

# AYLESBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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Founded in 1598

## Parents' Handbook 2018-2019

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## Parents’ Handbook

When a student first joins the school, his 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 and Illness of Students

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

## Appendix 1 From Policy: Expectations

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

- Arrive on time for registration and for all lessons
- Sign in promptly at the School Office if unavoidably late
- Sign out with permission from school for acceptable reasons
- Ensure absence notes are delivered to the School Office and placed in the appropriate tray
- Speak to the Tutor or Head of Year if there is a problem which prevents regular good attendance

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

- Ensure that their child attends school regularly and is punctual
- Provide an alternative means of transport to school if the School Bus fails to arrive under reasonable weather conditions
- Telephone the school on the first and all subsequent days of absence to inform the school of their child’s absence
- Provide a written explanation of their child’s absence on his return to school, unless a phone call has been made to the school on each day of absence or unless a response has been made to an absence text from the School Office
- Refrain from taking their child(ren) on holiday during term time
- Apply to us in advance to consider any leave of absence (e.g. medical, driving tests, music exams from school using the appropriate absence request form available from the school website. Click on ‘parents’ and ‘letters and forms’ (exceptional circumstances only)

## Appendix 2 From Policy: Procedures Relating To Attendance And Absence

1. A formal electronic register must be taken daily at the start of the morning session (8.40 – 8.50 am) and at the start of period 5 (between 2.35 – 2.50 pm) in the afternoon. It is a legal requirement to register students twice a day and teachers must ensure that it is taken accurately. A class register must also be taken every lesson, preferably electronically.
2. If a student arrives late but the register is still open (until 9.30am in period 1 and until 3.00pm in period 5) 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 or other agreed person (i.e. Head of Year)
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 (Appendix 1)
4. Students should not leave school without permission. Students who need to leave school during the day (i.e. for an unavoidable medical appointment) should sign out, with prior written agreement, at the School Office. If the student then returns to school within the same day, they must sign back into school at the School Office.
5. If any student, including a Sixth Form student, becomes unwell during the school day, they must see Matron who will decide whether it is appropriate to contact their parent/carer and ask for them to be collected. Students should never phone home and ask to be taken home without agreement from Matron. Matron 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.
6. Parents/carers should contact the school by phone, via the School Office, on the first morning of a student’s absence (before 9.00 am) and each subsequent day of absence. Parents should inform the school if the absence is likely to be for longer than three consecutive days. The School Office

will text parents by midmorning on any day when a student is unaccounted for and parents are asked to respond to these texts promptly. If the absence is still not accounted for, when the student returns to school, a letter or email should be provided to explain the absence. The letter should be placed in the tray in the School Office. Emails should be sent to [absence@ags.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:absence@ags.bucks.sch.uk)

7. Absences will only be authorised if parents/carers have informed the school of the reasons for the absence or if authorised by the Head of Year, Head of Section or Headmaster.

**8. If a parent/student knows about an intended absence in advance an Absence Request form must be completed with as much notice as possible IN ADVANCE of the absence. Please see the guidelines for the completion of the Absence Request form for notice required. These forms are available from the School Office and can be downloaded from the School Website.**

9. Students whose attendance in Years 7-11 falls below 90% will be monitored by the Head of Year. For Sixth Form the percentage attendance will exclude Home Study.

10. Students whose attendance in Years 7 -11 falls below 85% will be monitored by the Head of Year but will also have been discussed with the parents and Head of Section.

11. Students whose attendance in Years 7 -11 falls below 80% (or who continue to make no improvement with progress) will be monitored by the Head of Year and the member of SLT in charge of attendance.

12. If attendance continues to cause concern, or there is no good reason for the absence, the SLT member in charge of attendance will ask for support from the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

### **Absence – clarification**

The procedure, if your son is unexpectedly absent from school, is as follows:

- Parents should telephone the school office early on the first and subsequent day(s) of their child’s illness (this can be done by leaving a message on the school answer phone)
- If all the days of absence are covered by one or more such phone calls, no further notification is required
- If not all days are covered by phone calls from you (and you have not responded to texts from the school office), further notification via email or letter will be required from you and should be sent to the school office [absence@ags.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:absence@ags.bucks.sch.uk)
- Please print your child’s name and Tutor Group at the top of any printed letters
- If no note has been brought by the Thursday of the week following the absence, the school will record this absence as unauthorised, and notify parents accordingly
- If parents receive such notification and wish to explain the absence and request the school to authorise it, they must immediately reply to the school office with an explanation of the absence

If your child is or will be absent due to illness for more than three days it is essential that you telephone the School Matron to let her know. In cases of extended absence due to ill health we can arrange for work to be set. If there is any medical reason why your child should not do PE/games, please notify your child’s games teacher requesting to be excused.

