Primary Attendance Policy into Practice

1 Registration process

Timings

08:15 – 08:30	Doors open 'soft start'
08:25 – 08:30	Registration
08:30 – 09:30	Children to be brought to the office and marked as late (L)
12:45 – onwards	Children collected after this point will receive their afternoon mark

Register

At Alec Reed Academy we use an electronic register system (Bromcom). Teachers should mark pupils with the following marks for both morning and afternoon registration:

- '/' (present in morning)
- '\' (present in afternoon)
- 'N' (absent in morning or afternoon)

DfE codes showing reasons for absences will be added by the office or the attendance officer.

Late arrivals

If pupils arrive after 8:30am, they must be brought by their parents to the office. After 8:30am, the child will be marked as 'L' (late) until 9:30am. After 9:30am, the child will be marked as 'U' which will included as an absence.

2 Unplanned absences/first day of absence procedure

It is the responsibility of all parents to notify the school on the first day of a period of absence. This is to ensure that our children are kept safe and the school knows the reason for their absence. Parents must inform the school office and explain the reason of their child's absence by telephone or email by 8:30am on the morning of the absence.

The school's email address for reporting absences is:
primaryattendance@alecreedacademy.co.uk

Parents can leave messages on the school answer machine by dialing the school's main number: 020 8841 4511, press option 1, then option 1 again.

If a message is not received from a parent
A text message will be sent to parents of any absent pupils who have not notified the school on the morning of their first day of absence. This will ask parents to phone the school. This needs to happen after the lates from inVentry have been added.

If a phone call is not received
The school will phone parents. The school will keep a log of texts and calls. Any concerns regarding safeguarding will follow the school's safeguarding procedures (See safeguarding policy).

Where there is no explanation for an absence, or the school considers the reason given for the absence unsatisfactory, the absence will be marked as 'unauthorised' (see below).

Parents may choose to inform class teachers of their child's absence in addition but must also contact the school office as well.

For planned absence, see section 7 ('Leaves of absence').

3 Planned absences

Medical Appointments

Attending a medical appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school office in advance of the appointment. However we ask that all appointments are arranged outside of school hours or term-time where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Term time absence

The Principal/CEO will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. Parents who wish to apply for a leave of absence during term time should contact the school office who will provide a 'Leave request form during term-time'.
The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

4 Authorised/unauthorised absences

Authorised absences

An absence is classed as 'authorised' when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason (see table below) and school has received notification from a parent or carer.

Only school can 'authorise' an absence. Parents do not have this authority. This is confirmed by the high court.

Unauthorised absences

An absence is classed as 'unauthorised' when a child is absent for reasons, which are not permitted by law. An absence is 'unauthorised' if the child is away from school without permission from the school or good reason (according to school, not the parent).

Unauthorised absences are reported to the Local Authority. The EWO may contact you where unauthorised absence continues to be a problem**.** The school will then work in partnership with you until matters improve.

Unauthorised absence could result in a Fixed Penalty Fine or other legal action. Sanctions for continued, unauthorised absence include warnings, penalty notices (fines), prosecution in the magistrate's court or an education supervision order through the family proceedings court.

Below is a table showing examples of authorised and unauthorized absences:

Examples of Authorised absences	Examples of Unauthorised absences
Illness	Birthday celebrations
Injury	Holidays (domestic and foreign)
Medical appointment (with evidence)	Foreign/domestic travel (excluding funerals of immediate family)
Funeral of immediate family member	Long weekends
Entrance exam (for the duration of the exam plus travel time)	Feeling tired
Music exam (for the duration of the exam plus travel time)	Bad weather (e.g. rain, cold)
No suitable transport available (e.g. in the event of deep snow or unsafe weather)	Non-urgent appointment (that can be booked outside of school hours)
Religious festival	Whole day either side of appointment, entrance/music exam
Elite sporting, musical, artistic or extracurricular representation, trial, performance or activity.	Parent/sibling unwell (parents should contact school if they are struggling to get their child to school)

5 Monitoring of pupil absence

The school monitors the attendance of every pupil.
We have a staged response system for dealing with attendance concerns at our school.
The meetings with the attendance team are designed to be supportive. They explore possible reasons for poor attendance and the school will look to offer solutions that will encourage the pupil to be keen to come to school.

When the school's actions are deemed to have made limited impact and the attendance or punctuality is of concern, referrals to the EWO and local authority will be made. This may lead to the issuing of a fixed penalty notice (in line with Local Authority policy) if no improvement is seen.

6 Punctuality

Pupils should arrive to school on time by the time the register closes. Any child arriving after 8:30am will be marked as 'L' (late). After 9:30am, this will be a 'U' mark, which is included as an absence.

If a child has persistently poor punctuality, the class teacher will speak to the parent in the first instance to inform them of this. If the child's punctuality does not improve, the school follows a staged response system specifically for punctuality. Again, the aim is to explore barriers to coming into school and putting supportive measures in place.

7 Leaves of absence

The school does not grant absence from school for holidays.

We recognise that we serve a diverse community and our children have relatives in many different countries. We ask that parents aim to schedule visits to family members who may be abroad during holiday times.

Note that foreign travel to visit a relative who is unwell or who the family concerned have not visited in a long time is not a valid reason for absence and school expects that if the parent needs to travel to visit a family member that the child continues to attend school. School can make alternative arrangements to ensure the child continues to attend school.

In the rare occasion that a trip is unavoidable, the parent should complete a 'Request leave of absence' form.

8 Children missing from education (CME)

If a pupil is missing from school for ten consecutive school days and the school has no information about the child then Child Missing from Education (CME) procedures will be followed. These are set by the LA and are designed to ensure that all children are kept safe and that their education continues.