

Alderwasley Hall School Attendance Policy

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Related Policies and Guidance Documents	This policy to be read in conjunction with <u>Senad Attendance Policy 715</u>
Related Regulations	
Annexes and Supplementary Info	Appendix A – Part-time timetable request Appendix B – Request for student absence
Policy Owner	Bernardo Vega
Document History	
Date	Revisions
July 2025	Reviewed – unknown changes
August 2026	P4 Attendance monitoring and actions around attendance 2 nd paragraph Attendance Champion removed, and sentence reworded

Alderwasley Hall School – Attendance Policy

Attendance Policy

This Attendance Policy should be read in conjunction with the SENAD Group Attendance Policy (Policy 715). This policy also acknowledges latest guidance from the Department for Education. Our expectation for all students is the highest possible attendance.

All staff will consistently promote the expectation that all students will attend 100% of education days that they are able/expected to attend.

Context of Alderwasley Hall School and Sixth Form

The young people who attend our school have a variety of complex needs, which affects their school attendance. In addition to their diagnoses, many of our students have poor sleep patterns, travel long distances or have difficulty with organisational skills, all of which affect their ability to arrive at the expected start of the school day. In those cases, agreeing initially to a later start means we can facilitate better attendance. Students then work throughout their time at Alderwasley Hall School and Sixth Form to improve on the issues mentioned above, usually reaching the ability to start the school day at standard times by the time they transition to mainstream placements, if not before. Student's anxiety or mental health concerns can cause lower attendance and part-time timetables can be an effective strategy to re-engage and encourage attendance. Anxiety is unpredictable and can be affected by many factors (external events, changes to staffing, setting or curriculum etc.) and students may not always be able to continue to follow a timetable which has previously been successful, therefore ongoing monitoring and flexibility is vital.

Over 70% of our students have a history of poor or non-attendance at previous schools. 30% had spent a year or more not attending school prior to their start at Alderwasley Hall School and Sixth Form. Although we strive to work in partnership with students and their families towards the goal of 100% attendance, we recognise that this needs to be differentiated to meet the ongoing needs of individual students. Each young person's attendance is carefully monitored and any concerns are discussed and strategies put in place to reduce absence to the possible minimum.

All staff will consistently promote the expectation that all students will attend all days that they are able.

Attendance Registers

Registers will be taken at the start of registration and in every lesson thereafter on Compass. In the event of any IT system failure, a blank paper register will be provided which must be completed and returned to the Wellbeing Officer for the site. The usual first session for students on full time timetables will be 09:00.

The legal morning register will be completed by the pastoral teacher (or a delegated representative); the legal afternoon register by the teacher (or delegated representative) of period 4 for that group of students.

Registers will be initially completed within 10 minutes of the session start time. Registers are a legal document and must accurately reflect the students' attendance to school, and the reason for absence of those absent.

The legal registers will close 30 minutes after 08:45 (9.15 AM) and 30 minutes after 1.30 (2 PM).

If a student is absent with no explanation offered by the time the register is completed, the mark 'N' will be used which will then be altered when a reason for the absence is known. In order to do this school office staff will attempt to contact parents, carers, or the student themselves (if over 18) to find out the reason for their absence. This mark will also be used for students with an agreed late start but will be amended when they arrive.

AHS Attendance Marks	
I \	AM and PM attendance
L	Late before the close of register
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
B	Off-site educational activity (including completion of work at home in the following events: registered and DBS approved alternative provision i.e. tutors, external agency or online connection with a school lesson, attendance to a dual placement with an approved provider)
J1	Interview with prospective employer, school, college, HE provider
P	Approved supervised sporting activity
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
Authorised Absence Marks (Absence with Leave)	
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances (to only be authorised by the Headteacher) including holidays
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence for compulsory age student subject to a part-time timetable.
I	Illness (not medical check-up. If this is an anxiety-related absence, which frequently takes places for students with Autism, a note will be added to explain this within the register)
M	Medical or dental appointments
E	Suspended or permanently excluded
R	Religious observance (for designated groups)
S	Study leave for year 11/12/13 students
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes (a mobile child of no fixed abode)
Q	Unavoidable Cause: Unable to attend school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y codes	Unavoidable Cause: Unable to attend due to Y1 – ...normal transport not being available Y2 - ...widespread disruption to travel Y3-...part of the school being closed Y4 - ...the whole site being unexpectedly closed Y5 – ...the pupil is in criminal justice detention Y6 - ...public health guidance or law Y7-...any other unavoidable cause that affects the student, not the parent.

