



ALTRINCHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2025

Nominated Lead Member of Staff	JW
Last Review Date:	September 2025
Next Review Date:	September 2026

General Aims

High attendance is essential for students to reach their full potential. At AGSB, we believe that regular attendance is crucial, to ensure academic progress and to minimise learning gaps. Regular attendance is key to students' sense of well-being, enabling them to become resilient and confident young adults, able to thrive in the competitive world beyond school.

At AGSB, we place great value on the partnership between school and parents. We see high attendance as a shared responsibility, and we are committed to working closely with families to identify the root causes of poor attendance and find effective solutions to address them.

This policy aims to set out the AGSB approach to ensuring excellent rates of attendance and reflects the statutory expectations outlined in the DfE's 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (2024), which all schools must follow from September 2024

Attendance Law

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 (SEN) they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.

From September 2024, all schools must adhere to the statutory guidance on attendance, which outlines expectations for early intervention, multi-agency working, and consistent escalation procedures.

This policy incorporates the Department for Education (DfE) 2024 statutory guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance'. It is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 6 of the Education Act (1996)
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act (2006)

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, including 2013 and 2016 amendments.

General Principles

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on Governing Bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State concerning safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

At AGSB, we recognise that attendance is often the first indicator of underlying issues, such as safeguarding concerns, making accurate record-keeping a crucial part of ensuring children's safety in education. If a student is absent for 10 consecutive school days and contact with a parent or carer has not been possible, the student will be reported as missing in education.

School Procedures, Roles and Responsibilities

The Head Master and Governors will ensure that the School:

- Keeps accurate and up-to-date attendance records
- Maintains high attendance standards and focuses on individuals and groups to improve attendance where necessary
- Takes appropriate action after identifying the causes of non-attendance
- Inform parents about any issues related to attendance and punctuality
- Works closely with students who have been absent due to long-term illness or frequent short-term absences
- Collaborates with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO)
- Ensures consistency in recording data and applying this policy
- Conducts weekly and termly analysis of attendance data to identify patterns, vulnerable cohorts, and students requiring support.
- Reports findings to the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body and uses data to inform targeted interventions.

AGSB Implements a whole-school approach to attendance, ensuring that all staff understand their role in promoting and improving attendance, as required by the DfE guidance.

Form Tutors will ensure the register is taken electronically each morning at 8:40am Subject Teachers will ensure it is taken in the afternoon at 1:20pm, at the start of lesson 4. If the electronic system fails, a paper register will be completed and returned to Reception immediately. Registers are taken every lesson to minimise the risk of students disappearing between classes.

The designated Senior Attendance Champion is the Deputy Head Master, Mr. J Whiting. They are responsible for leading strategic attendance initiatives, monitoring attendance data, coordinating interventions, and ensuring compliance with statutory guidance.

The Attendance Administrator will contact the parents or carers of any student who is absent without notification by the first day of absence. A School Comms or text message will be sent by 10:00am. If

no response is received, a phone call will be made. The Attendance Administrator/Sixth Form Administrator will keep records of these absences.

At AGSB, we believe that early intervention is key to reducing absence before it becomes habitual. This aligns with the DfE's emphasis on a 'support-first' approach, where schools must work with families to identify barriers and offer help before considering legal intervention.

If a student's attendance or punctuality raises concern (<95%), a letter will be sent to parents or carers advising of the importance of good attendance, the impact on attainment and that the student's attendance is now being closely monitored. The School will participate in regular Targeting Support Meetings with Trafford Local Authority to review persistent absence cases, share best practice, and coordinate multi-agency support where appropriate.

If a student's attendance drops below 90% (persistently absent), the Head of Year will be notified, and a letter will be sent to the parents or carers informing them that the EWO will monitor the situation. The letter will also invite the parents or carers to a meeting with the EWO and Deputy Head/Head of Year to discuss the impact of the student's poor attendance or punctuality on their education and achievements. During the meeting, barriers to attendance will be identified, and an action plan will be developed with the student and parents to improve attendance before more formal support procedures are considered. The student's attendance will be closely monitored following the meeting, and the EWO may also visit the student's home.

If attendance does not improve, the Attendance Administrator and Deputy Head Master may implement a formal attendance contract – a formal written agreement between parents or carers and with the School or Local Authority.

Part-time timetables

In exceptional circumstances, a part-time timetable may be implemented following agreement with parents/carers. These arrangements will be reviewed at least fortnightly and must be time-limited, with a clear plan for reintegration into full-time education.

Support for SEND and Health Needs

AGSB is committed to supporting students with SEND or health-related barriers to attendance. This includes personalised attendance plans, reasonable adjustments, liaison with external agencies, and ensuring access to learning during periods of absence.

Legal Sanctions

Where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate, the School will consider initiating formal legal proceedings, starting with a penalty notice issued on behalf of Trafford Local Authority. The School will consider applying for a penalty notice if a student has 10 or more unauthorised absence sessions (5 days) in a 10-week period. One school day accounts for 2 sessions. This threshold is in line with the national standard introduced in the 2024 guidance.

