



# St Albans Girls' School

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## **Appendix 1 - Use of Attendance Letters**

The letter sequence outlined below is intended as a guide only. Professional judgement and discretion will be used when responding to individual circumstances.

### **Attendance dropping below 93%**

Letter 1 to be sent by Director of Learning.  
This letter makes parents aware of our concern



### **Attendance dropping below 90%**

Letter 2 to be sent by Director of Learning.  
This letter is a request for parents to attend an Attendance Review Meeting



### **Following the Attendance Review Meeting**

Directors of Learning should send one of the following letters:  
Letter 3a - Record of Attendance Review Meeting at which parents were present, followed by letter 8 if attendance improves  
Letter 3b (KS3+4) or 3c (Post 16) - Record of Attendance Review Meeting at which parents were not present



### **Attendance dropping below 85%**

The Head of Key Stage, will send Letter 4a (KS3+4) or 4b (Post 16), requesting that parents attend a meeting with the Head of Key Stage or other Senior Leader, as appropriate.



### **Following the second Attendance Review Meeting:**

The Head of Key Stage/ Senior Leader will then send a follow up letter. This will either:  
Letter 5 - Unauthorise absence that has no medical confirmation and set a date for review, or Letter 3a - continue to authorise absence with a date set for review.



### **Following the Review Date:**

The Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for attendance will send either:  
Letter 8 this will communicate that "unauthorised absence" status has ended due to improvement  
Or  
that "unauthorised absence" status will continue



### **Attendance remaining below 85%**

Students in this category run the risk of having a Penalty Notice imposed. A Penalty Notice can be imposed if a student has 15 or more unauthorised sessions in the current or previous term. This process will be managed by the Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for attendance. Letter 6 will be sent. These are legal letters and should only be sent by the Deputy Headteacher or the Head Teacher.



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## Appendix 2/Letter 1 - Attendance/Punctuality - 90-93% attendance

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Re <Child's name and DOB>

St Albans Girls' School is committed to the achievement of our students and assisting them to fulfil their potential. Regular attendance and punctuality is vital to enable our pupils to accomplish this. At St Albans Girls' School we expect that all students who are able will achieve 96% attendance, I am concerned to note that <child's name> has an attendance rate of < % (under 93%)>

We recognise that sometimes there are good reasons for your daughter's absence from school and always seek to support families in such circumstances. We also want to support parents to ensure their daughter(s) attend(s) school regularly and punctually, enabling them to make the most of the educational opportunities available to him/her/them. If <child's name> is experiencing difficulties in school, please contact your daughter Director of Learning.

Yours sincerely

Director of Learning



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## Appendix 3/Letter 2 - Attendance/Punctuality - Under 90% - Invite to Attendance Review Meeting

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Re <Child's name and DOB>

Further to my previous letter, I have been monitoring <child's name> attendance and there has not been an improvement.

<Child's name> has an attendance rate of < %>, still below the school target of 96%. If this attendance rate continues further interventions/ sanctions will need to be implemented.

We would like to work together with you to improve your child's attendance and therefore I invite you to an Attendance Review Meeting <meeting details>. This will be an opportunity for you to explain the issues that have led to this drop in attendance, but it will also be an opportunity for the school to discuss the importance of securing improvements where possible.

If you are unable to attend, a meeting of professionals will take place in your absence and a record of the discussion will be sent to you.

Many thanks for your continued support. Please contact the office to confirm that you will be attending.

Yours sincerely

Director of Learning



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## Appendix 4/Letter 3a – Letter to Parents following Attendance Review Meeting where the Parent/carer attended

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Re <Child's name and DOB>

Thank you for attending the Attendance Review Meeting on (Date). This was a helpful meeting in which we discussed the issues that have led to <Child's name> attendance falling below 90%.

**During the meeting, you outlined the following issues:**

**To ensure improvements in the coming weeks, we have agreed to:**

I hope that this meeting enables us to move forward positively in securing improved attendance for <Child's name>. We will continue to monitor your daughter's attendance and will review the situation on (date, at least six weeks hence).

