



AYLESBURY
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Founded 1598



PARENT/CARER HANDBOOK

REVISED 2024



PARENT/CARER HANDBOOK

When a student first joins the school, their parents are strongly encouraged to read this handbook, which is intended to help them throughout their child's career at AGS. The handbook is updated annually, and the copy on the school's website is always the most recent edition.

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1. ATTENDANCE, ABSENCE & ILLNESS OF STUDENTS

Please read the Attendance For Learning Policy (available on the School website) for more detail

We expect that all our **students** will:

- Arrive by 8.35am for registration and for all lessons
- Sign in promptly at the School Office if unavoidably late
- Speak to a member of staff in the School Office, or their Head of Year, if they need to leave the school site outside of normal times of the school day. They should do this BEFORE they sign out
- Speak to their Tutor or Head of Year if there is a problem which prevents regular good attendance
- Inform their academic teacher if they know they will be absent from school, and be proactive about catching up missed work

We expect that **parents/carers** will:

- Ensure that their child attends school regularly (target threshold of 96%) and arrives at school by 8.35am
- Provide an alternative means of transport to school if the school bus fails to arrive under reasonable weather conditions
- Contact the school as soon as they realise that their child may be late for school, for whatever reason
- Contact the school on the first and all subsequent days of absence to inform the school of their child's absence – via the absent child phone line or absent child email absence@ags.bucks.sch.uk
- Request permission from the school, in advance, for their child to attend an unavoidable appointment within the school day (i.e. medical, driving tests, music exams) using the Absence Request Form for 1 or more full days, or the absent child email for half a day or less
- Refrain from taking their child(ren) on holiday during term time **since it is against the law for schools to grant leave of absence during school time for this purpose**
- Inform the school if your child has a medical condition which is likely to affect attendance or punctuality

From 'Attendance for Learning Policy' Sections 7 to 11:

7. Regular procedures and monitoring attendance

- 7.1 A formal electronic register must be taken daily at the start of the morning session (8.40 am) and at the start of *period 4 (between 12.40 – 1.40 pm)* in the afternoon. It is a legal requirement to register students during the morning and afternoon sessions and teachers must ensure that it is taken accurately. A class register must also be taken every lesson via Bromcom.
- 7.2 If a student arrives late but the register is still open (*up until 9.10 am and 1.35 pm*) they will get a late mark. If a student arrives after the register is closed they will be marked as absent and will require a reason for this absence from their parents/carers or other agreed person (ie Head of Year)
- 7.3 A student who arrives late and misses registration must report to the School Office and sign in promptly. Lateness will be monitored and will be followed up accordingly.
- 7.4 Students should not leave school without permission from a member of staff. Students who need to leave school during the day (ie for an unavoidable medical appointment) should sign out, with prior agreement, at the School Office. If the student then returns to school within the same day, they must sign back in at the School Office.
- 7.5 If any student, including a Sixth Form student, becomes unwell during the school day, he must see the Welfare Officer who will decide whether it is appropriate to contact their parent/carer and ask for him to be collected. Students should never phone home and ask to be taken home without agreement from the Welfare Officer. The Welfare Officer may decide, in conjunction with Sixth Form Pastoral staff, that a Sixth Form student may be sent home even if it has not been possible to contact parents. Read also the **Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy**.



8. Punctuality

- 8.1 Poor punctuality is not acceptable, creates bad habits and can be a precursor to later disaffection and absenteeism. If a student is late for registration or classes, they miss out on important information about school and this disrupts their learning.
- 8.2 Persistent lateness by arriving after statutory registration has closed could amount to evidence of a parent failing to ensure their child attends school regularly. Students who arrive at registration after 8.40am but before the end of the session (9.05am), will be marked as late. Teaching staff and the Attendance Officer will record how many minutes late students are in arriving for registration.
- 8.3 Students arriving at school after 8.50am for whatever reason e.g. having overslept or attended an appointment, must go to the School Office to sign in. In the event of an evacuation it is imperative that there is a record that a student has arrived on site, because if they have not signed in and not arrived in class at the time of evacuation, then they may be assumed to be off site and their absence would not be missed.
- 8.4 We do recognise the difference between a student who persistently arrives late for school/lessons without good reason e.g. due to poor organisation, and a student who is occasionally and unavoidably delayed e.g. car breakdown, buses being late, ill health or family reasons.
- 8.5 It is important that in the case of ill health or family circumstances, that information is shared with the student's pastoral team. When students are persistently late the primary aim of the school is to support the parents/carers and the student by working together to identify the cause of the lateness and offer support.
- 8.6 In the first instance a member of staff will enquire into the reason why the lateness occurred. If the student is rarely late or if it is considered that there was reasonable explanation for the lateness it may be that no further action is taken other than offering advice/support.
- 8.7 Direct contact may be made with a parent/carer by a member of staff if it is felt to be appropriate to discuss the circumstances and to offer support. Students who are regularly late to registration and/or lessons (without good reason) will be sanctioned in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

9. Unplanned absences

- 9.1 Parents/carers should contact the school by phone or email on the first morning of their child's absence (preferably before 8.30 am) **and each subsequent day of absence**. Please note that the email **absence@ags.bucks.sch.uk** and phone line (01296 484545, option 1) for communicating absence, are open at all times.
- 9.2 Parents/carers should inform the school if the absence is likely to be for longer than three consecutive days.
- 9.3 Under normal circumstances parents/carers will receive a text message by 10.30am if their child is unaccounted for that day. Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this. If satisfactory medical evidence is subsequently provided we will review and amend our records.