Unauthorised Absence Marks	
G	Holiday not authorised by the Head Teacher prior to being taken
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Unauthorised absence (we do not accept the explanation given or none has been given by 11.30 of the day of the absence despite attempts to gain it.)
U	Arrived into school after their individual registration has closed

Students who have an agreed part-time timetable should be marked for those sessions they are not expected to attend: "C2" up to Year 11 or 'X' if they are in Years 12 to 15. Post-16 students who have placements agreed at fewer than 5 full days, or who attend college for some part of their school week are not classed with having a part-time timetables and instead are referred to as PCI (Post-compulsory Individualised) timetables. The times in which the student is not expected in school due to the PCI timetable are not discussed as attendance concerns, they are fundamentally part of the placement.

The temporary mark 'N' will be used until a reason for absence is known. The deadline for the change of 'N' to the correct mark for each absence will be 11:30. The school will continue to make attempts to obtain a reason for an absence from a parents in order to mark the register correctly if this has not been provided.

Informing the School of the reason for an unexpected absence

Absences – Parents/Carers should **phone or email the school office** of the site the student attends, **before 8:30am on the day of absence**. School offices open at 8am, therefore an email may be more convenient for parents. Emails detailing unexpected absences should copy in the student's class team email address as this will help us to ensure the message is passed on to the correct team quickly.

Late arrivals - For children who arrive on site outside of their normal arrival time,

- At Lower Site: parents/carers should let us know in person or by email, or by phone at the time of the student's arrival
- At Upper Site: parents/carers **or** the student should contact the school office upon arrival

This is to ensure that we have taken responsibility for the student when on site and we can make sure students arrive safely to lessons when they arrive at the school site.

Part-time Timetables

Our expectation is that all pupils will have regular attendance. We acknowledge that in England this has been interpreted by the courts to mean attending every day that school is open for education. We also acknowledge the DfE's recommendation that sessions not attended, even on a part-time timetable, should be marked as absence.

Some students' part-time timetables will have a reduced number of days expected to attend, on usual start and finish times. Other students' agreed reduction might however be a later start time or earlier finish. Whenever this happens, the expected registration cut off time of 9.15 still

applies. Any part-time student arriving at a later expected time will have to be marked as absent on the legal register for the morning session. They will however be able to mark as attending for their sessions registers from the moment they arrive onsite. We are aware of the impact this will have on the student's legal attendance percentage. School leaders will therefore explain this situation and the context of the low percentage mark to all stakeholders (student, parents, Local Authority etc.) when discussing that student's attendance.

While we recognise the difficulties many of our students face to attend full-time due to their specific needs and circumstances, we will tirelessly work with them and their families towards full-time attendance. Any adjustments to a full-time timetable will be proposed on the correct form (Appendix A) for discussion and approval at the weekly site meeting. They will last for no more than a half term before being reviewed.

Part time timetables (as per 'Working together to improve school attendance, August 2024') will have

- Agreement of both the school and the parent the student normally lives with
- a clear ambition and be a part of the student's wider support/health/reintegration plan
- regular review dates which include the student and the parents, to ensure it is in place for only as long as necessary
- a proposed end date that takes individual circumstances into account, normally then expected to be full time, but can be extended as part of a regular review process, or in some limited case due to a long-term health condition be for a prolonged period.

The management and supervision of part-time timetables will be rigorous. Part-time timetables will be registered with the management team of each site, reviewed frequently with an aim of expansion to full-time education.

First Day Response

If a parent/carer has not been in touch with an explanation for absence by the time a young person's register closes, the school office will attempt to contact home. If, by the end of the day, it has not been possible to ascertain a reason for absence, the Wellbeing Officer will be informed. The Wellbeing Officer will then continue to attempt to contact parents. If no contact or explanation is made by parents by the end of the second day of absence, a home visit will be arranged to secure the safeguarding of the young person.