Thank you for your continued support of your daughter and the school

Yours sincerely

Director of Learning



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## Appendix 5/Letter 3b – Letter to Parents where there is non attendance at an Attendance Review Meeting (KS3+4)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

### Re <Child's name and DOB>

I am sorry that you were unable to attend the Attendance Review Meeting on (date) to discuss <Child's name> poor attendance to school. As advised in my previous letter, a meeting of professionals was undertaken in your absence. Present at the meeting were (names and responsibilities).

We continue to be concerned about level of absence during this academic year. As stated in previous letters, we are sympathetic to and support absence from school where there is a genuine need for this to occur. However, we are equally committed to ensuring the best levels of attendance from all students.

### Following discussion, the professionals present decided on the following strategies to support (name) in improving her attendance:

Please be aware that if your daughter's attendance does not improve, this may result in the school making an application to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued to you.

If a pupil has at least 15 sessions (half day = 1 session) unauthorised absence in the previous and/or current term, including holidays where parents/carers understand that permission had not/would not be given, the Head Teacher can apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued by the Local Authority. This can be for each parent/carer for each child. A fine of £60 is issued if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Parents can discharge potential liability for conviction by paying the penalty. Failure to pay the fine may result in prosecution for the offence which could result in a fine of up to £1000 for each parent, per child. Should the fine not be paid in full within 28 days, the Local Authority must consider prosecution for the offence.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, I encourage you to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Director of Learning

Head Teacher: Mrs M Chapman  
Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans, Herts, AL3 6DB  
Tel: 01727 853134 Fax: 01727 831157 e-mail: admin@stags.herts.sch.uk





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## Appendix 6/Letter 3c – Letter to Parents where there is non attendance at an Attendance Review Meeting (Post 16)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Re <Child's name and DOB>

I am sorry that you were unable to attend the Attendance Review Meeting on (date) to discuss <Child's name> poor attendance to school. As advised in my previous letter, a meeting of professionals was undertaken in your absence. Present at the meeting were (names and responsibilities).

We continue to be concerned about level of absence during this academic year. As stated in previous letters, we are sympathetic to and support absence from school where there is a genuine need for this to occur. However, we are equally committed to ensuring the best levels of attendance from all students.

**Following discussion, the professionals present decided on the following strategies to support (name) in improving her attendance:**

Please be aware that if your daughter attendance does not improve, her success and place at St Albans Girls' School Sixth Form are at serious risk, as referenced in the Post 16 Attendance Agreement.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, I encourage you to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Director of Learning



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## Appendix 7/Letter 4a - Attendance/Punctuality - Under 85% - Invite to Attendance Review Meeting with Head of Key Stage/ Senior Leader (KS3+4)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Re <Child's name and DOB>

I am writing to inform you that an appointment has been made for you to meet with me on (date). It is essential that you attend this appointment. An excellent level of attendance at school, as I am sure you are aware, is a legal requirement. <Child's name> attendance is ( %), well below the school target of 96%.

Your daughter's attendance has reached a level that means we may need to consider making an application to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued to you. If a pupil has at least 15 sessions (half day = 1 session) unauthorised absence in the previous and/or current term, including holidays where parents/carers understand that permission had not/would not be given, the Head Teacher can apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued by the Local Authority. This can be for each parent/carer for each child. A fine of £60 is issued if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Parents can discharge potential liability for conviction by paying the penalty. Failure to pay the fine may result in prosecution for the offence which could result in a fine of up to £1000 for each parent, per child. Should the fine not be paid in full within 28 days, the Local Authority must consider prosecution for the offence.

Alternatively a referral to an Attendance Improvement Officer at Hertfordshire County Council, when legal proceedings may be considered.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss how the school can support you in ensuring that your daughter's attendance improves and we are determined to ensure that we see an improvement as the year progresses. We are much more likely to achieve this with your support and cooperation and therefore look forward to seeing you on the above date.

If you are unable to attend, a meeting of professionals will take place in your absence and a record of the discussion will be sent to you. It is highly likely that your non attendance at this meeting will result in stronger interventions being implemented.