10. Planned absences

- 10.1 If a parent/student knows in advance about a planned leave of absence of **a full day, or more**, an Absence Request form must be completed with as much notice as possible **IN ADVANCE** of the absence, or as soon as parents/carers are aware of the expected absence. Please be aware that this is a **request** for leave of absence from school and that some requests may not be authorised. Absence Request Forms are electronic and can be accessed via the school website or the MCAS parent app.
- 10.2 Leave of absence from School will only be authorised if parents/carers have informed the school of the reasons for the absence (in the case of unplanned absence as in point 9 above) or if authorised by the School.

Authorisation of planned Leave of Absence is delegated by the Headmaster as follows:

- Planned Leave of Absence of less one than day will be considered, and may be authorised, by the Attendance Officer
 - Planned Leave of Absence of one day will be considered, and may be authorised, by the Head of Year
 - Planned Leave of Absence of up to three days will be considered, and may be authorised, by the Head of Section
 - Planned Leave of Absence of over three days will be considered, and may be authorised by the Headmaster
 - All Leave of Absence applications for holiday within School term time will be considered by the Headmaster
- 10.4 Any absences for exceptional circumstances will be decided at the discretion of the Headmaster (see below).

11. Absences that are likely to be authorised and unauthorised

- 11.1 The school considers each application for term-time leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Common reasons for **authorised absence** include:
- Illness, medical/dental appointments. We ask that, wherever possible, any routine medical or dental appointments are arranged for outside of school time. In general, we would only expect to authorise absence from school for a half day for non-routine medical appointments that are booked within the School day – unless there are exceptional circumstances which should be communicated to the Head of Year
 - Funerals (within reason), driving tests, moving house (1 day), university visits and interviews
 - Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart. **Up to three days for this purpose over the School year is permitted.** Additional absences for Religious observance are likely to be unauthorised
 - Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision.
- 11.2 **Headteachers may not grant leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.** The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are where requests are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. See point 5 relating to the legislation.



- There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday. Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents/carers to help us by not taking children away in school time. **If holiday leave is taken without the school's prior approval, this may be viewed as undermining the good order and discipline of the school and could be referred to the County Attendance Team.** Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education and the School will take no responsibility for missed education during unauthorised holiday.

2. ACCESS TO SCHOOL PREMISES

Schools are private places and as such access to the School site is restricted for safety purposes. **The School is locked at 5.30pm each day.** After this time it is not possible for parents or students to gain access to the School to collect items that may have been forgotten.

Equally, it is not possible to gain access to the School at the weekend. The external gates to the School are controlled access points and will be locked in the evening and at weekends.

Some parts of the School are let to outside agencies in the evenings and at weekends. Therefore some gates may be accessible to gain entry to the site. However, this does not entitle unauthorised access to the School buildings.

Students should not be on the School site before 7.30am on a normal weekday

There is no vehicle access for parents/carers to pick up or drop off students. Please arrange to do this away from the School site.

3. ASTHMA INHALERS, EPIPENS & ALL OTHER MEDICATION

Please read the **Supporting Students with Medical Needs Policy** (available on the School website) for further information.

If your child needs to use either an asthma inhaler or an Epipen parents/carers should provide a spare, clearly marked with the student's name, for the Welfare Officer to keep in the event of emergency.

Parents/carers must return the 'Parental Agreement to Administer Medicine' form which can be found on the website under Parents (and then Letters and Forms), giving permission for the school to administer the Epipen, inhalers and all other medication. It is parents' responsibility to make sure that all medication is not past the use-by date.

4. AYLESBURIAN ANNUAL FUND

It might surprise you to learn that Aylesbury Grammar School remains one of the lowest funded schools in Buckinghamshire. The Aylesburian Annual Fund has been set up to provide essential additional income for our School. The Fund enables us to make essential improvements to our School site, and to provide an uncompromised curriculum and life-enriching opportunities for our students, that are not possible from the School's current income. It is never used to 'top-up' the School's budget.



Current Department of Education funding just about covers our basic operating costs through efficient financial management, but we have been on this site for over century and many of our learning and teaching spaces now need our attention. We have a detailed School Development Plan but there are no funds available within our budget to update, refurbish and develop our School site and so this is where you come in! A regular donation of an affordable amount every month will have a tremendous impact and most importantly every student will benefit.

For further details please contact Alison Cox, Development Director. Email acox@ags.bucks.sch.uk or Phone 01296 480276 Online – <https://alumni.ags.bucks.sch.uk/supportus>

5. AYLESBURY HIGH SCHOOL

We enjoy a close collaborative relationship with Aylesbury High School, located next door to AGS on Walton Road. From time to time, students from AGS and AHS visit each other's schools for activities, such as music/drama rehearsals, debating, and other clubs, both during and outside the normal school day.

We encourage students to take part in organised activities for which they have the school's permission. During the school day, students must sign out before they leave AGS, make their own way directly to the activity at AHS, and return directly to the Grammar School and sign in, in good time for lessons. Students must accept the authority of both AHS and AGS staff whilst at AHS. For activities outside the school day there is no need to sign out or to return to School.

Parents/carers who **do not** wish their child to take part in such activities should write directly to the Headmaster.

6. BAD WEATHER ARRANGEMENTS

If there are heavy falls of snow during the winter months we try to keep the school open. This decision is based upon the safety of the site and the routes into School for students and staff. One consideration is the impact on home to school transport.

We will aim to make an early decision if we are to close the school for a day and we will make an announcement via the Buckinghamshire Council School Closures webpage as well as on the School website. Further information will be communicated via the appropriate official channels.

If there is no message or confirmation via Buckinghamshire Council or the School website, then the School is open. We liaise with Aylesbury High School and Sir Henry Floyd Grammar School as all three Schools share transport for students.