It is most important that students find out what work they have missed, immediately on their return following absences. **They must arrange to catch up as soon as possible.**

### **Permission For Leave Of Absence**

A Leave of Absence application form should be completed for any student who wishes to be away from school for any **planned** absence. Leave of Absence application forms may be downloaded from the School Website (Under ‘Parents’, ‘Letters and Forms’, ‘Application for leave of Absence Form’) or are available from the School Office.

## **Guidelines For Completing The Request For Absence Form**

The school must, by law, take a register twice a day and they must record whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. A student may only be authorised as absent if the reason is ‘unavoidable’ or has genuine compassionate reasons. Allowing any student to be absent from school without an acceptable reason is against the law. Different codes are used to explain the absence of a student and this is why information about the cause of each absence is required.

### **Absences Authorised By The School**

Although parents/carers will know about and agree to these absences from lessons, additional parental action is not required to authorise these absences. In the case of School Visits, parents will be asked to sign consent forms.

Examples:

- Attendance on a school trip or visit
- Agreed Home Study (Sixth Form only)
- Agreed Exam Study Leave (Years 11 – 13 only)
- Representing the School in a sporting fixture, musical, public speaking or drama event
- Community Involvement sessions & Work Shadowing

### **Authorised Unforeseen Absence**

These should be notified to school on the day of the absence where possible via the absent child line or via email sent to the school explaining the absence.

Examples:

- Illness
- Bereavement or other emergency family situation
- Severe disruption to transport with no possible means of getting a student to school (i.e. very heavy snow)

### **Planned Absences Which May Be Authorised**

These require the Leave of Absence form to be completed and should be submitted to the School at ideally one month in advance of the absence.

Examples of planned absences which may be authorised:

- Medical appointment which cannot be arranged outside of school hours
- Occasional care for a member of the family if a student has a known caring responsibility
- Religious holiday (guidelines are 3 days maximum)
- Visit to another school, a career related interview or audition
- Occasional extra-curricular activity which gives the student significant opportunity for personal achievement or improvement
- Attendance at a family wedding or funeral
- A Driving Test
- Probation meeting or court hearing
- University Open Days (Sixth Form only, 3 days in school time over Years 12/13)

### **Planned Absences Which Are Unlikely To Be Authorised**

Examples:

- Holidays (unless holiday is requested under exceptional circumstances in which case the Leave of Absence form should be submitted at least four weeks before the holiday time)
- Part or Full Time work which is not part of a student’s programme of study
- Leisure Activities e.g. attending sporting events
- Birthdays or similar celebrations
- Babysitting younger siblings
- Shopping
- Driving Lessons
- Persistent and regular lateness

### **Leaving The Site**

Students in Years 7 – 11 are not normally allowed out of school unsupervised, except for the privilege sometimes granted to Year 11 of leaving the site on one lunchtime a week. If exceptionally, you wish your child to leave the premises, please let your child have a letter to that effect, addressed to the Head of Year. They must sign out at reception when they leave the premises and sign in on their return. Once at school in the morning, students in Year 7 – 11 must not leave the premises. In Years 12 and 13 parents sign consent to allow their child to go off site at lunchtime or for Home Study.

## 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.

## 3. Asthma Inhalers, Epipens And 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 should provide a spare, clearly marked with the student’s name, for Matron to keep in the event of emergency.