Yours sincerely

Head of Key Stage

Head Teacher: Mrs M Chapman  
Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans, Herts, AL3 6DB  
Tel: 01727 853134 Fax: 01727 831157 e-mail: admin@stags.herts.sch.uk





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## Appendix 8/Letter 4b - Attendance/Punctuality - Under 85% - Invite to Attendance Review Meeting with Head of Key Stage/ Senior Leader (Post 16)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Re <Child's name and DOB>

I am writing to inform you that an appointment has been made for you to meet with me on (date). It is essential that you attend this appointment. An excellent level of attendance at school, as I am sure you are aware, is a legal requirement. <Child's name> attendance is ( %), well below the school target of 96%.

Your daughter's attendance has reached a level that means we may need to discuss her future at St Albans Girls' School Sixth Form, as references in the Post 16 Attendance Agreement.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss how the school can support you in ensuring that your daughter's attendance improves and we are determined to ensure that we see an improvement as the year progresses. We are much more likely to achieve this with your support and cooperation and therefore look forward to seeing you on the above date.

If you are unable to attend, a meeting of professionals will take place in your absence and a record of the discussion will be sent to you. It is highly likely that your non attendance at this meeting will result in stronger interventions being implemented.

Yours sincerely

Head of Key Stage



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## Appendix 9/Letter 5 – Letter to Parents where absences are to be unauthorised (KS3+4 only)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

**Re: <Child's name and DOB>**

St Albans Girls' School is committed to the achievement of our pupils and assisting them to fulfil their potential. Regular attendance and punctuality is vital to enable our pupils to accomplish this. Therefore, I am concerned to note that following my previous correspondence and our meeting of <date>, <Child's name> has an attendance rate of < %> and has only completed <number> full weeks of school out of <number> possible weeks.

Further absence will remain unauthorised by the school. It is a legal responsibility for parents to ensure their daughter attends school regularly and punctually. Should there be unauthorised absence the school will need to consider further action. This could be a Penalty Notice. If a pupil has at least 15 sessions (half day = 1 session) unauthorised absence in the previous and/or current term, including holidays where parents/carers understand that permission had not/would not be given, the Head Teacher can apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued by the Local Authority. This can be for each parent/carer for each child. A fine of £60 is issued if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Parents can discharge potential liability for conviction by paying the penalty. Failure to pay the fine may result in prosecution for the offence which could result in a fine of up to £1000 for each parent, per child. Should the fine not be paid in full within 28 days, the Local Authority must consider prosecution for the offence.

The registering of absences as unauthorised will be reviewed on <date>. Should you provide medical confirmation that <Child's name> absence is due to illness this enables the school to authorise the absence and consider support if appropriate.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Deputy Headteacher

Head Teacher: Mrs M Chapman  
Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans, Herts, AL3 6DB  
Tel: 01727 853134 Fax: 01727 831157 e-mail: admin@stags.herts.sch.uk





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## Appendix 10/ Letter 6 - Improving Attendance/Punctuality – continue to review attendance

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Re <child's name and DOB>

Further to my letter dated \_\_\_\_\_, I have been monitoring <child's name> attendance (and/or punctuality).

Our aim is for our pupils/students to achieve over 96% attendance. <Child's name> has increased from \_\_\_\_\_% to \_\_\_\_\_%. I will review the figure until attendance is over 95% for an 8 week period.

Should there be any issues regarding attendance in the future, please contact me. Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Director of Learning



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## Appendix 11 /Letter 7 – Letter to inform Parents that the school are going to apply for a fixed penalty notice

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

### The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Re <Child's name and DOB> Registered at ----- (school name)

This is a formal warning that you are at risk of being in breach of the regulations stated above. <Child's name> has been absent from school and the absence(s) has/have not been authorised.

Should the number of unauthorised absence sessions reach 15 or more in the current and/or previous term you will be in breach of the regulations and the Local Authority may issue you with a penalty notice. The notice requires you to pay a penalty of £60 within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Each parent is liable to pay a separate penalty and penalty notices are issued for each child to whom the absence relates.

Payment of the penalty enables you to discharge your liability for the offence for the period in question of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school. (section 444, The Education Act 1996). Failure to pay the penalty means you are liable to prosecution for the offence, by summons to appear before the local Magistrates Court. On conviction you may be liable for a fine of up to £1,000 per parent. This is a criminal offence which carries a criminal record.