7. BUSES

All matters relating to school transport are handled by Buckinghamshire Council (BC). Please visit their website for all up to date information and contacts:

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools-index/school-transport/>

If a student loses their school bus pass (or mobile phone as most bus passes are displayed and checked electronically via phones) they can obtain a temporary pass from the School Office which can be used for a maximum of five school days whilst parents/carers contact BC for a replacement. Temporary passes cannot be issued back-to-back so an official replacement pass must be sourced immediately. BC will charge for replacement passes.



In the first instance any problems in connection with school transport should be referred to Admissions and School Transport Team, Buckinghamshire Council, County Hall, Aylesbury HP20 1UZ.

Here is a useful list of frequently asked questions regarding Council School transport:

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools-index/school-transport/school-transport-frequently-asked-questions/>

Bus Drivers may and do refuse carriage to students with no pass. If your child misses their bus they will need to contact you to make alternative arrangements. If they do not have a mobile phone, they can ask to use a phone in the School Office.

Behavioural expectations on the bus are the same as in school. Poor or anti-social behaviour is likely to result in school sanctions and could result in the child's losing their place on the bus.

Please see the **Behaviour Policy** for more information.

8. CARS

Our School Travel Plan aims to:

- Encourage healthy ways of getting to and from school e.g. walking and cycling
- Encourage use of sustainable modes of transport
- Reduce the number of car journeys to and from the school

These targets are monitored annually. Meeting the third target is a requirement for all Planning Applications to extend or alter the school buildings.

Due to the limited car parking space and congested side streets, students cannot bring cars or motorbikes to school without special permission from the Head of Year 13.

Parents must not drop off or pick up their child(ren) on the school site for safety reasons. The exception to this rule are when the student is unwell or incapacitated and contact has been made specifically asking for the child to be collected from school.

Students and parents should not use the Wynne Jones Centre to drop off or pick up students or park even for short periods, as it is private property and not a public right of way. The Probation Office is situated there, and the manager is concerned for the safety of our students outside this Office.

Parking can be difficult in the evenings at some school functions. Usually the playground is available for parking and cars can be parked in Turnfurlong although parking restrictions are in force along sections of the road. In any case, please allow plenty of time for parking – our meetings usually start promptly at the time stated. **Please do not wait or park in such a way that vehicles behind you will be in the marked “No Parking” zone outside the main entrance.** It is an offence to stop on the yellow zigzag lines in Walton Road outside the school entrance. Please do NOT park at any time in the designated space for staff who come and go regularly.

9. CYCLING TO SCHOOL

Please write to the Premises team to request a form if your child intends to cycle to school. Students may bring bikes to school and leave them in the fenced off area beside the House. All bikes left on school property must be locked. The lock must be provided by the student, and the only type we recommend is a Shacklelock or D lock.



Please note that we cannot be responsible for loss of, or damage to, bicycles or other property at school. We expect students to wear a helmet when cycling to and from school. Cycles must be properly lit for riding in the dark. **Students must dismount on school premises.**

10. CHANGE OF ADDRESS

It is important in case of any emergency to be able to make immediate contact with parents/carers. Please let the School Office know immediately of any change in address, home, work, and mobile telephone numbers, email addresses or personal circumstances. office@ags.bucks.sch.uk

11. COMMUNICATIONS TO PARENTS/CARERS

All day-to-day communications will be posted on the 'My Child At School' MCAS app. It is essential for all parents/carers to ensure they can access the app. Details on how to download it and login for the first time will be sent out to all new entrants to the School or are available to be requested from the IT Team: ithelp@ags.bucks.sch.uk

The MCAS app also includes various pieces of useful information to assist parents/carers in being connected to the School such as; Timetables, attendance, rewards & sanctions, staff email contacts and much more.

News items are sent out via the Headmaster's weekly bulletin and termly newsletter, 'Flourish'. Every Friday afternoon parents/carers will also receive a weekly news update via email which will signpost new and important messages from the previous week to be accessed again via the MCAS app.

If at any time you are having difficulties accessing School communications please do check that your email address is set up to receive them. Often parents/carers will use a work related email address as they check that most regularly but sometimes companies will restrict incoming email traffic so please ensure any addresses ending in @ags.bucks.sch.uk are authorised. If messages are still not arriving please contact our IT Team and they will be able to assist you: ithelp@ags.bucks.sch.uk

12. CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

The School's policy is to work as closely with parents/carers as possible and, when we have concerns, we will email, telephone or invite you in for a meeting. If you have concerns, we want you to feel that you can contact us. If you wish to have a face-to-face meeting with a member of staff, please arrange this in advance by email or phone call, as teachers, by the nature of their job, are not generally available if you arrive unannounced.

If contacting members of the School staff via email you should expect a response within a **two working day period**. For example, for an email sent on a Friday afternoon/evening please do not expect a response until the next Wednesday morning at the latest. This initial response may well be a holding email to acknowledge your contact with the school, especially if more information is required to answer your question/concern. You will then be informed by the member of staff dealing with your communication the timescale for provision of the precise response required.



