



ST ALBANS
SCHOOL

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Absence

We ask parents to make every effort to keep pupils' absences to a minimum. In cases of illness or unforeseen events, please telephone the Reception Office (01727 855521) on the morning of the first day and subsequent days of absence, preferably before 8.30am. You should also email your son/daughter's Tutor to inform them of the absence. On returning to School your son/daughter must produce a note to his/her Tutor, confirming his/her dates of absence and the reason for it. **This can be sent by email.**

For **planned absences** (e.g. for a special family event or a driving test) **a request must be sent together with an explanation of the reason for it to the Headmaster** by an email to LOA@st-albans.herts.sch.uk. Requests should be submitted as far in advance as possible and our agreement should be sought before any commitments are made – for example, the date of a family wedding is likely to be known several months beforehand, so we would expect a LoA (Leave of Absence) request to be received well in advance. Please remember that all pupils are expected to be available to fulfil School commitments as required on Saturdays during term time and to give these priority over other commitments: except in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, a LoA request for a Saturday should be submitted by the Friday of the preceding week, i.e. 8 days in advance, at the very latest.

For obvious reasons we ask that, where possible, **medical and dental appointments** be arranged so as not to conflict with the School day, but we realise that this can be difficult: our agreement to absences for such reasons is therefore usually readily forthcoming. As above, a Leave of Absence request should be submitted by email to LOA@st-albans.herts.sch.uk at the earliest opportunity.

Sixth Form students do not need to seek permission from the Headmaster to attend university open days or interviews; instead, they should inform the Head of Sixth Form, in writing, via email.

If your son/daughter is staying with friends or relations owing to parents being away during term time, it is very important that the School is informed and a contact name and telephone number is given.

Email Communications with School

If you need to get in touch with the School about your child, their Tutor should be your first point of contact. It is the School's policy that emails will, in usual term-time circumstances, be responded to within 24 hours of receipt. In some situations, the initial response will be to acknowledge receipt of the communication with a more detailed reply to follow once necessary conferring has taken place.

Parents are asked to remember that the majority of the School day for teaching staff is taken up by teaching and pastoral duties and, except in emergencies, communication with parents is a lower priority than teaching and support of pupils. We do not expect colleagues to read or respond to emails outside of normal



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working hours, although some colleagues may choose to do so. We ask parents to be considerate in their expectations so that teachers are not distracted from their core tasks during timetabled lessons.

Enquiries made during the weekend or School holidays may take longer as staff will not necessarily be checking their emails on a daily basis. If you need to contact the School about an urgent matter where an immediate response is needed, then it would be best to telephone Reception (01727 855521).

Exemption from Abbey Attendance

All pupils are required to attend an assembly on Monday and Friday mornings. An alternative assembly is held at these times for pupils whose faith background would make their attendance in Abbey on a twice-weekly basis uncomfortable. It normally takes the form of a talk and does not include an act of worship. It is known as 'BLR Assembly' after the BLR (Big Lecture Room) in which it is held.

If you wish your son/daughter to attend BLR Assemblies, you should write a letter to the Headmaster requesting permission to do so and stating the reason for your request. This letter should reach us before the end of the first half term at the School. Please also state whether or not you wish him/her to attend the BLR Assembly held at the time of the Carol Service. Attendance at one or other is compulsory.

There are two annual services in the Abbey at which it is expected that all pupils will be present, irrespective of whether they normally attend the BLR Assemblies, as we consider it important that these occasions bring together, without exception, the whole School community in a common purpose. These are the Remembrance Service in November and the Commemoration of Benefactors on Founders' Day, which celebrates the School and those who have contributed to its long history.

Driving and Parking

Parents are not permitted to drive onto the school site to drop off or collect their children. I am sure you will understand that for the safety and welfare of all pupils we cannot afford the volume of traffic this would involve during the School day.

Unfortunately, there is no parking available for parents on the School site unless arranged in advance when attending a meeting with staff. In these circumstances please only use the visitor bays at Aquis Court and sign in at Reception on arrival. Cars should not be parked on double yellow lines in the vicinity of the School and should always be parked in such a way as to allow other vehicles to pass easily, thus ensuring a free flow of traffic. As a School we have a responsibility to the local community and it is important for us to show consideration in this regard.

School Policies

St Albans School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and takes seriously complaints and concerns they may raise. A **Complaints Procedure** for parents is available on request. The **School Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy** is available on the School website under 'Policies'. The other policies



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listed in this area of the School website, including the **Anti-Bullying Strategy**, are available on request. These documents are reviewed and updated regularly. St Albans School gives the utmost priority to investigating allegations of bullying and has a zero tolerance approach. If a parent has concerns, then it is best to raise such concerns with their child's tutor or Head of Year as quickly as possible.