Attendance monitoring and actions around attendance

In addition to all the actions listed above, the Site Management teams for both Lower and Upper sites monitor and discuss individual attendance, with a particular focus on those students attending below 95% and students with part-time timetables. Actions are agreed and recorded in the site management meetings. This information is further discussed on a weekly basis by the Senior Management and Leadership team (SLMT), with any further actions implemented as required.

Each week the Senior School Business Support Manager creates a report which records each student's up to date cumulative attendance percent figure, and the number of sessions attended on the last 10 consecutive school days. This report is discussed and analysed by the Wellbeing officers and Assistant Heads for each site, and then presented to Safeguarding team. The Safeguarding and Attendance team meet to determine actions necessary to support student attendance where necessary, through typical attendance and

safeguarding procedures, as well as signposting wider support services where necessary for persistent and severe absence.

Each Pastoral Teacher will have one pastoral session with their group per half term where the focus is on attendance and a discussion will be held with each student in regards to their attendance, what might be affecting it and how it can be improved, including a target to work towards.

Students with over 95% attendance have half-termly attendance discussions which are congratulatory in nature, as well they receive a post-card posted home to highlight their attendance achievement. Students who improve their attendance by recording a 'personal best' also receive a post-card home to incentivise this increase in attendance.

Senior Attendance Champion and concerns about attendance

The Senior Attendance Champion at the school is

Edward Michell, Assistant Headteacher (Upper site)
email - edward.michell@senadgroup.com
phone – 01629 823364

If parents/carers have concerns about a student's attendance they should contact their key team at school. If the student is feeling anxious or struggling to attend please get in touch for support. The student's key team is the best point of first contact, but we also have Wellbeing Officers, Assistant Headteachers, Health Promotions staff as well to help students get the most they can out of school. They can be contacted by phoning the school site's office phone number for their individual contact details. The Senior Attendance Champion supports parents, students, and school staff in key teams to improve students' attendance.

Requests for Student Absence (See form Appendix B)

From September 2013 the Government introduced new regulations making it clear that Headteachers must not give approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Any requests for term time leave should be made on a Student Absence Request form and sent to the Headteacher at least 10 school days before the first date of the requested absence if possible. You must have received written authorisation before your child can be absent from school.

Parent/carers may be issued with a penalty notice fine or prosecution should leave of 5 days or more be taken which is not authorised by the Headteacher, or where repeated incidents of leave in term time for less than 5 days occur or where the unauthorised absence contributes to wider poor attendance that meets the legal threshold. Absence deemed for the reason of unauthorised leave in term time will be marked in the register with the Attendance code G.

You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.

Appendix A – Part-time timetable request/Renewal

Reduced Timetable Request

Completed by	
Student name and pastoral group	
Date	
Type of Request	• TTR (Transition Timetable Reduction) for new starters • PTT (Part-time timetable) for compulsory school age students • PCI (Post-Compulsory Individualised) for post-compulsory age students

Proposed Timetable

	Start time	Finish time
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		

Additional off-site provision (college, online etc.)

	Start time	Finish time
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		

Principal reason for reduction in timetable

Mental health needs	
Other medical/health	
Plan to improve attendance	
Other (please specify, e.g. PCI timetable)	

Additional information

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Proposed end Date			
Staff Lead on Agreement with Parents		Date	
Staff Lead on Agreement with Parents		Date	
Submitted to		Date	
Accepted/rejected		Date	

Appendix B – Request for Student Absence

You should not normally take your child on holiday in term time as it can be disruptive both to your child's education and to the School.

Absence in term time can only be authorised by the Headteacher.

A minimum of 10 days' notice is required for any request

Name of student:	
Class:	
Day/Residential:	
Name of parent requesting absence:	
Absence required from and to: (date and time)	From: To:
Reason for absence:	

Signed: _____

Date: _____

When completed please return form to:

Bernardo Vega, Headteacher

Alderwasley Hall School

Alderwasley

Belper

Derbyshire

DE56 2SR

This form will then be returned to you when authorised by the Headteacher