Parents 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

Our Aylesburian Annual Fund offers an opportunity for every member of the Aylesbury Grammar School community, especially parents, to support both current and future students. Through regular gifts via a Standing Order to the fund you can help AGS accomplish a range of projects, which will vary from year to year, that urgently need our attention and enrich the educational experience for every student at Aylesbury Grammar School. Our goal is to continue to invest in every aspect of School life, delivering the highest standard of education to every student in the School, and any contribution you can make to the Aylesburian Annual Fund will make this possible. It is especially powerful because, if we raise sufficient funds, your contributions will go to work within the academic year. Our aim is for parents to contribute if they can and every gift, at any level, will have an impact. For further details please contact Alison Cox, Development Director, on 01296 480276 or [acox@ags.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:acox@ags.bucks.sch.uk). Thank you.

## 5. Aylesbury High School

From time to time, students from AGS and AHS (which is located on the opposite side of Turnfurlong) visit each other’s schools for joint activities, such as music, drama, rehearsals, debates, and clubs, both during the school day and outside it.

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 the High School, and return directly to the Grammar School and sign in, in good time for lessons. Students must accept the authority of both High School and Grammar School staff whilst at the High School. For activities outside the school day there is no need to sign out or to return to school.

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

## 6. Bad Weather Arrangements

If there are heavy falls of snow during the winter 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 County Council School Closures webpage as well as on the School website. Further information will be communication via the appropriate official channels.

If there is no message or confirmation via Buckinghamshire County Council or the School website, 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. Bicycles

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 to 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.**

## 8. Buses

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

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/education/school-transport/>

If a student loses their bus pass 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 BCC for a replacement. Temporary passes cannot be issued back to back so an official replacement pass must be sourced immediately. BCC 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 County Council, County Hall, Aylesbury HP20 1UZ.

Bus Drivers may and do refuse carriage to students with no pass. Misuse of bus passes (including defacement, transfer to any other student or use beyond expiry date) may result in their withdrawal, as will misbehaviour on buses or in the bus park. If your child misses their bus they will need to phone you to make 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. Please see the behaviour policy for more information.

## 9. 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 exceptions to this rule are when the student is incapacitated, or after 4.15pm.

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.

## 10. Change of Address

It is important in case of any emergency to be able to make immediate contact with parents. Please let the School Office know immediately of any change in address, home, work, and mobile telephone numbers, e-mail addresses or personal circumstances.

## 11. Contacting the School

The School’s policy is to work as closely with parents 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 letter, 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, but 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	Tutor
Issues to do with general academic progress	Tutor
Requests for absence	Head of Year using the downloadable form on the website
Absence	School Office
Travel to and from school	Bucks County Council school transport section for all issues concerning fares, routes, travel passes, conduct of bus drivers and condition of vehicles (01296 383250) Tutor for issues of poor student behaviour <i>only</i>
Educational visits and extra-curricular activities	The teacher leading the trip or the staff member responsible for the activity
Requests to take or not to take specific examinations	Headmaster
Sanctions	The teacher who gave the sanction.
Behaviour	Head of Year
Participation in school life (e.g. extra-curricular activities)	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 e-mail.

**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 education

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

## 12. Detention

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 yellow department detention is given by staff/departments for less grave issues. A red detention (Fridays for one hour) or a Senior Leadership Team (SLT) detention (two hours) are given for more serious or persistent offences. Please do acknowledge receipt of the email communications. It may be necessary for parents to make special arrangements for students to get home. Detention is usually for one hour, and will end no later than 4.35 p.m. An SLT two hour detention will end no later than 5.35pm.

For very serious offences, including truancy, students may have to serve a detention on a Merit Holiday (when other students are not required at School). A letter will be sent to parents about this if it occurs.

## 13. 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](mailto:dpo@ags.bucks.sch.uk) Telephone 01296 480242

## 14. 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 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.

## 15. 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 Co-ordinator and the Headmaster. Major visits are subject to additional approval by the Chairman of Governors and in some cases the County Council.

Appropriate insurance for the visit is arranged by the school but parents 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. In such circumstances the teacher in charge of the visit will give consent, unless parents 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 National 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.

## 16. 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 £3.00. 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, have a lunch in the school Dining Hall, or (with written parental permission at the start of the year) go home for lunch. They are not allowed off site at lunchtime without permission.

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.

## 17. Health and 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
- to observe standards of dress consistent with safety and/or hygiene
- to use and not wilfully misuse, neglect or interfere with things provided for his safety
- to not bring unsuitable items to school, for example offensive weapons, fireworks, tobacco products, drugs, pornography, matches, lighters or other means of ignition

## 18. Home School Agreement

This summarises the support that school and family can give each other in a student’s education. It is an agreement between parent, school and student. **A copy of the current home-school agreement document can be found at the end of this handbook**

## 19. Home Learning

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 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 to develop their understanding and strengthen their learning.

