



ST ALBANS GIRLS' SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

GB sub-committee: Personnel & Student Wellbeing Committee

Co-ordinator: Miss T Lambert

Last Reviewed: Autumn 2021

Next Review: Autumn 2024

Signed by:
Margaret Chapman
Head Teacher

Signed by:
Claire Barnard
Chair of Governors

1. RATIONALE

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1.1 | Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to fulfil their potential. It is also everyone's business. There is a clear link between good attendance and students achieving best possible outcomes for themselves. Excellent attendance and punctuality are key to a student's success. The attendance target for all students is for figures to be at least in line with national averages including vulnerable groups throughout the year. The school takes guidance from the Dfe document Working together to improve school attendance (September 2022). |
| 1.2 | <p>We expect the whole school community – governors, staff, parents/carers and students, to be committed to ensuring high standards of attendance and punctuality.</p> <p>Section 7 of Education Act 1996 states:</p> <p><i>It is the duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age.</i></p> <p><i>The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A. to his age, ability and aptitude, and</i> <i>B. to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise</i> |
| 1.3 | <p>The Department for Education issued the following information to schools and local authorities about attendance in May 2022.</p> <p>“Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to</p> |

	<p>individual pupils and families.”</p> <p>“The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.”</p> <p>St Albans Girls’ School is committed to securing continuous improvement in attendance and punctuality. One of the means by which this is achieved is by setting challenging targets in relation to attendance, punctuality, authorised absence and unauthorised absence. We will continue to set such targets and measure the performance of the school community against them on a regular basis, implementing action where necessary to secure continued improvement. We will also continue to communicate and work with families to ensure excellent attendance for all children as stated by the Dfe it is everyone’s business.</p>
1.4	The responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parents/carers and students. All these groups need to understand the expectations which the policy makes of them.
1.5	<p>St Albans Girls’ School will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● provide a safe learning environment ● ensure that records of attendance are maintained according to Government legislation and guidance on a daily basis. ● encourage good attendance and will investigate all unexplained and unjustified absences. ● ensure that staff set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality. ● follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality. ● keep parents/carers informed of their child’s attendance/punctuality record. ● work closely with parents/carers should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern. ● The school will ensure maximum attendance from all students including vulnerable groups to ensure the best possible outcomes and opportunities for all. ● Targeting and monitoring of vulnerable groups will be undertaken with key colleagues breaking down any barriers to attendance.
1.6	<p>The expectations for parents/carers are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child’s regular and punctual attendance. ● Parents/carers should ensure their child is properly dressed, equipped and in a fit condition to learn. ● Parents/carers will inform school on the first day of absence, of the reason for their child’s absence from school. The school ask parents to report absence by 9am latest. ● Parents/carers will avoid arranging family holidays during term time and understand the schools stance on taking action should this occur ● Parents/carers will aim for all medical appointments to be made our of school hours ● Parents/carers will maintain regular communication with school staff where necessary. ● Parents/carers will ensure that school is informed of any changes of contact details.