School staff are not expected to read or respond to emails during evenings, weekends or school holidays so please be aware and considerate of this when making contact. Please ensure that all communication with the school is of the appropriate tone conducive to resolving the concern or query being raised as quickly and efficiently as possible. **Any communication deemed to be abusive or defamatory will not be responded to and will be referred to and dealt with by the appropriate senior member of staff.**

For most issues you should contact:

Issue	Initial Contact
Specific subjects (including homework and coursework issues)	Subject teacher
Personal relationships (including bullying) and personal belongings	Form Tutor
Issues to do with general academic progress	Form Tutor
Requests for absence	Head of Year via the electronic form on the School website
Absence	School Office
Travel to and from school	Buckinghamshire Council school transport section for all issues concerning fares, routes, travel passes, conduct of bus drivers and condition of vehicles (01296 383250) Form Tutor for issues of poor student behaviour only
Educational visits and extra-curricular activities	The member of staff leading the visit or the staff member responsible for the activity
Requests to take or not to take specific examinations	Headmaster
Sanctions	The member of staff who issued the sanction.
Behaviour	Form Tutor or Head of Year
Participation in school life (e.g. extra-curricular activities)	Form Tutor or Head of House
Complaint against a member of staff	Headmaster

If an issue remains unresolved, parents may take the matter up with the next person in the chain as shown below. This should be done by letter or email.

Subject issues including progress and subject specific sanctions (e.g. private detention):

Subject teacher → Head of Department → Senior Team Leader → Headmaster.

Pastoral issues including relationships, options, absences, school sanctions (e.g. school detention):

Tutor → Head of Year → Head of Section → Headmaster.



While a student is under the jurisdiction of the school, the law is that the Headmaster's decision on most issues is final. Issues on which the Headmaster has the final decision include:

- the curriculum
- standards of behaviour and appearance
- rewards
- sanctions

On some issues the parents' decision is final. These are:

- withdrawal from religious education
- withdrawal from collective worship
- withdrawal from some aspects of sex and relationships education

On some issues there is a formal appeal process. Please refer to the School's Complaints Procedure on the website.

13. DETENTIONS

In the rare event of a student being given a detention after school, an email will be sent home giving at least 24 hours' notice and the reason for the detention. A Department detention is given by staff/departments for less grave issues. A School detention (Fridays for one hour) or a Senior Leadership Team (SLT) detention (Wednesdays for two hours) are given for more serious or persistent offences. Please do acknowledge receipt of the email communications. It may be necessary for parents/carers to make special arrangements for students to get home. Detention is usually for one hour and will end no later than 4.35pm. An SLT two-hour detention will end no later than 5.35pm.

For very serious offences, including truancy, students may have to serve an internal isolation or fixed term exclusion sanction. A letter will be sent to parents/carers about this if it occurs.

14. DATA PROTECTION

Aylesbury Grammar School processes personal data about its students and is a "data controller" in respect of this for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018. It processes data to:

- Support student learning
- Monitor and report on student progress
- Provide appropriate pastoral care
- Protect student welfare
- Assess the quality of our services
- Administer admissions waiting lists
- Carry out research
- Comply with the law regarding data sharing

Personal data that we may collect, use, store and share (when appropriate) about students includes, but is not restricted to; Contact details, national curriculum assessment results, attendance information and characteristics such as ethnic group, special educational needs and any relevant medical information.



A “Privacy Notice” for both parents and a simplified one for students can be found in the policies section on our web site under ‘about’. It gives more details of why we collect the data and to whom we are able to disclose data. The notice also includes details of a data subject’s rights under the Data Protection Act. Most of the data we hold relates to students who are the data subject. The guidance from the Information Commissioner’s Office is that by around the age of 12, a child has sufficient maturity to understand their rights and to make an access request themselves if they wish. A parent would normally be expected to make a request on a child’s behalf if the child is younger.

If you have any questions, concerns or would like more information about anything mentioned in this privacy notice, please contact, in the first instance our data protection lead officer:

- email dpo@ags.bucks.sch.uk Telephone 01296 480242

15. EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENTS

The legal position on students taking paid work is as follows:

- Under 14 – paid work is not allowed.
- Under 16 – a maximum of 12 hours paid work a week is allowed, and it is necessary to fill in an LA form and seek the permission of the school before taking a job. Employers should insist on receiving this form if they are not to break the law. We would not encourage any student to engage in paid work for as much as 12 hours per week.
- 16 or over – permission is not required. However, there is a clear link between spending too much time in paid work and under-achievement in examination results. Those students who have paid work on weekday evenings or all weekend, which does not leave them sufficient time or energy to complete homework satisfactorily, will inevitably underachieve. Parents/carers need to monitor and regulate their child’s involvement in paid work. The school’s recommendation is no more than one evening per week and one day at the weekend.

16. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The school arranges many educational visits and activities, both during and outside normal school hours. All visits are subject to stringent risk assessment procedures and approval by the Educational Visits Coordinator and the Headmaster. Major visits are subject to additional approval by the Chairman of Governors and in some cases the Buckinghamshire Council.

Appropriate insurance for the visit is arranged by the school but parents/carers are able to take out additional insurance if they wish.

Urgent medical treatment may be needed in circumstances in which it is not possible to contact a parent/carer. In such circumstances the teacher in charge of the visit will give consent, unless parents/carers have written to the Headmaster to the contrary.

Voluntary Contributions for School Visits and Activities

The school is permitted to charge for visits that are held outside school hours and/or do not form part of the specification for a public exam or as part of the Curriculum. Such visits are regarded as optional extras.



No compulsory charge can be made for activities and visits in respect of education provided during school hours or which are not optional. The school would, however, not be able to organise such visits and activities without the support of parental voluntary contributions. The school is, therefore, allowed to ask for voluntary contributions to cover certain costs. The minimum amount needed to cover the cost is requested. We calculate the amount based on an assumption that all parents will contribute. If we do not receive enough voluntary contributions for a visit or activity the likelihood is that it will be cancelled.