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

## 20. 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 his entire time at the school. The Houses meet for assembly led by their Head of House every week. In years 7 and 8 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 Head Boy and the Deputy Head Boys in each 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.

## 21. 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.

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.

## 22. Insurance

The school has a privately arranged insurance policy with Zurich Insurance plc 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.

## 23. Letters to Parents and General Communications

At the start of each term parents will receive a copy of the Headmaster’s Letter to Parents. This will be sent via email on the Weekly News email to parents. Any parent wishing to receive a hard copy should contact the School Office.

All day to day communications will be posted on the school’s Parent Portal (the mobile device version of the parent portal is the iSAMS Parent app). Via the portal/app parents can view various pieces of useful information such as: their child’s timetable, attendance, rewards and sanctions and much more.

News items are also posted throughout the week to be viewed at any time but on a Friday afternoon parents will receive the Weekly News email. This will contain a list of all the news items, letters etc. which have been posted over the previous week. These news items, letters etc. are automatically stored for future reference.

The School Newsletter is produced quarterly each academic year and will be sent electronically unless you have stated that you wish to receive a paper copy.

## 24. Lockers

Lockers are available for all students. The charges are based on the year in which the student first applies for a locker. Full details of the scheme are given to parents when students join the school but are also available from the school office. Normally a student will retain the same locker throughout his time in Years 7 to 11, and then a larger locker throughout his time in the Sixth Form.

## 25. Library

The Professor William Mead Library is open during school hours 8.30am - 5pm (Monday – Thursday), 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.

## 26. Lost Property

The school offers lockers to protect personal belongings. Unfortunately, however, we can take no responsibility for personal belongings, and all clothes, PE kit, money and valuables are brought to school at the student’s own risk. As a result we would strongly advise that significant amounts of money and valuable items such as mobile phones and portable music players are left at home. Care should be taken of PE kit, which should not be left around the school, but placed in a locker or taken home.

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 impress upon 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 break time**. 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 an assembly notice informing them that an item belonging to them is in the Lost Property Office.

**All unclaimed items will be disposed of after six weeks. Valuables will be held in the Premises Office. Parents can access the Lost Property Office by prior arrangement.**

If the item is not found, they should then report the loss to their Head of Year 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.

## 27. Mobile Phones and 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 during their free time. 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 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.

## 28. Money and Valuables

Students must carry any money brought into school on their person, and should not bring large amounts of cash to school. No money or other valuable possessions should be carried or left in school bags, or left unattended in blazers. Please note that students are **not allowed** to buy and sell items including food and drink between themselves.

## 29. Private Study/Home Study for 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).

## 30. 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:

- Behaviour Policy
- Drugs Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Charging Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy

Paper copies are not distributed automatically, but can be sent via students if parents make a written request to the Office Manager.

## 31. School Shop

The School Shop sells items of school uniform and sports team kits. Items can be ordered online via the school website and the shop is open for students and parents every weekday: 14.00 – 14.30 and 15.30 – 16.00. For all school shop enquiries outside of these times, please contact a member of the school office staff: [office@ags.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:office@ags.bucks.sch.uk) Any profits generated by the School Shop are used for the benefit of the school.

### **Second Hand Uniform Shop**

This is run by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and is only available at Parents’ Consultation Evenings and selected PTA events for the sale of good quality second-hand clothing and kit. All proceeds go directly to supporting the school through the PTA.

## 32. Sixth Form 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’, ‘Sixth Form Bursary’ 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 on 31/08/18 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)

## 33. 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 the Games notice board and students are expected to show their availability by 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 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 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. We strongly recommend that students wear gum shields whilst playing rugby.

**Squash:**

Parents whose children play squash should provide them with eye protection and encourage 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 would be sensible to extend this to all players taking part in squash at school.

## 34. 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 in which case En1 is available. These venues will not be under staff supervision, and since school has finished, responsibility for the well-being of each student rests with parents, or with the student themselves for those over 18. All students not actually involved in school activities are required to have left the premises by 5.00 p.m.