The Local Authority will ask for costs of £125 to be awarded against you. If you fail to ensure your child attends regularly and 15 sessions of unauthorised absence is reached a penalty notice will be issued. You will not receive a further warning before the penalty is imposed. If you believe there are legitimate reasons for your child's absence please contact me within 5 working days to discuss the matter.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Head Teacher: Mrs M Chapman  
Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans, Herts, AL3 6DB  
Tel: 01727 853134 Fax: 01727 831157 e-mail: admin@stags.herts.sch.uk





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## Appendix 12 /Letter 8 – Letter to inform Parents that the school are going to apply for a fixed penalty notice where the Parent has removed the child from the country without seeking permission from the school

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

### The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Re <Child's name and DOB> Registered at ----- (school name)

This is a formal warning that you are at risk of being in breach of the regulations stated above. <Child's name> has been absent from school and we have information to suggest your daughter is out of the country during term time. This absence(s) has/have not been authorised by us.

Should the number of unauthorised absence sessions reach 15 or more in the current and/or previous term you will be in breach of the regulations and the Local Authority may issue you with a penalty notice. The notice requires you to pay a penalty of £60 within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Each parent is liable to pay a separate penalty and penalty notices are issued for each child to whom the absence relates.

Payment of the penalty enables you to discharge your liability for the offence for the period in question of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school. (Section 444, The Education Act 1996). Failure to pay the penalty means you are liable to prosecution for the offence, by summons to appear before the local Magistrates Court. On conviction you may be liable for a fine of up to £1,000 per parent. This is a criminal offence which carries a criminal record.

The Local Authority will ask for costs of £125 to be awarded against you. If you fail to ensure your child attends regularly and 15 sessions of unauthorised absence is reached a penalty notice will be issued. You will not receive a further warning before the penalty is imposed. If you believe there are legitimate reasons for your child's absence please contact me within 5 working days to discuss the matter.

If your daughter does not return to resume her education at St Albans Girls' School by \_\_\_(Date)\_\_\_ then we will send notification to the local authority that your daughter is Missing In Education and she may be removed from the school roll.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Head Teacher: Mrs M Chapman  
Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans, Herts, AL3 6DB  
Tel: 01727 853134 Fax: 01727 831157 e-mail: admin@stags.herts.sch.uk





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## Appendix 13 – Application to Local Authority to issue a fixed penalty notice

Hertfordshire County Council

Children's Services  
Integrated Services for Learning  
Attendance Team

### Application for a Penalty Notice to be issued

Name of person requesting issue of Penalty Notice:	
Position: (Head, Deputy or Assistant Head Teacher only)	
Contact details:	
Pupil's Name:	
Date of Birth:	
School/Academy:	
Parent(s) full name(s):	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Date of warning letter:	
<b>Please attach copies of:</b> Warning letter Certificate of attendance signed by the head teacher Up to date SIMS (or equivalent) printout <b>Please note that applications will not be processed if the necessary information is not attached</b>	

Head Teacher: Mrs M Chapman  
Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans, Herts, AL3 6DB  
Tel: 01727 853134 Fax: 01727 831157 e-mail: admin@stags.herts.sch.uk





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## The following sections must be completed

1. Information on supportive measures offered to family. Please include dates of any meetings held with parents to address poor attendance.


2. Information on the parent(s) failure to co-operate:


3. Has the pupil been referred to or discussed with the Attendance Improvement Officer?

Yes/No – if yes, please give details


Any further information:


Please send this application **within 10 school days of the last absence** to the Attendance Team Manager for the area where the school is based.