In cases of financial difficulty parents are asked to write to the Headmaster in confidence for assistance, since the school has a small fund for such circumstances. Where appropriate depending upon the nature of the visit/activity, students in receipt of Pupil Premium funding would have their total, or part of their financial contribution paid from those funds. Parents/carers should check with the organising member of staff if there are any queries to be made in this regard.

17. FOOD

The Dining Hall operates on a cashless system via ParentPay and provides healthy breakfasts, snacks at morning break, and hot and cold lunches available to all students and staff on a cafeteria system with items of food individually priced. A typical meal would be about £3.50. In addition, for Sixth Formers only, the caterer provides snacks and light lunches in the Sixth Form Common Room.

Students in Years 7 to 11 can bring sandwiches or have a lunch in the school Dining Hall.

In Year 11, students are allowed to leave school on one lunchtime each week as a privilege, if the Head of Year so decides. Sixth Form students are allowed out of school every lunchtime but are welcome to use the Common Room or Dining Hall.

Should a student forget their packed lunch, parents can bring it in and leave it at the school office. Parents should make it clear to their child(ren) that, if they forget their packed lunch, they should go to the school office to see if it has been brought in, as it is not feasible for the lunch to be taken to them.

If you think your child may be entitled to **free school meals**, please download an application form from the **School Website under 'Parents, Letters and Forms'**. This explains the criteria for eligibility and the documentary evidence needed to support an application. We would strongly encourage any family eligible to take up their entitlement.

18. HEALTH & SAFETY

As well as providing a safe environment to learn, it is expected that all students will comply with the behaviour, uniform and wider safety procedures of the School.

Every student is expected to:

- exercise personal responsibility for safety of themselves and other members of the school community
- observe standards of dress consistent with safety and/or hygiene
- use and not wilfully misuse, neglect or interfere with things provided for his safety
- not bring prohibited items to school, for example; Offensive weapons, fireworks, tobacco products, drugs, vaping products, pornography, matches, lighters or other means of ignition, chewing gum



19. HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT

The Home School Agreement document summarises the support that school and family can give each other in a student's education. It is an agreement between parents/carers, school and student which is agreed to upon joining the School roll. **A copy of the current Home School agreement can be found at the end of this handbook and is always available via the MCAS parent/carer app.**

20. HOME LEARNING (HOMEWORK)

Home learning is an important factor in supporting the development of learning and character – [The AGS Learner](#)

Tasks should enable students to embed, improve, develop, extend or apply their learning. All home learning tasks will be posted online, using Google Classroom and students are informed, in-class, of the tasks set. Parents/carers have access to Google Classroom and are able to monitor and support their children appropriately – parental encouragement is very beneficial. Where no task has been set for a subject, students are encouraged to complete additional reading or related enrichment to develop their understanding and strengthen their learning.

For further information please read the **Learning and Teaching Policy** – see section 30 on School Policies

21. HOUSES

There are six Houses, with colours as follows:

Denson - light blue
Hampden – green
Lee – yellow
Paterson – purple
Phillips – red,
Ridley - dark blue.



Each has a Head of House drawn from the teaching staff.

Each House consists of seven tutor groups – one from each of the year groups in the school. Normally a student stays in the same tutor group (and therefore the same House) throughout their entire time at the school. The Houses meet for assembly led by their Head of House every week. In year 7 the tutor group is also the main teaching group, but throughout the whole school the tutor group and the House are an important part of the pastoral system. Competitions between the Houses are keenly fought, and lead to the annual award of the Brodie Trophy (for sports competitions) and the Watson Trophy (for non-sports competitions).

The Head of House is likely to counsel students for university entrance (UCAS) and advise on their suitability in Year 12 and 13 for prefect status. There are many opportunities for leadership at all ages within the House, culminating in the three Head Boys of House in the Sixth Form.



Allocation to Houses

Parents who have a family connection with a House may request that their child is allocated to the same House. We try to comply with such requests, but students entering after year 7 may find the House is already full. To encourage students to make a wide circle of friends, we allocate students from the same primary school to different Houses, as much as possible. It will therefore not be possible to consider requests for students to be put into the same House but would be possible to consider requests for them to be put into different Houses.

22. INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC LESSONS

Tuition is normally available in the following instruments:

Violin, Viola, Cello, Double bass, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Saxophone, Bassoon, Trumpet, French Horn, Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba, Percussion, Drums, Electric Guitar, Acoustic Guitar, Bass Guitar, Piano and singing.

Instrumental tuition is provided by private arrangement with our visiting peripatetic music staff and all matters relating to payment are handled by them directly. Payment is made for each term in advance with a term's notice required for ending the commitment. Most tutors offer individual and paired lessons depending upon the individual students and their standard/experience and aspirations. For students wishing to apply for or continue with music instrumental lessons, a letter including all the necessary contacts and current fees can be obtained from the school Finance office.

Students who have lessons at school are expected to play in one of the Ensembles when they reach the appropriate standard. A letter regarding music lessons is sent out at the start of the September term.

23. INSURANCE

The school has a privately arranged insurance policy that covers all students to participate in all educational activities on site. It covers all activities related to the education we provide with directly organised trips and travel to and from such activities. All students are covered to take part in such activities. If you would like further details on the school's insurance, please contact the school.

24. LIBRARY

The Professor William Mead Library is open during school hours on Monday - Thursday (8.00am – 5.00pm) and on Friday (8.00am – 3.00pm) The Library is staffed by a qualified Librarian and an Assistant Librarian. To borrow books, students use biometric recognition (a numerical analysis of a fingerprint – no copy of the fingerprint itself can be extracted from the system). Further information can be obtained from the Librarian.