1.7	The expectations for Students are; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually. • Students are expected to be LEARN Ready (Appendix 18) • Students cannot leave the school without permission. • Students will sign in at Student Reception, if arriving after 8.35am. Students will sign out at Student Reception if leaving school during the day with permission that has been received correctly from parents/carers by the school
2. AIMS	
2.1	To ensure all students attend school/lessons regularly to enable them to progress personally, socially and cognitively.
2.2	To undertake the school's legal responsibility to ensure all students attend lessons/school regularly.
2.3	To ensure that parents/carers and students are aware and understand the expectations of the school.
2.4	To operate clear and effective procedures for monitoring and recording student attendance.
2.5	To instigate supportive interventions in order to return a student to school/lessons.
2.6	To maintain a high level of punctuality to school and lessons.
2.7	To operate clear, efficient procedures for maintaining school and lesson registers and acting promptly when poor punctuality and absences occur.
2.8	To provide accurate and prompt information on attendance to LA, DfE, Governors, Parents/Carers, Employers, UCAS, OFSTED and ourselves.
2.9	To operate a system of rewards for good attendance and punctuality.
3. PROCEDURES	
3.1	School doors open at 7.45am. Students may enter the building at that time and can go to the Dining Room. The Learning Resource Centre opens at 8.15am when formal supervision begins each day. The library is staffed until 4.30pm every day (and students may work in there until that time). After 4.30pm any student who is being collected by parents must wait in the restaurant. The school cannot accept responsibility for students after 5.00pm, unless they are taking part in a supervised sport, drama, music, dance or curriculum activity. There is a homework club with support from our Teaching Assistants which runs from 3.10pm to 4.00pm from Monday to Wednesday.
3.1.2	The School will send a letter annually, outlining procedures for attendance and action taken in the event that a student becomes a persistence absentee (below 90% attendance)
3.2	Registration
3.2.1	Registers are called at 8.35am and 2.10 pm.
3.2.2	Registers are marked consistently by staff using the schools MIS . Students arriving after 8.35am and 2.10pm respectively, will be marked with an "L" coding on the schools MIS .

3.2.3	Any student arriving after 9.35am without sufficient explanation, will be coded as an unauthorised absence for the whole session, using attendance code "U".
3.2.4	Registers should be taken in silence. Students should be called by name and respond in the prescribed formal manner 'here', 'present', 'yes miss/sir' etc.
3.2.6	In the event that an AM session register is not taken, the Attendance Officer will inform the member of staff before 9.00am. The register will then be completed immediately by the member of staff, or in the event of a technical issue, by the Attendance Officer.
3.2.7	All staff will take a register in each lesson, with lateness to lessons being recorded using the "L" code on the schools MIS. The comment function will be used to record the number of minutes late.
3.2.8	In the event that a lesson register is not taken, the Attendance Officer will inform the member of staff on the day concerned. The register should then be retrospectively completed on receipt of this message.
3.3	Lateness
3.3.1	Any student arriving after 8.35am should report to Student Reception and sign the late book.
3.3.2	A daily copy of the late list will be forwarded daily to the Directors of Learning by the Attendance Officer.
3.3.3	Students who are late without sufficient explanation will be given a C2 and expected to attend a break-time detention on the same day with a Director of Learning.
3.3.4	Students who are late to school and fail to attend this break-time detention will be given a C3 detention.
3.3.5	Entries in the late book will be transferred to the computerised registration system.
3.3.6	Dispensation will be given to students who are late because of the school bus system, or if there are additional valid reasons the school are aware of
3.3.7	The Attendance Officer will cross reference their detention list with a MIS lateness report, thus ensuring that all students who were late to school were recorded in the late books.
3.3.8	Students who arrive late, but fail to sign in, will be given a C4 consequence.
3.3.9	Students who are persistently late will be monitored closely. Intervention will be designed on a personalised basis by the Director of Learning. Punctuality intervention flow chart is shown in Appendix 1a
3.3.10	If lateness persists then Parents/Carers will be invited in for a meeting to discuss a plan for improvement.
3.4	Absences
3.4.1	Parents/carers must provide a reasonable explanation for absences from school via the absence line (01727 853134) or e-mail absence@stags.herts.sch.uk . We ask that parents/carers make this contact by 9am.