Timetable

Pupils are required to be at School for registration at 8.35am. School finishes at 4.00pm but on Games afternoons, pupils may be collected from the Woollams Playing Fields at the end of Games if the Games staff are notified in writing. Those who are not collected are returned to School in time for the buses or for you to collect them. Please note that the Library is supervised each evening until 6.00pm at which point the late bus service operates.

Homework

Some homework may be done at School in the Form room during breaks. Usually, there will be a minimum of two days (including weekend days) between work being set and the deadline for its completion. The amount set should occupy the average pupils as follows:

First & Second Form	20 minutes per subject (maximum of three subjects) per school night
Third Form	25 minutes per subject (maximum of three subjects) per school night
Middle School	30 minutes per subject (maximum of three subjects) per school night
Sixth Form	The nature of A Level study requires an ability and willingness to work independently and much of the work students will be required to undertake will be done during study periods and in their own time after School. Typically, Sixth Form students are expected to do around three hours per subject, per week, beyond the normal School day. In view of the complexity of option combinations and the nature of the work set, there will not be a weekly homework timetable and students must take careful note of work set and plan ahead to ensure that they meet their deadlines.

Please note that ALL pupils at all levels of the School are always required to acknowledge sources they have used in their work. Failure to do this will be regarded as plagiarism and punished appropriately.

Homework Planning

Homework for all year groups is set electronically on Microsoft Teams. Detailed communication is sent out at the start of the School year and pupils will receive training. If parents are concerned about any aspect of homework they should, in the first instance, contact the tutor in the normal way.



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Off Games

A request in writing, or by email, that a pupil be excused from games on medical grounds must be given to the Form Tutor, as early as possible and at the latest, at morning registration on the day concerned. If a student is off games then arrangements are made for them in School, they may not go home. Pupils are expected to bring sports kit with them to off games and will undertake managed exercise within their injury limitations, if appropriate.

School Sports Information

We would like to share important information about the School's dedicated Sports website (www.stalbanssports.org) with you. The School's sports website and Mobile Web App will provide you with useful information about all School sport, including the full Sports calendar, venue details, team fixtures and results, team selections, transport arrangements, past results, upcoming fixtures and a downloadable fixture list that synchs to your personal calendar on your mobile and updates when a match is cancelled or postponed.

A letter will be sent to you at the start of term outlining in more detail how to access and use the sports website, including password information for accessing team sheets. In addition, sports information can be found via the School's Sports Twitter account @SASHertsSport which you are encouraged to follow for updates on fixtures and events.

School Fees and Withdrawal

Fees are payable on the first day of each term and no refund can be made in cases of illness or absence. However, a fees refund scheme is available to cover this situation; please see the separate letter from the Bursar. A reduction of 5% is made where an entrant already has a brother or sister in the School and is applied to the older child's account. Tuition fees are subject to annual review, but in exceptional circumstances, more frequent consideration may be necessary.

The Headmaster may require a pupil to leave if, in the opinion of the Headmaster, his or her progress no longer justifies attendance at the School or his or her influence is damaging to the School's standards or reputation.

A term's notice of withdrawal must reach the Headmaster in writing on or before the first day of term of the term after which the pupil will be leaving. In reasonable cases of uncertainty, the Headmaster will accept provisional notice. In default of such notice, parents are liable for the payment of a term's fees in lieu.

The full terms and conditions document, which forms the contract between parents and the School, was provided to you with the Acceptance Form and can be found on the School's website.

Insurance



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While the School provides facilities, such as lockers, to assist pupils in taking care of their personal possessions, it is impossible for the School to accept responsibility for them. Parents are therefore urged to include any items of value on their own insurance policies, and so far as possible to avoid the bringing of such items to School by their child. Where they do need to be brought in, parents should ensure that their insurance policies cover this. There are separate communications regarding the care of and provision for the safe storage of personal devices for year groups where it is required that they be brought into School. All possessions should be, and all items of clothing **must** be, named.

Damage to School Property

Pupils pay for any damage which goes beyond the limits of fair wear and tear, such as windows broken by misbehaviour. Where this cannot be attributed to individuals, the group is responsible.

Additional Expenditure

The cost of all normal educational equipment, including textbooks, lab coats and exercise books, is included in the School fee. However, there will be additional expenses throughout the year that are either mandatory or optional. School lunches are compulsory for all pupils in First to Fourth Form. This is paid on a termly basis and will be added to the fee invoice. Lunch arrangements for Fifth and Sixth Form pupils will be communicated separately; both can opt into lunches in the Refectory but have a number of other options. There will also be a number of School trips, both residential and day trips, that will be chargeable; however, you will be informed of this in advance. The external costs of public examination fees are also charged to parents' accounts. In the case of lost/unreturned items including lockers keys and library books, a charge will also be made to your bill to cover the replacement of the item.