Failure to bring about improvements in attendance via the mechanisms referenced previously, and the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may follow. Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered student at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and/or be imprisoned for a period of three months. A Magistrate can fine each parent £2500 for each child.

Unauthorised Holidays

Term-time holidays will not be authorised, but the School must be notified. Parents will receive a penalty notice for unauthorised, term-time holidays. The fine is £160 per child if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 per child if paid within 21 days.

In any period of not more than 3 years, if a student has a second period of unauthorised leave of absence, there is no discount for early payment. If a student has a third period of unauthorised leave of absence since the issue of the first penalty notice, a penalty notice will not be given, and the case will be taken to court.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities

Parents and carers play a crucial role in ensuring good school attendance. To support this, they must:

- Ensure their child leaves for school on time each day.
- If their child is ill, contact the School before 10:00am on the first day to explain the absence.
- Send a letter or email to the Form Tutor/Attendance Administrator upon the student's return.
- Provide advance notice to the Form Tutor/Attendance Administrator via letter or email for any medical or other appointments requiring the student to be absent or leave school during the day.
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term time without permission from the Head Master.
- Provide a written explanation for any student absence from school.

Student Responsibilities

Students are required to:

- Arrive in their form room by 8:40am and 1:20pm for registration.
- Be on time and prepared for all lessons.
- Provide a written note to the School upon their return if they have been absent.
- Follow the late procedure by reporting to Reception and signing in with a reason for lateness if they miss registration.
- Bring a letter of authorisation if they need to leave school early. Inform the relevant Form Tutor and sign out at Reception before leaving.

Punctuality

At AGSB, punctuality is vital for a productive learning environment. Being on time ensures students participate fully from the start, reduces disruptions, and builds essential habits for future success. It fosters responsibility and respect for education, supporting overall student achievement.

Form Tutors will remind students about late registration procedures and ensure they understand the importance of regular and prompt attendance.

Appropriate sanctions will be applied to reinforce the importance of arriving on time, ensuring students understand the value of punctuality and its impact on their learning and the School

community. Through consistent enforcement, we aim to encourage students to develop lasting positive routines.

Categorising Absence

National attendance codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. School attendance data is shared directly with the DfE via the School's Management Information System (mis). The data helps schools, Local Authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence.

Absence is Categorised as Follows:

Illness (I) – Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence to authorise absence due to illness where appropriate.

Medical/Dental (M) - Parents are advised to schedule such appointments outside of the School day where possible. Where this is not possible, students should attend part of the School day. Evidence, such as an appointment card, should be shown to the School.

Other authorised circumstances (C) – This refers to absences in exceptional circumstances. Parents or carers must apply to the School at least four weeks in advance for consideration, and the Head Master will assess whether the circumstances are truly exceptional based on the specific details of each case. In the event of a bereavement, the four-week notice period does not apply, and the Head Master will generally grant one day's absence to attend the funeral, though each case will be considered individually.

If a leave of absence is granted, the Head Master will determine the number of days the student may be away from school. The decision to grant leave is entirely at the Head Master's discretion.

Sporting (P) – Requests for absence due to sporting representation must be made, in writing, to the Head Master for special consideration.

Suspended (E) – Suspension from attending school will count as an authorised absence.

Interviews (J) – Sixth Form students who must attend interview for their post-18 options will have an authorised absence recorded.

Religious observance (R) – AGSB acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and that religious festivals can fall outside of school holiday periods. The Head Master authorises absence for religious observance of one day annually.

Unauthorised (O) - Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation, and it has been accepted by the Attendance Administrator and/or Head Master.

Study leave (S) – Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 and Year 13 students during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those students who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Children at Risk of Missing Education

School Governing Bodies, Academy Trusts, and other proprietors must follow the statutory guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* when arranging to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

Schools should implement appropriate safeguarding measures for children who repeatedly go missing from school.

Where possible, schools hold more than one emergency contact number for each student, which should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the child resides. While this exceeds legal requirements, it is considered best practice, offering additional contact options if a child goes missing and is identified as a safeguarding concern.

If staff have concerns about a student, they should use their professional judgment and knowledge of the child to decide whether to escalate the issue.

Removing a Student from the Register

Schools must notify the Local Authority when a student's name is to be removed from the admission register under any of the grounds listed in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended. This notification must occur as soon as the grounds for removal are met and no later than the actual removal. This process must be completed in accordance with Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended in 2024.

This requirement does not apply if the student is removed after completing the School's final year, unless the Local Authority specifically requests it.

When notifying the Local Authority of a removal, the School must provide:

- The student's full name;
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the student lives;
- At least one contact number for any parent with whom the student lives;
- If applicable, the full name and address of the parent the student is moving to live with, and the date this move will occur;
- The name of the student's future school and their start date, if known;
- The specific grounds under which the student's name is being removed from the register.

Additionally, schools (including academies) must agree with the Local Authority on a regular reporting interval for any student who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without permission for 10 consecutive days or more.