## 35. 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.

## 36. Uniform

We expect 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 an injury requires the temporary wearing of a non-uniform item, students should carry a note of explanation to show teachers.

Students should be clean-shaven, unless an exemption has been granted for strong religious or medical reasons. Parents who seek such an exemption should write 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 and should not be artificially coloured. Hair beyond shoulder length should be tied back at all times. Jewellery and piercings (even covered by a plaster) are not allowed. Students whose appearance 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 Shop (see the paragraph on the School Shop). In cases of financial hardship, parents who find difficulty in providing uniform should contact the Headmaster in writing to explain the problem.

### Everyday wear

- Black blazer with school badge on the pocket
- School tie, which is black with silver and maroon stripes; a special tie is presented by the school to those who are awarded their colours in any main school game (maroon with Silver stripes) and honours (black with silver stripes)
- White shirt (unpatterned); in the Sixth Form only plain shirts are allowed (still unpatterned)
- Black V neck pullover if desired; in the Sixth Form plain colours are also allowed (still V-neck)
- Plain trousers in black flannel, worsted or Terylene. Cords, jeans type and striped or patterned material are not permitted
- Plain black socks
- Black shoes, lace up or slip on. Suede shoes, boots and trainers or similar are not permitted
- Coats should be in plain colours without logos, so that students look smart when wearing outdoor dress.

### Games and PE

Students may not take part in PE and games without proper kit, including footwear. Failure to bring it will incur sanction from PE teachers.

- Pair of strong white gym or training shoes (black soles are unsuitable)
- Socks (plain white ankle socks)
- House PE shirt
- Shorts (plain black)
- Pair of strong black shorts for outside sports
- Pair of rugby boots
- Games socks (maroon)
- Rugby football jersey, with collar (black with maroon stripe on reverse)
- Swimming trunks (plain black)
- (Summer only) White cricket shirt and socks - cricket boots are optional
- (Summer only) Cricket trousers: all teams representing the school play in white trousers, though for practices and games lessons, grey trousers may be worn

### Games (optional)

- Sweat shirt and jogging trousers; the recommended sweatshirt is black with school crest, with matching jogging bottoms (black with elastic waist)
- Training tops; the recommended style is black with AGS letters on back

**APPENDIX 1:**

**AYLESBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

**NAME OF STUDENT** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home–School Agreement**

This agreement sets out how parents/carers, students and the school can work together to support the welfare of and achieve the best outcomes for every student at AGS. Please retain one copy, and return the other signed copy to the school office. Additional guidance for parents is contained in the Parents’ Handbook (available on the AGS website). This agreement should be used in conjunction with other policies, including the ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