The Library is a vibrant part of the school and students are encouraged to join book clubs and take part in other literary based activities throughout the year.



25. LOST PROPERTY

All personal items such as clothes, PE kit, chromebooks, mobile phones, money and any other valuable items are brought onto the School site at the students' own risk. Consequently, we would always strongly advise that all non-essential valuable items are left at home.

Essential items such as chromebooks and PE kits should be looked after and should only ever be left unattended on one of the designated bag racks.

Please ensure that all items of school uniform, games kit, bags etc, including shoes are clearly marked with your child's name. If your child loses anything at School please remind them that they should first look for it themselves by retracing their steps, and then go to the School Office to see if the item has been handed in. **Finally they should try the Lost Property Office**, situated at the rear of the Sixth Form House, **which is open every day (8.30am – 9.00am)**. It may take several days for an article to reach the Lost Property Office, therefore more than one visit may be necessary. If an item has been labelled there will be a notice sent via the form tutor informing the student that an item belonging to them is in the Lost Property Office awaiting collection.

All unclaimed items will be disposed of after six weeks. Valuables will be held in the Premises Office.

If the item is not found, they should then report the loss to their Form Tutor who can arrange for a notice requesting information to be read out in Assembly. We cannot undertake to investigate every such loss, since this would take teachers away from their duties of teaching.

Should the Head of Year judge that the case is one which needs investigation, appropriate steps will be taken. Frequently, however, because of the size of the school and its position in Aylesbury, such investigation could be fruitless.

26. MOBILE PHONES & DEVICES

Mobile phones may not be used during School time and on School site unless directed by a member of staff.

Sixth Form students may use phones in private study periods in Sixth Form areas, but not, unless agreed with a teacher, during or between lessons, registrations or assemblies – this includes incoming as well as outgoing messages.

Phones will be confiscated for a first offence and handed to the School Office for collection by the student at the end of that day. For a second offence, the item can be picked up by the student at the end of the day but a letter will be sent home asking for the item to not be brought into school for the next four weeks and for a third offence parents will have to collect the phone from the school at their earliest convenience.

Any emergency phone calls can be made from the School Office. Occasionally staff may permit students to use devices during a lesson, but this is at the absolute discretion of the teacher concerned.

The loss of mobile phones, music players and other mobile devices by carelessness or theft has become an increasing problem in recent years. Parents/carers and students are reminded that the school can take no responsibility for these items, and whilst anyone found to be guilty of theft is severely sanctioned, the school does not have the staffing resources to guarantee to investigate loss or possible theft.



27. MONEY & VALUABLES

There is little day-to-day need to bring money into school and students should never bring large amounts of cash into School. If students do carry money for a specific reason, then it must be stored securely in their zipped blazer pocket and not left in bags, and never left unattended.

Please note that students are not permitted to buy and sell items including food and drink between themselves and will receive sanctions where this is discovered.

28. PRIVATE STUDY/HOME STUDY - SIXTH FORM ONLY

All Sixth Formers will have some Private Study periods and School Study periods on their timetable. If they are to make the most of their opportunities they must learn to use Private Study time effectively. Private Study periods are not a substitute for doing work at home. Private Study periods can be spent either in the Learning Centre, The Group Study Room, the Library, an available Computer Room, or the Sixth Form Common Room.

If a student has an afternoon during a week where he has no timetabled lessons, they can apply for Home Study. Details will be given to your child at the start of Year 12 and Year 13 and you will be asked to sign a form to state that you agree with them having Home Study on any given afternoon.

A student on Home Study is expected to be at home and not in town or anywhere else (in which case the privilege will be withdrawn).

29. SCHOOL POLICIES

School Policies are published on the school website. To access them click on 'About' on the front page. There are numerous policies, but parents' attention is particularly drawn to the following:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Assessment & Feedback Policy
- Attendance for Learning Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct for School Visits
- Curriculum Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy for Students
- Online Safety Policy
- Smoking, Alcohol & the Misuse of Drugs & Substances Policy

30. SCHOOL SHOP

The School Shop sells items of school uniform and sports team kits. Items can be ordered online via the school website <https://www.ags.bucks.sch.uk/parents/shops/> and the shop is open for students to collect their uniform on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at lunchtime (1.40pm – 2.30pm).

For all school shop enquiries please email shop@ags.bucks.sch.uk Any profits generated by the School Shop are used for the benefit of the school.



Second Hand Uniform Shop (SHU)

This is run by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and is only available at Parents' Consultation Evenings and selected PTA events/days for the sale of good quality second-hand clothing and kit. All proceeds go directly to supporting the school through the PTA. The SHU is always looking for good quality/condition used uniform items. If you have anything to donate please contact pta@ags.bucks.sch.uk or bring donated items to the School Office – thank you!

31. SIXTH FORM: 16-19 BURSARY FUND

What is the 16-19 Bursary Fund?

The fund is made available from the government through its funding body - The Education and Skills Funding Authority (ESFA) for 16-19 year olds - to provide assistance to students whose access to, or completion of, education is inhibited by financial constraints or barriers.

Please see the School Website under 'Parents, Letters and Forms', '16-19 Bursary Fund Application' for further details on how to apply.

Who is eligible to apply for 16-19 Bursary Funding at AGS?

