



19<sup>th</sup> October 2023

t: 01707 351350

admin@ridgeway.aat.school  
www.ridgeway.herts.sch.uk

Dear Parents/ Carers

As we approach half term, Alban Academies Trust (AAT) would like to take the opportunity to share with you the new [Attendance Policy](#) which is now in place across all our schools and to outline both our expectations of students with regards to attendance and our attendance procedures, whilst also reminding you of your legal obligations as parents.

Good attendance at school is intrinsically linked to high attainment and positive wellbeing. Accordingly, the AAT places huge importance on our students attending school every day. As a trust, our aim with approach to attendance is primarily to provide support, advice and guidance to parents, children and young people, taking into consideration the vulnerability of some children and young people and the ways in which this might contribute to absence; handling confidential information with sensitivity and working collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance.

We would like to remind you of the following statutory guidance regarding attendance:

- All parents of children aged 5 – 16 who are on a school roll must, by law, make sure that their child goes to school both regularly and punctually. That means you have a duty to make sure that your child is in school when they should be and that they arrive at school in time for both morning and afternoon sessions.
- Government guidelines state that children should only be absent from school if they are too ill to attend or they have obtained advance permission from the school.
- Headteachers no longer have the discretion to allow time for a family holiday or to agree to extended leave for parents/carers to visit their country of origin during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. If your child is absent from school because of a holiday then this will be classified as an unauthorised absence and you may be fined or legal action taken against you.
- Students whose attendance is below 90%, **the equivalent of being absent for 4 whole weeks in one school year** are classed by the Government as being 'Persistently Absent'. Attendance of all students across the AAT is monitored closely, however those students with attendance below 90% will have their attendance even more closely monitored and should there be no improvement, they and their parents may be invited to meet with the AAT Attendance Lead.
- This year, as a trust we will be taking a robust approach to unexplained absence and cases that do not improve will either be issued with Fixed Penalty Notice Applications or referred to the Local Authority for statutory casework.

If you are having difficulty getting your child to attend school, please make contact with our senior leader with responsibility for Attendance, Mrs M Tinker or AAT Attendance Lead, Mrs C Chaudhry via admin@ridgeway.aat.school, as we are able to offer wide-ranging support to help with this.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Mitcherson  
**Headteacher**