	PARENT/CARER COMMITMENT	STUDENT COMMITMENT	SCHOOL COMMITMENT
<b><u>Attendance</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure my child’s punctuality and full attendance at school, with the correct uniform and equipment.</li> <li>Follow the procedures for planned absences of more than half a day as set out in the Attendance Policy and in the Parents’ Handbook.</li> <li>Avoid taking holidays or making appointments during term time.</li> </ul> <p>Submit Absence Request Forms for planned absences in advance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wear complete school uniform at all times, including to and from school, arrive punctually and bring all necessary equipment.</li> <li>Achieve full attendance.</li> <li>Catch up with all missed work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide clear policies and ensure they are adhered to.</li> <li>Contact parents/carers if there are problems concerning punctuality or attendance.</li> <li>Notify parents/carers in advance of holiday dates as determined by the school.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Behaviour</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully support the school’s application of its Behaviour Policy and other expectations, so there is consistency between home and school.</li> <li>Reinforce the importance of respectful relationships in school and in the community and of respect for property and the environment.</li> <li>Show respect for the School and the staff and not bring the School into disrepute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Behave considerately and appropriately at all times, both in and out of school, including on home/school transport and during extracurricular activities.</li> <li>Show respect for other people, and for property and the environment, both in and out of school and not bring the School into disrepute.</li> <li>To use the school’s facilities responsibly, in accordance with the school’s expectations (including the school’s rules on the use of IT and the internet)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide clear, firm and fair discipline within the Behaviour Policy.</li> <li>Encourage good behaviour through; example; Personal, Social, Citizenship, Health and Enterprise Education; the pastoral system.; the Anti-Bullying Policy; praise and recognition of contributions</li> </ul>
<b><u>Studies</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the learning character development of my child through the AGS Learner focus; attend information evenings and keep up to date with the AGS Learner information on the School website.</li> <li>Support my child in their learning, including providing a suitable environment in which homework can be done effectively.</li> <li>Ensure that sufficient time is spent on learning outside school, and check use of the student learning planner.</li> <li>Encourage high standards of work and the achievement of targets.</li> <li>Attend Parents’ Consultation Evenings for the discussion of my child’s progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage fully with the AGS Learner focus to help my learning character development.</li> <li>Work hard at home and at school to achieve my full potential in knowledge, understanding and presentation.</li> <li>Organise and prioritise my time with the help of my learning planner in order that I meet all deadlines</li> <li>Discuss my progress with my family and my teachers, from time to time, and do my best to attain my targets.</li> <li>Read my report, and discuss it with my parents/carers, and act on it where necessary.</li> <li>Act on feedback about to improve my learning and targets set</li> <li>Attend Consultation Evenings with my parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that learning tasks provide opportunities for learning character development, in line with the AGS Learner focus</li> <li>Provide a rigorous, broad and balanced curriculum to meet the needs of each student and the requirements of the National Curriculum and examination boards</li> <li>Encourage effective use of the student learning planner to improve organisation</li> <li>Set and mark homework regularly, and inform parents of any concerns about their child’s progress.</li> <li>Discuss progress with your child and set challenging but realistic targets for improvement.</li> <li>Monitor and assess your child’s progress and report this information to parents</li> </ul>

AYLESBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL – PARENTS’ HANDBOOK

	PARENT/CARER COMMITMENT	STUDENT COMMITMENT	SCHOOL COMMITMENT
<b>Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Let the school know at the earliest opportunity of any problems which may affect my child’s work, behaviour or well being.</li> <li>Communicate with the school in a courteous and cooperative manner.</li> <li>Understand that appointments with members of staff should be made in advance as they cannot usually be available for meetings without notice.</li> <li>Maintain an interest in the school and the opportunities it is providing for students eg via Newsletter, website.</li> <li>Monitor the appropriate level of paid employment or other activities that my child can successfully combine with effective progress at school.</li> <li>Permit the administration of analgesics (paracetamol) to my child if a first-aid trained staff member considers this appropriate (see below*). A separate agreement will also be signed for this.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help myself by sharing problems with teachers, parents/carers and others as appropriate, so solutions can be found to support my well-being and progress.</li> <li>If suggestions and/or action plans are made to help me progress, I need to make the effort to follow them.</li> <li>Be realistic about the time and effort I need to put in to achieve my grades.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uphold the School’s Safeguarding Policy as the safety of the children is paramount.</li> <li>To uphold all school policies which support the safety and well-being of students.</li> <li>Let parents/carers know at the earliest opportunity if there are any problems with work or behaviour.</li> <li>Provide appropriate support for students with work, social or behavioural problems.</li> <li>Provide a range of activities in and out of school time for students to participate in.</li> <li>Provide information about policies, activities and events and to enable consultation with parents/carers eg via Newsletter and website.</li> <li>Provide advice for students and their parents/carers on choices and opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage my child to take a full part in the life of the school and contact the school if they are unable to do so.</li> <li>Permit my child to attend joint activities with Aylesbury High School (see below*).</li> <li>Permit the teacher in charge of visits to give consent to emergency medical treatment if a parent cannot be contacted (see below*). A separate agreement will also be signed for this.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try a range of extra-curricular activities in and out of school</li> <li>Make the best use of the opportunities offered by the school</li> <li>Honour commitments to take part in activities and practices/rehearsals (e.g. teams, plays, concerts)</li> <li>Support my House and my School to the best of my ability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide as many additional activities as the goodwill of staff and the resources of the school will allow.</li> <li>Plan and lead visits/trips and activities to a high professional standard.</li> </ul>

\* If for any reason you do not wish to permit this, please cross through this item, sign the form, and clarify the limits of your permission in the space below the signatures.

Signatures: \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Carer) \_\_\_\_\_ (Student) \_\_\_\_\_ (Headmaster)