Students following government (ESFA) funded full time or part-time courses, who are 16 years and over and satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

- Students aged at least 16 and under 19 years of age who are in care, are leaving care, are in direct receipt of Income Support or are disabled and in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance
- Students who are economically or socially disadvantaged and at risk of not taking up or continuing in their education. This group includes students with physical or other disabilities, medical conditions and/or learning difficulties
- Students who have been in care, on probation, are young or lone parents or are otherwise considered at risk
- Asylum seekers
- Refugees (who will have access to 16-19 Bursary Funding if they are in receipt of supportive evidence from DWP)

32. SPORTS TEAMS

Policy Statement:

AGS is committed to encouraging students to take part in sports, both as part of the curriculum and as part of extra-curricular activities. The school offers a full fixture list across a wide range of sports which is possible due to the enthusiasm of our students and the commitment of a number of dedicated staff who give freely of their time during the week and at weekends. Students at AGS enjoy sport and do very well in local, regional and national competitions. If students attend practices, we assume that they are available for all school fixtures and that they will put the school before other sporting commitments.

Squad members are expected to arrange work and, as far as possible, family commitments to allow them to play for the school. Clashing club fixtures must normally take a lower priority than school games, unless they are very important, backed by parental letter, and approved by the teacher in charge of the squad.



Colours for school sport are awarded to students based on the following criteria: commitment (to training and fixtures) and excellence.

Student responsibilities:

Where possible fixtures are arranged in advance and students can find these in the school calendar of events. In some cases (for example, Cup games) students will be notified of dates as soon as the fixture is known. Team lists are posted on team Google Classroom pages/Games noticeboard and students are expected to show their availability by replying/ticking their name on the team list as soon as possible. If they are unexpectedly unavailable they must also talk directly to the appropriate member of staff.

The following information is clearly given on the Team sheets and it is the students' responsibility to inform parents/carers of the necessary arrangements: meet time, departure time, venue of match, likely finishing/return time. Return times can only be an estimate since delays can happen and students are advised to contact their parents by mobile phone on the return journey. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that appropriate care is taken of valuables (for example, given to staff for safe keeping).

Staff responsibilities:

Staff who accompany sports teams will notify students well in advance about fixtures and fixture information (either in person or via the Games notice board). In the event of a match being cancelled, staff will try hard to inform parents/students either via the Games notice board, assembly notices or by phone. Staff accompanying teams are appropriately qualified (including First Aid) and carry First Aid kits. In the event of serious injury staff will contact parents/carers and will accompany the student to hospital if necessary. All students who take part in school matches are covered by the school insurance policy.

Parental responsibilities:

We welcome parents' support in encouraging their child(ren) to represent the school in school fixtures and appreciate their support at matches. However parents are reminded of appropriate conduct when attending school fixtures. Any abusive language towards any other persons present or excessive coaching from the side-lines undermining the school coaching staff is not acceptable and parents will be asked to leave the school grounds should it be deemed that their behaviour has reached this level.

Rugby:

A small but important point with regard to safety: the Rugby Football Union has made clear regulations about the kind of studs that should be worn on rugby boots. There is a difference, for safety reasons, between football and rugby studs. Most boots have interchangeable studs and we ask all students to ensure that they have the correct studs when playing in rugby matches. Students MUST wear gum shields whilst playing rugby.

Squash:

Parents/carers whose children play squash MUST provide them with eye protection and remind their child(ren) to use it. The Squash Racquets Association has made the wearing of suitable eye protection mandatory for all those taking part in the inter-regional events and beyond. However, in the interests of safety, we feel that it is compulsory sensible to extend this to all players taking part in squash at school.



33. STAYING AFTER SCHOOL

Students should normally leave the premises promptly at the end of school, unless they are involved in a school activity that takes place immediately after the end of school. Students who, exceptionally, would find it helpful to work at school while waiting for a later school activity may work in the library until 5.00pm unless the library is temporarily closed. All students not actually involved in school activities are required to have left the premises by 5.00pm.

34. STUDENT CONCERN FORM

The student concern form is an online, anonymous whistle-blowing form where students can raise concerns about any aspect of school should they wish to. They can access it from the main school logins page on the school website. This is a valuable tool in terms of supporting and safeguarding students who would otherwise potentially not speak out regarding incidents or experiences which may have upset them in and around school. Where possible we always encourage students to speak in person to school staff but in some situations students of all ages can find this tough, so the concern form bridges that gap.

All concerns raised on the form are immediately automatically emailed to three designated members of staff who are then able to act upon them swiftly and appropriately.

35. UNIFORM

We expect all students to wear school uniform to and from school, during the school day, and for most school activities, and to take a pride in their appearance, ensuring for example that ties are done up and shirts tucked in. **When a situation (injury, lost/broken items) requires the temporary wearing of a non-uniform item, parents/carers must inform the School Office as soon as possible and ideally students should also carry a note of explanation to show staff.** Students are likely to be issued sanctions for incorrect uniform where instances arise for no reasonable reason.

Students should be clean-shaven, unless an exemption has been granted for strong religious or medical reasons. **Parents/carers who seek such an exemption should write directly to the Headmaster.**

We do not dictate hairstyles, but styles that the Headmaster judges to be extreme will not be permitted. Hair should be tidy, should not be artificially coloured to an unnatural colour nor should it be dyed with extreme contrasting colours. Hair beyond shoulder length should be tied back at all times.

Nail varnish, make – up, visible tattoos, and visible piercings (even covered by a plaster) are not permitted. Discreet jewellery for religious reasons may be worn under shirts but must be removed for PE/Games. From Year 10 a single discreet signet ring may be worn. Belt buckles must always be discreet.

Students whose uniform is unsatisfactory may be sent home to remedy the situation.

All items must be labelled. Most uniform items, including name labels, can be obtained from the School.

Adjustments to uniform for individual students are made, following discussion and agreement, in line with the Equalities Act.