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## **Watford, Three Rivers, Bushey and Radlett Attendance Team**

Attendance Team Manager, Post Point AP 1102, Apsley 2, Brindley Way, Hemel Hempstead HP3 9BF

## **St Albans and Dacorum Attendance Team**

Attendance Team Manager, Post Point AP 2115 Apsley 2, Brindley Way, Hemel Hempstead HP3 9BF

## **Welwyn Hatfield and Hertsmere Attendance Team**

Attendance Team Manager, Post Point MU204, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Mundells,

Welwyn Garden City AL7 1FT

## **North Herts and Stevenage Attendance Team**

Attendance Team Manager, SFAR114, 1st Floor, Farnham House,

Six Hills Way, Stevenage SG1 2FQ

## **East Herts and Broxbourne Attendance Team**

Attendance Team Manager, Room 50-61, Lower Ground Floor, County Hall,

Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8DF

### Certificate of Attendance

<b>Name of Child:</b>	<b>Date of Birth:</b>
<b>School/Academy Attended:</b>	<b>Form:</b>
<b>Parent/Guardian:</b>	<b>Address:</b>

Head Teacher: Mrs M Chapman  
Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans, Herts, AL3 6DB  
Tel: 01727 853134 Fax: 01727 831157 e-mail: admin@stags.herts.sch.uk







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## Appendix 14 - ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. present at another school or PRU)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Other unauthorised absence (not covered by other codes or descriptions)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the registers closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience (not work based training)	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Partial and forced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to all pupils	Not counted in possible attendances



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## Appendix 15

### Absence and Attendance Codes

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

#### Present at School

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

#### Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm

Present in school during registration.

#### Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

#### Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

#### Attendance codes for when pupils are present at school are as follows:

##### Code B: 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 absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.



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## Consortia Schools

Pupils attending consortia schools as part of their course only need to be placed on the registers of their 'main' school rather than on all of the schools they attend. They should be treated as guest pupils at the other consortia schools. The consortia schools however, must ensure they have suitable systems in place for monitoring and reporting the attendance and absence of the pupils involved, which must be shared with the 'main' school.

## **Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment**

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, but only when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

## **Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment**

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

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.

## **Code V: Educational visit or 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.

## **Code W: Work experience**

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

## **Authorised Absence from School**

'Authorised absence' means that 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 justification for absence.

**Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:**

### **Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school**

Head Teacher: Mrs M Chapman  
Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans, Herts, AL3 6DB  
Tel: 01727 853134 Fax: 01727 831157 e-mail: [admin@stags.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stags.herts.sch.uk)





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Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each request individually taking into account the circumstances, such as: the nature of the event for which leave is sought; the frequency of the request; whether the parent gave advance notice; and the pupil's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling.

## **Code 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 day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

## **Code F: Extended family holiday authorised by the school**

Head teachers may in exceptional circumstances agree more than 10 school days leave of absence in a school year. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the leave. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion and is not a parental right.

## **Code H: Family holiday authorised by the school**

Head teachers may in special<sup>\*</sup> circumstances grant leave of absence of up to 10 days for the purpose of family holidays during term time. The application must be made in which warrant the leave. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion and is not a parental right.

## **Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)**

Schools should advise parents to notify the school as soon as possible when a child is ill. 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 seriousness of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical certificates unnecessarily (particularly retrospective certificates), especially if the illness was not treated by a doctor at the time. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

## **Code 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.

## **Code 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.



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## **Code S: Study leave**

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

\* The current regulations states that head teachers can grant requests from parents to take their child on family holiday during term time in “special” circumstances. The Government has accepted Charlie Taylor’s recommendation that changes are made to the pupil registration regulations to strengthen the rules around term time holidays. The Government intends to do so by September 2013.

## **Code 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 school.

## **Unauthorised Absence from School**

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

### **Code G: Family holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of agreed period**

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence and the parents still take the child on holiday, 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 the leave of absence in advance the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided**

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil’s absence. When the reason for the pupil’s absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil’s attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

### **Code O: Absent from school without authorisation**

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.



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## **Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed**

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 a 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.

## **Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances**

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- 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 is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

## **Code Z: Pupil not on 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.

## **Code #: 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.



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## Appendix 16 – Letter to be sent to all parents annually

Date

Dear Parents/Carers

### Re: School Attendance and Punctuality

At St Albans Girls' School we want all of our students to enjoy school and achieve their potential. We are committed to promoting excellent levels of attendance and punctuality. Our attendance target is 96% and our aim is for our students to exceed this level, enabling them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and improve their future life chances. We would appreciate your support to ensure that your daughter achieves this.

Our School Attendance Policy can be found on the school's website. As part of this policy, the school would like to keep parents informed regarding attendance and will contact parents in writing when attendance drops below 93%.

