

Dear Parents and Carers,

Attendance

It is widely acknowledged that attendance is directly linked to academic attainment, personal development and wider opportunities. I would therefore like to thank you for your support in ensuring your child is in school every day that they are well enough to be here. Further guidance for parents to help them decide if their child is well enough for school is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

If your child has an appointment during the school day, please share the appointment letter with us by emailing a screenshot or showing it to the office team. We expect children to still attend school either side of their appointment as far as is possible.

Regarding holidays in term time, the simple answer is I am unable to authorise them. The Department for Education has introduced new legislation around Fixed Penalty Notices which we have to comply with. In accordance with Hertfordshire's Attendance Code of Conduct, please note that we will no longer be sending breach warning letters, but we will apply for Penalty Notices after ten sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence. Further guidance for parents is at the end of this letter. Please know that we really do not want to fine parents though, we want to work with you. Mrs Carter is our attendance lead and she is always happy to discuss any concerns or individual circumstances with parents to support their child's good attendance.

European Day of Languages 26th September

We are so fortunate to have a rich variety of languages and cultures amongst the families in our school community, and we are looking forward to sharing and celebrating them all on European Day of Languages. Just to be clear, this isn't an occasion to celebrate only European languages, but all languages and cultures from around the world. Children are invited to wear something that represents their heritage if they would like to, such as a national costume or the colours of their flag (but please not football kits). Year 6 children are going out on a trip in the morning, so they should wear normal school uniform and can change into their own clothes at lunchtime if they wish. If any parents are able to come into school to share some of their language or cultural traditions with the children, please let the class teacher know so that a suitable time can be arranged. We will be having a special themed lunch on this day and the menu is below.

Parent information meetings

Next week we are holding an information meeting for parents about how we teach phonics and early reading. We have also planned a meeting about maths on 25th October, when Mrs Bland will explain and demonstrate how maths is taught in school from Reception up to Year 6, so this meeting is appropriate for parents of children in all year groups. We hope these meetings will help you to support your child at home with their learning.

Birthday sweets

We have made the decision to no longer hand out sweets on children's birthdays. There are several reasons behind this decision. We encourage healthy eating and the importance of dental care, so do not want the children to be given sweets in school up to 30 times a year. A large number of children throughout the school have allergies or dietary requirements linked to religious beliefs, so it takes the teachers a long time to distribute sweets to the correct children and ensure no one is handed them incorrectly and inevitably some children are also disappointed if they cannot have them. There is also an added cost and pressure for parents from the expectation of bringing in sweets for their

child's birthday. We will always celebrate children's birthdays in other ways, such as with singing and cards, just not with sweets! Thank you for your understanding.

Morning snack

A fruit or vegetable snack is provided for all children in Reception-Y2 free of charge, funded by a Government grant. Children in Years 3-6 may bring a snack from home to eat at morning break if they wish, but this can **only** be a fruit or vegetable, not crisps, biscuits etc. and definitely not nuts because of children with severe allergies.

Request from Mr Edwards

Could the person who keeps dropping their chewing gum on the carpet during soft start please stop! It has happened 4 times in the last couple of weeks and it's a nightmare for him to clean it off.

Update on the playground project

For anyone who is new to our school, we are planning to develop and enhance the playground this year by laying a sports surface over the tarmac netball court area, replacing the rubber surface with artificial grass and installing new markings, target boards, a climbing frame and a sensory area. There is an image of the new playground on the wall outside Lime classroom if you would like to have a look. The first part of the project is the sports surface and this has been booked for the Autumn half term break. The PTA will be focusing their fundraising efforts over the coming year to supporting the playground project, and we also have a fundraising page for donations. If you could share the link far and wide we would really appreciate it, and if anyone has any expertise in writing bids for sponsorship please speak to me! <https://app.goodhub.com/alban-city-school-11527>

Have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Stray

Diary dates Autumn term 2024

23rd September	Spurs football: Magenta, Scarlet, Vermillion
25th September	Y3 Stone Age Day
25th September	Phonics and Reading information meeting for parents 8.50am theatre
26th September	European Day of Languages
26th September	Y6 visit to Crucial Crew
27 th September	Year 6 Lego Coding Workshop
30th September	Spurs football: Sage, Sky, Saffron
4th October	Harvest Festival collection for Food Bank
7 th October	Harvest assembly with Rabbi Adam
7 th October	Year 5 3D Printing Workshop
9th October	Individual photos
14 th October	Year 5 3D Printing Workshop
16 th October	Year 6 School Health checks
21st October	Year 6 Bikeability training week
25 th October	Maths information meeting for parents 9-10am school hall
28th October	Half term week
4th November	INSET day - school closed to pupils
15th November	Magenta sharing assembly in the theatre at 9:00am
20 th November	Animal Man visiting Year 2
22nd November	Amethyst sharing assembly in the theatre at 9:00am
26th November	Parents Evening 3:40-7:00pm
28th November	Parents Evening 3:40-7:00pm
29th November	Sage sharing assembly in the theatre at 9:00am
4th December	Y1 Performance in the theatre at 9:15am
6th December	Forest sharing assembly in the theatre at 9:00am
13th December	Reception Performance in the theatre at 9:15am