3.4.2	In the event that an absence is known in advance (i.e. medical appointment) the Parent/Carer should inform the school and the reason recorded on the schools MIS using the correct code. Students leaving school for an authorised reason during the school day must sign out via reception. A student will not be let off site until contact has been received from parents/carers. We ask all parents to give us advance notice so there can be no delay in letting their child off the school site.
3.4.3	Any other absence requests need to be put in writing to the Head Teacher using the specified Absence Request Form, which can be found on the school website.
3.4.4	Authorisation for absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The Head Teacher will decide whether to accept the reason given and to authorise the absence. It is the Head Teacher and not the parent who may authorise absence in exceptional circumstances.
3.4.5	Absence from school may be authorised if it is for the following reasons, although this is not an exhaustive list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sickness ● Unavoidable medical/ dental appointments (though these should be made, whenever possible, outside school hours) ● Day of religious observance ● Exceptional family circumstances such as bereavement ● Music, Dance or Practical Driving Examinations ● Older Sibling's Graduation
3.4.6	A record of all explanations should be kept on the student file. These records will be kept for 6 years following a student's removal from the school roll.
3.5	Following up absences and first day response.
3.5.1	St Albans Girls' School follows up all absences from school on the first day.
3.5.2	If no reason has been provided for a student's absence by 9.00am on the first day of absence, a parent/carers of the student will be contacted by text. Absence texts will be sent by 10am everyday.
3.5.3	If no response to this text/call is received, the Director of Learning will then follow up directly.
3.5.4	In the event that any safeguarding concerns exist about students for whom contact has not been made, the Head of Key Stage and/or the DSP may be informed.
3.5.5	If no reason or contact has been provided for a student's absence after 3 consecutive days, a Police Welfare Check or School welfare check will be initiated. 6th day of school absence a safeguarding check will take place and police may be contacted.
3.5.6	If the school has knowledge that a student has been taken out of the country without seeking permission of the school, Letter 8 (Appendix 12) will be sent.
3.6	Persistent Absence & Serious Absence
3.6.1	The government refers to students with attendance below 90% as persistent absentees, regardless of whether the school has authorised or unauthorised the absence. Any student that falls under the 50% attendance category is considered a Serious Absentee.

3.6.1	Students with patterns of frequent absence and/or unexplained absences will be monitored closely by their Director of Learning who will check attendance on the schools MISdaily and follow up any unauthorised absences.
3.6.2	If a student's attendance falls below 95% then the following actions will be taken as outlined in Appendix 1 flow chart
3.6.3	Students with attendance between 95% and 90% will be sent Letter 1 and Letter 2 respectively (Appendix 2 & 3).
3.6.4	Where attendance falls below 90% Letter 2 & 3 will be sent (Appendix 3 & 4). Directors of Learning will ensure that Attendance Review Meetings with parents/carers take place and an action plan is agreed. This action plan may be designed to ensure compliance with attendance regulations, or may be designed to foster engagement in cases where significant issues have been identified. A record of the meeting will be sent to parents using Letter 3a, 3b or 3c. (Appendix 4, 5 & 6).
3.6.5	Any student who receives Letter 2 will have their attendance monitored closely every 4-6 weeks. In the event that improvement is not secured a meeting with the Head of Key Stage or other senior leader will be held. Parents will be informed of this meeting and the possible serious consequences using Letter 4a or 4b (Appendix 7 & 8). Targets will be agreed in the meeting. A record of the meeting will be sent to parents using Letter 3a, 3b or 3c (Appendix 4, 5 or 6).
3.6.6	If improvement is secured, the parents/carers will be informed using Letter 6 (Appendix 10) and informal monitoring will resume.
3.6.7	In the event that improvement is not then secured then either the school will set up an Attendance Improvement Panel to formalise support for persistent absence or issue letter 5 (Appendix 9) and a process will be initiated, which may lead to legal proceedings and a Penalty Notice being sought. This will involve Letter 7 (Appendix 11) being sent, following which an application for a Penalty Notice will be submitted by the school to the local authority (Appendix 13).
3.6.8	If St Albans Girls' school feels that a family is in need of more specialist support in relation to a student's continued pattern of poor attendance, a referral can be made to the County Attendance Team.
3.6.9	St Albans Girls' School is committed to integrated working and may also seek to initiate further supportive measures, such as a Families First Assessment or support from St Albans Vista Team. Decisions of this nature will be made by the Key Stage Assistant Head Teachers, in consultation with the relevant Director of Learning, the Deputy Head Teacher and/or the DSL.
3.6.10	All the processes outlined above are at the discretion of the Deputy Head Teacher with responsibility for attendance and will be implemented according to the context of the individual student.
3.6.11	Students returning to school after prolonged absence will be supported with their reintegration. This may involve a personalised curriculum or flexi timetable
3.7	Term Time Holidays Schools are not permitted to authorise holidays during term time. Term time absence may only be granted in the most exceptional circumstances. Parents/Carers who take students out of school for holidays during term time may be issued with a fixed penalty