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children attend the school at which they are registered, regularly, punctually and ready to learn. Children with attendance under 90% are classified by the Department for Education as Persistent Absentees.

If your daughter/son is absent from school, please contact us on each day of the absence and provide the reason. On return to school the reason for your daughter/son's absence should be confirmed in writing and passed to their form tutor. It is the Head Teacher's decision as to whether this absence is authorised or not. In most cases, absence is genuine and marked as authorised on the register.

The school day consists of two sessions, the morning and the afternoon. Registers are taken twice daily at 8.35 am and 1.55pm. In the mornings, the registers close at 9.35am. Should your child arrive after the register has been closed, this will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless a reasonable explanation is provided. The school will follow up lateness, unauthorised absence and students with low levels of attendance.

Ongoing poor attendance and/or punctuality may result in the school making a request to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice (explanation below) or a referral to the Attendance Improvement Officer when court proceedings may be considered.

If a student has at least 15 sessions (half day = 1 session) unauthorised absence in the current and/or previous term, including leave of absence where permission has not been requested or requested and denied, the Head Teacher can apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued by the Local Authority. The amount payable is £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice. Separate notices are sent to each parent for each child. Parents can discharge potential liability for conviction by paying the penalty. Should the fine not be paid in full within 28 days, the Local Authority must consider prosecution.

Head Teacher: Mrs M Chapman  
Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans, Herts, AL3 6DB  
Tel: 01727 853134 Fax: 01727 831157 e-mail: [admin@stags.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stags.herts.sch.uk)





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## Leave of Absence

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 state that 'Head Teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances', outlining the conditions under which leave of absence may be granted. Should parents/carers need to request leave of absence during term time for exceptional circumstances. A copy of the relevant form is on the school website and return it to me no less than 4 weeks before the date that you are requesting the period of absence to start. I will inform you of my decision in writing and may request an appointment with you.

May I remind you that the school operates Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence of 15 or more sessions across the current and/or previous term. Leave of absence will be unauthorised:

1. should a request for leave of absence be declined but the time taken
2. if a parent/carer takes a child out of school for leave of absence without requesting permission
3. when a child fails to return to school following authorised leave of absence for exceptional circumstances on the agreed date.

Unauthorised leave of absence of 15 or more sessions may lead to a Penalty Notice being initiated. Further information can be found in the school's Attendance Policy and on our website.

Our aim is to work with you and our students to ensure that the courses of action, outlined above, are not necessary. Students are regularly praised and rewarded for improved and good attendance and punctuality and we look forward to working together with you to support the future of your daughter/son.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M Chapman  
Headteacher



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## Appendix 17/ Authorised Absent Form

### REQUEST FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Permission for leave of absence from school will only be given in very exceptional circumstances. There are 12 school week's holiday and removal of a young person during term seriously disrupts their learning. If you feel it is essential to request permission for leave of absence for your daughter/son please complete the information below.

Student's Name (s)	Tutor Group
1. ....	.....
2. ....	.....

Dates of absence from ..... to ..... Number of school days .....

The exceptional circumstances that require my daughter(s)/son(s) to be absent from school are:-  
**(Parents must guarantee that school work is undertaken during the period of absence and students should request work from subject teachers).**

.....  
.....  
.....

Signed: ..... (Parent/Carer) Date: .....  
Please return form to **Mrs M Chapman**, Head Teacher, as soon as possible.

Permission for an authorised absence is granted because .....

.....

Signed: ..... Mrs M Chapman, Head Teacher Date: .....

Permission for an authorised absence has NOT been granted because .....

.....

.....

Signed: ..... Mrs M Chapman, Head Teacher Date: .....

### Please be aware that if this unauthorised absence is taken you may be at risk of being issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice

If a student has at least 15 sessions (half day = 1 session) unauthorised absence in the previous and/or current term, including holidays where parents/carers understand that permission had not/would not be given, the Head Teacher can apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued by the Local Authority. This can be for each parent/carer for each child. A fine of £60 is issued if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days.

Head Teacher: Mrs M Chapman  
Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans, Herts, AL3 6DB  
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