17th December	Pantomime at the Alban Arena 10:30am
18th December	Year 3 Christmas Concert in the theatre at 9:00am
18th December	Christmas Lunch
19th December	Year 2 Christmas Concert in the theatre at 9:00am
19th December	End of term 1.30pm
20th December	Occasional Day - school closed

Sports fixtures

Football

Tuesday 24th September - Year 4 Boys tournament @ St Columbas
 Wednesday 2nd October - Girls cup @ Wheatfields
 Monday 7th October - Boys A & B @ Prae Wood
 Wednesday 9th October - Boys B & Year 5 @ Wheatfields
 Thursday 10th October - Boys B @ Bernards Heath
 Wednesday 16th October - Boys A and Girls @ Samuel Ryder
 Monday 21st October - Boys B @ Bernards Heath
 Thursday 24th October - Girls @ Oakwood
 Tuesday 5th November - Girls @ Cunningham Hill
 Wednesday 13th November - Boys A @ Mandeville
 Thursday 14th November - Boys B & Year 5 @ St Columbas
 Wednesday 20th November - Boys A @ Mandeville
 Thursday 21st November - Boys A and Girls @ Samuel Ryder
 Monday 25th November – Boys A and Girls v Killigrew
 Thursday 12th December - Year 5 @ Fleetville

Cross country

Thursday 26th September @ Colney Heath
 Thursday 17th October @ Fleetville
 Thursday 7th November @ Wheatfields

Netball

Wednesday 2nd October @ Prae Wood (friendly)
 Wednesday 13th November @ Gardenfields
 Thursday 21st November vs Prae Wood @ ACS

Statutory Attendance Support Team Penalty Notice Fines – Sept 2024



Helping Parents understand Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance

From 19 August 2024, there is a National Framework for Penalty Notice Fines being issued for unauthorised absences recorded by schools.

National Threshold

A single consistent national threshold for when a Penalty Notice **must** be considered by **ALL** schools in England, this is:

- 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.
- These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.
- For example, a 5-day unauthorised leave of absence would meet the national threshold.
- The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

Who may be fined?

- Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent without authorisation from school.
- For example, 3 siblings absent for unauthorised leave during term-time would result in each parent/carer receiving 3 separate fines.

Definition of Parent

- Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that, in relation to a child or young person, a 'parent' includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility for or care of the child.
- Parent refers to a person who typically has care of a child or young person if the child lives with them either full or part time and they look after them, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence, the fine amount will be:

- £80 per parent, per child if paid **within 21 days**.
- If **not paid within 21 days**, the fine will increase to **£160 per parent, per child**, payable between the 22nd and 28th day.

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence, a reduced rate is not available. The amount therefore will be:

- £160 per parent, per child – payable within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed, a Penalty Notice WILL NOT be issued, and the case will be presented **straight to the Magistrate's Court**:

- **Prosecution** can result in **criminal records** and **fines of up to £2,500**.
- Cases found **guilty** in a **Magistrates Court** can show on the parent's future DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) certificate (Disclosure and Barring Service) due to a **'failure to safeguard a child's education'**

The poster features a light blue background with a faint map of Europe. At the top, a red banner with a ribbon effect contains the word 'EUROPEAN' in white, and a green banner below it contains 'DAY OF LANGUAGES' in white. The date 'Thursday 26th September' is centered below the banners. The menu items are listed in the center. The poster is decorated with various food illustrations: a pan with mussels, a baguette, a croissant, a plate of spaghetti with meatballs, a plate of vegetable paella, a plate of green beans and sweetcorn, a plate of baguettes, a jacket potato, a French apple pie, a pizza, a fish and chips dish, and a plate of salad. The bottom corners show a boat and a lighthouse on the left, and a building on the right.

EUROPEAN

DAY OF LANGUAGES

Thursday 26th September

Meatballs In a Tomato Sauce Served with
Spaghetti
(Italian)

Vegetable Paella
(Spanish)

Served with Green Beans and Sweetcorn

Baguettes with a choice of filling:
Cheese/Ham/Tuna Mayonnaise

Jacket Potato with a choice of Cheese or Baked
Beans

French Apple Pie with Custard