	notice.
3.8	<p>Truancy</p> <p>St Albans Girls' School works with parents/carers, students and staff to reduce truancy during the school day by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Taking a register each lesson using schools MIS Lesson Monitor. ● Staff monitoring exit points. ● Searching places where truants are known to hide. ● Working proactively with other agencies, such as the police.
3.9	<p>Rewards</p> <p>St Albans Girls' School works with students to recognise and celebrate high levels of attendance and excellent rates of punctuality. All students who achieve 100% attendance within a term will receive an achievement certificate in a celebration assembly and the parents/carers will be contacted.</p> <p>In addition to this, each year group will have age appropriate, bespoke systems to celebrate attendance and punctuality. Directors of Learning are responsible for these processes and will design reward systems appropriate to their year group. These might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trips or events ● Celebration in Assembly ● House-points awarded systematically by Form Tutors ● Prize draws ● Form Parties ● Celebration on the "Wall of Fame" board <p>St Albans Girls' School recognises that some students may be unable to attend school regularly due to ongoing physical and mental health issues. With a certified letter from a consultant, the school will work with health care professionals and parents to ensure appropriate provision is in place, and will not aim to upset them by highlighting poor attendance in school.</p>
4. MONITORING	
4.1	<p>We ensure clear lines of communication with all stakeholders with regard to attendance. Information published and reviewed includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individual attendance figures are shared with parents and carers through the school report and are available on Edulink parent app. ● Annual letters to parents/carers remind them of the importance of excellent attendance. ● New parents/carers are informed about the school's policies and ethos on attendance and punctuality as part of the Year 6 into Year 7 transfer process. ● Students and Form Tutors are informed fortnightly about attendance and can follow up any issues. ● Attendance is a regular item on the agenda of Governors meetings and SLT meetings ● The Deputy Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring that data collected by the DfE and census is accurate. ● Staff are updated about changes to the policy by the Deputy Head Teacher. ● Whole school figures are shared in a weekly report. ● Annual figures, including targets, are shared with staff and Governors, through the School Improvement Plan.

Appendix 1 - Use of Attendance/ Punctuality Letters

Attendance dropping below 95%

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 a 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



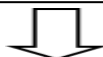
Attendance dropping below 89%

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 and a Letter 5 will be sent to parents warning of a Fixed Penalty Notice



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 once a warning letter has been issued. This process will be managed by the Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for attendance. Once 15 sessions are reached a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued by the Local Authority

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

Punctuality – 3 Lates in a half-term

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

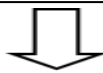
Punctuality – 8 Lates

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



Following the Punctuality 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



Punctuality still not improving

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 Punctuality 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



Punctuality still not improving

Students in this category run the risk of having a Penalty Notice imposed. A Penalty Notice can 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.

Appendix 2/Letter 1 - Attendance/Punctuality - 90-95% 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 95% 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 child's absence from school and always seek to support families in such circumstances. We also want to support parents to ensure their (s) attend(s) school regularly and punctually, enabling them to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. If <child's name> is experiencing difficulties in school, please contact your child's Director of Learning.

Yours sincerely

Director of Learning

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

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 daughters 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

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

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 94%.

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

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 94%.

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

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

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 95% attendance. <Child's name> has increased from _____% to _____%. We are pleased they are in school more, this will have a positive impact on their learning and their wellbeing.

