an assurance that school will keep a close eye on the pupil
- Parents/carers will be prompted to keep their child away from school for 48 hours if they have sickness or diarrhoea (due to a gastro stomach bug, not if it is related to asthma, a cough, eating too fast etc)
- If there is no response a recorded message or parent mail message will be left if possible
- Reason for absence will then be added to the register

Appendix 3

Requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. To be read in conjunction with letters from Tameside Local Authority.

Regular school attendance is essential if children are to maximise their educational opportunities. Interruptions in school attendance disrupt continuity of learning and have a negative impact on school.

- The Government's guidance states that only under exceptional circumstances may the Headteacher consider giving permission for a child to be absent from school
- Parents and carers who feel that their child/children must be out of school for exceptional circumstances must write to the Headteacher in advance of the absence explaining the exceptional circumstances
- The Headteacher will reply by letter and letters will be filed as evidence of the measures school is taking to improve attendance.

Appendix 4

Response to unauthorised absence

- Section 444(A) of the education act 1996 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. This means that when a pupil has unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, in any term (where no acceptable reason has been given for the absence) or if their child persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration their parents or carers may receive a Penalty Notice.