Everyday Wear (YEARS 7-11):

Item	Compulsory	Optional	Any Retailer	Notes
School Blazer Black with school crest on the breast pocket	Yes		Yes (see notes)	The School has researched different blazers so that the item offered is of high quality and durable. Though these are more expensive than other brands, it is envisaged that most boys will only require two/three blazers during the seven years between Year 7 and Year 13 which is less than if the blazer is a less durable brand. A School crest can be purchased individually to be sewn on a plain black blazer in an alternative brand.
School Tie Black with silver and claret stripes	Yes			
Shirt White (unpatterned)	Yes		Yes	
Pullover Black V neck pullover (plain with no logos or writing)		Yes	Yes	
Trousers Plain black	Yes		Yes	Suit style trousers. Cords, jeans, chino style and striped or patterned material are not permitted
Socks Plain black	Yes		Yes	
Shoes Black	Yes		Yes	Shoes must be lace up or slip on (velcro is acceptable). Suede shoes, boots and trainers or similar are not permitted. Shoes must be polishable. https://www.ags.bucks.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/AGS-Uniform-update-footwear-guidance-September-2022.pdf
Outdoor Coat Advised to be water/splash proof		Yes	Yes	Students should look smart when wearing outdoor dress. Leather or suede jackets or denim coats are not permitted. Hoodies are not permitted as an outdoor coat.



PE and Games (YEARS 7-11):

Item	Compulsory	Optional	Any Retailer	Notes
PE Trainers Non-marking training shoes	Yes		Yes	Please check shoes are non-marking, they should be clean for any indoor sports and activities
PE Socks Plain white	Yes		Yes	
House PE Shirt	Yes			
School PE Shorts Plain black with crest	Yes			
Games Shorts Plain black for outdoor sports	Yes		Yes (unbranded)	Games shorts should be durable for sports such as rugby
Outdoor Rugby/Football Boots	Yes		Yes	
Games Socks Claret	Yes		Yes	
Outdoor School Games Shirt	Yes			With collar (black with claret stripe on reverse)
Gum Shield	Yes		Yes	Gum shields are compulsory for Rugby. Parents will be advised separately about gum shields
Swimming Trunks Plain black	Yes		Yes	Shorts need to be mid-thigh length and tight fitting
Cricket Shirt Plain white	Yes			Summer only
Cricket Trousers	Yes		Yes	All teams representing the school play in white trousers, though for practices and games lessons, PE shorts may be worn.
Base Layers Plain black, grey or white		Yes	Yes	Base layers - top and bottom may be worn as appropriate
Water/showerproof Sports Top Plain black with School crest		Yes		Optional item for PE/Games and may be worn around School



Everyday Wear (SIXTH FORM):

Item	Compulsory	Optional	Any Retailer	Notes
School Blazer Black with school crest on the breast pocket	Yes		Yes (see notes)	<p>The School has researched different blazers so that the item offered is of high quality and durable. Though these are more expensive than other brands, it is envisaged that most boys will only require two/three blazers during the seven years between Year 7 and Year 13 which is less than if the blazer is a less durable brand.</p> <p>A School crest can be purchased individually to be sewn on a plain black blazer in an alternative brand.</p>
School Tie Black with silver and claret stripes	Yes			
Colours/Honours/Learning Honours Tie Claret with silver stripes Black with silver stripes Silver with black stripes		Yes		Special ties are presented by the school to those who are awarded their Colours in any main school game (Claret with Silver stripes), Honours (black with silver stripes), and Learning Honours (Silver with black stripes).
Shirt Plain single colour (unpatterned)	Yes		Yes	
Pullover Plain single colour V-neck pullover (plain with no logos or writing)		Yes	Yes	
Trousers Plain black	Yes		Yes	Suit style. Cords, chinos, jeans type and striped or patterned material are not permitted
Socks Plain black	Yes		Yes	
Shoes Black	Yes		Yes	Shoes must be lace up or slip on. Suede shoes and trainers or similar are not permitted. Shoes must be polishable. https://www.ags.bucks.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/AGS-Uniform-update-footwear-guidance-September-2022.pdf
Outdoor Coat Advised to be water/splash proof		Yes	Yes	Students should look smart when wearing outdoor dress. Leather or suede jackets or denim coats are not permitted.



PE and Games (SIXTH FORM):

Item	Compulsory	Optional	Any Retailer	Notes
Trainers Non-marking gym training shoes	Yes		Yes	Please check shoes are non-marking, they should be clean for any indoor sports and activities
Sixth Form Games T-Shirt	Yes			Plain black sports t-shirt with AGS crest.
Sixth Form Games Shorts Plain black	Yes		Yes	Games shorts should be durable and suitable for the sport being undertaken Plain black sports shorts with discrete, minimal branding may be worn For former Year 11 students of AGS can make use of PE/Games shorts and this is advisable
Sixth Form Games Socks	Yes		Yes	Outdoor sports - claret football/rugby socks to be worn when competing Indoor sports socks For former Year 11 students of AGS can make use of PE/Games socks and this is advisable
Outdoor Rugby/Football Boots	Yes		Yes	
¼ Zip Mid-Layer Plain black		Yes		Plain black ¼ Zip Mid-Layer with AGS crest.
Tracksuit bottoms Plain black		Yes	Yes	Plain black tracksuit bottoms (cotton/fleece lined jogging bottoms are not permitted) Plain black tracksuit bottoms with discrete, minimal branding may be worn
Base Layers Plain black, grey or white		Yes	Yes	Base layers - top and bottom may be worn as appropriate
Water/showerproof Sports Top Plain black with School crest		Yes		Optional item for Sixth Form Games and may be worn around School



AYLESBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Founded 1598