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

Yours sincerely

Director of Learning

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

Head Teacher

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

**Hertfordshire County Council
Children’s Services
Integrated Services for Learning
Statutory Attendance and Participation Team**

Application for a Penalty Notice to be issued

Name of person requesting issue of Penalty Notice:	
Position: (Head, Deputy or Assistant Head only)	
Contact details:	
Name of person completing application:	

Pupil’s Name:	
Date of Birth:	
School Year Group:	
School/Academy:	
Parent full name:	
Address:	
Email address:	
Telephone:	

Please confirm the following:	
1. You have read the Code of Conduct and this application complies	
2. You have included evidence that the issue of a Penalty Notice will change parental behaviour	
3. You have exhausted all avenues of support, including the offer of a Families First Assessment	
4. Please confirm who will provide a witness statement and/or attend court as required – Name: _____ Designation: _____	
5. You have sent each parent the Factsheet with the warning letter	

Date of warning letter:
Please attach copies of:
1. Warning letter
2. Certificate of attendance signed by the head teacher
3. Up to date SIMS (or equivalent) printout – Registration Certificate
4. Chronology of support offered
<i>Please note that applications will not be processed if the necessary information is not attached</i>

THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED

Information on supportive measures offered to family.

This must be a full detailed chronology of all support offered and when

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

Does the pupil have any additional needs (diagnosed or not) e.g.

SEND/ASD/ADHD/Emotional Wellbeing? Y/N

Is the SENCo aware of this application? Y/N

You must include full details of this CYP's additional needs and how you have supported the CYP including all reasonable adjustments offered.

Is the pupil known to Social Care as CLA or on a CIN/CP Plan? Y/N

Have you discussed this application with the social worker? Y/N

Please provide details of any plan or intervention form social worker

Please email this application **within 10 school days of the last absence** to the Penalty Notice Officer for the area where the school is based.

All applications to be sent via Herts/Schools FX as follows –

West Area – attendancedutywest@hertfordshire.gov.uk

East Area – attendancedutyeast@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Present		Absent		School closed
AM	PM	Authorised	Unauthorised	

Presented under the provisions of Section 566 of the Education Act 1996

I hereby certify that the above named child is a registered pupil at (name of school/academy) and that the above is an accurate record of his/her attendance.

Signed:

Head teacher

Date:

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

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.

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**

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* 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.

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.

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.

Appendix 16/ Authorised Absence 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.

ATTENDANCE

EDUCATION + ATTENDANCE + EFFORT = ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

FACT: More time in school means more time to learn, develop, grow and time to become the **very best you!**

FACT: Low attendance means drastically reducing life chances!

96-100%	<h2 style="margin: 0;">EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">On target for achieving EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Action: Daily Attendance and Absence monitoring</p>
93-95%	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="background-color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px; margin-right: 10px; font-weight: bold;">50</div> <h2 style="margin: 0;">MISSED LESSONS</h2> </div> <p style="margin: 0;">Form Tutor review and discussion and Director of Learning attendance monitoring</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Action: Letter 1 sent to parents/carers about attendance concerns</p>
90-93%	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="background-color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px; margin-right: 10px; font-weight: bold;">100</div> <h2 style="margin: 0;">MISSED LESSONS</h2> </div> <p style="margin: 0;">Director of Learning attendance meeting and Head of Key Stage attendance monitoring</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Action: Letters 1 & 2 sent to parents/carers informing of attendance meeting. Letter 3 sent outlining actions from meeting. Student meeting with Director of Learning or Assistant Director of Learning outlining targets</p>
85-89%	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="background-color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px; margin-right: 10px; font-weight: bold;">150</div> <h2 style="margin: 0;">MISSED LESSONS</h2> </div> <p style="margin: 0;">Local Authority Monitoring</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Action: Head of Key Stage attendance meeting with parents/carers and Letter 4 summary of agreed actions to improve attendance and potential fine</p>
BELOW 85%	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="background-color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px; margin-right: 10px; font-weight: bold;">200</div> <h2 style="margin: 0;">MISSED LESSONS</h2> </div> <p style="margin: 0;">Local Authority ACTION. Attendance Officer involvement</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Action: Letter 5 sent to parents/carers warning of Fixed Penalty Notice following 15 sessions of absence. Once reached, a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued to the Local Authority</p>

Learning for Life in a Community where All can Excel

STAGS STANDARDS

