



Signing Out, Leave & Permissions

(Relevant to National Minimum Standard 8,9,10,18 & 20)

Committee: Staff & Students

Co-ordinator : Mrs N Borland-Peel

Last Reviewed : Summer 2024 **Next Review :** Summer 2027

Policy links to

SIGNING OUT

Boarders are required to sign out when they are planning on leaving the boarding house regardless of whether they plan to remain on the school site or otherwise. The only exceptions are for lessons and meal times. Boarders are required to give specific information about where they are going and who they are going with. They are also required to state the sign out time and, on return, the sign in time. Boarders must have with them a mobile phone in order that they are contactable but also in case they need to contact a member of boarding staff. With this in mind, boarders must have the telephone number of their house mobile phone stored on their mobile phone. Occasionally boarding staff will carry out checks to see that the information provided by boarders in their respective sign out books is accurate. It may also occasionally be necessary to put in extra signing-out measures for boarders who are vulnerable or for whom there are concerns, for example a boarder reporting to a member of staff before signing out to verbally inform them of their intentions and/or whereabouts or a boarder making contact via a phone call to let the House Office know that they have arrived safely at the intended destination.

Although it is quite normal that boarders may have knowledge of the whereabouts of their peers and that they may provide boarding staff with this information, this information will never be taken as final and will always be followed up by boarding staff.

Younger boarders are only permitted to go offsite before supper. Sixth form pupils may sign out after supper and prep but must inform a member of boarding staff prior to doing so.

There is a strict curfew in operation at all times.

The sanction for failure to sign out using the correct procedure or for failing to provide house staff with sufficient information will be at least a 'gating' for the following day. REACH allows us to have a permanent record of when each and every boarder has signed in and out of their boarding house and where they have stated they are going.

When signing out, it remains essential that at least one group member has a charged mobile phone. It is however ideal if each individual has their own charged mobile phone.

ACCESS TO BOARDING HOUSES

Boarding Houses open at a pre-arranged time at the beginning of term and close at a pre-arranged time at the end of term. This is communicated to parents well in advance and is published in the school calendar. During the school day, boarders are not permitted

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access to boarding houses. The only exception to this is for those boarders who are ill and under the care of a matron, those in Year 13 or those in Year 12 who are boarding prefects. Should this be the case then these boarders should sign out at the Aim Higher reception (as would be the case for day pupils) and sign in on arrival at their house.

MIDWEEK LEAVE

Midweek leave during the school day is occasionally necessary for sixth form students to attend for example university open days or for any boarder to attend a medical appointment with their parents. Written permission is required for such leave from parents or guardians. Midweek leave requiring an overnight stay away from the boarding house is considered as only necessary under exceptional circumstances. Any requests for midweek leave must be put in writing to the Director of Boarding.

WEEKEND LEAVE

Boarders are generally permitted weekend leave (in addition to calendared exeats) to parents, guardians or friends. The arrangements for collection and return are agreed in writing (electronically and via REACH) by the respective boarder's parent or guardian with the Head of Boarding House. Weekend leave may be taken after school has ended on Friday and return will normally be by 20.00 on the Sunday evening. In the event that boarders are not returning on Sunday evening and instead are returning on Monday morning, they should report first to their respective boarding house to be signed in from weekend leave before going to morning registration. Any extension of these times will be at the discretion of the Head of Boarding House and with the requisite permission from school Heads of Day House. Should any uncertainty arise about the granting of extended leave requests, the matter should be discussed with the Director of Boarding.

Any overnight leave to visit anyone other than parent or guardian requires permission and approval via REACH from the host family as well as from a parent or guardian. These must be completed preferably by Wednesday evening but by Thursday morning at the latest.

Weekend leave to a host family is a privilege and will not be granted if the School is not confident that secure and satisfactory arrangements can be made. House Staff have every right to stop a boarder taking leave, whether to their own parents or to friends if the necessary written consent via REACH has not been received and approved or if they have concerns over the safety of a boarder.

PERMISSIONS

At the beginning of the year, parents of boarders complete a permissions form which grants the following permissions for their son or daughter:

- Transport with house staff by coach, minibus or school vehicle
- Accompanied or unaccompanied public transport travel (depending upon age)
- Lifts with other parents (or students who have passed their driving test for Sixth Form students)
- Town visits
- Visits to homes of day-pupils, attending social events with friends
- Participation in weekend activities and/or trips
- Viewing of 15 (or 18) certificate films
- Attending licensed premises

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Completed permissions forms are filed in House Offices. In addition, written permission is required (via REACH) when a boarder wishes to take weekend leave.

OFFSITE TOWN VISITS

Town visits and transport to parties should be seen as privileges which can be withdrawn in certain circumstances. Boarders are allowed to visit Harpenden for shopping: younger boarders at designated times during the week or at weekends and older boarders more frequently. Initially House staff may accompany the younger boarders until such a time that they feel confident that they have the knowledge to navigate such a trip themselves. All boarders will be allowed to shop on non-designated days in exceptional circumstances, e.g. to buy produce for Food Technology lessons etc. Older boarders may be allowed to travel in groups to St Albans, Luton and London unaccompanied but only if parents have signed a consent form.

House staff may transport boarders to and from the parties of day school pupils to which they have received written invitations, if transport is available. Parent or guardian's permission for a boarder to accept such an invitation may be given on the Permissions Form issued at the beginning of each academic year.

The following table, which is displayed in houses, summarises group sizes for various year groups and destinations:

Year	7	8	9	10	11	12 & 13
Harrow (until 5:30pm)	3*	2	2	2	2*	1
Harrow (after 5:30pm)	2
St Albans (Sat/Sun only)	.	.	3	2	2	1
Luton (Sat/Sun only)	.	.	3	2	2	1
London (Sat/Sun only)	2

- Year 7s must be in groups of 3 until October exeat weekend but can then travel in 2s; Year 11s can seek permission to go into Harrowden individually.
- Out of courtesy, Sixth Form students wishing to leave the site after supper must speak with duty staff beforehand.
- London trips require parental email.
- Other factors such as the specific destination, purpose of visit, the time of the year, daylight and, of course, the individual will be taken into account by house staff.

GROUNDS & ENGAGING WITH THE PUBLIC

Boarders may sign out to grounds but it remains essential that at least one group member has a charged mobile phone. It is however ideal if each individual has their own charged mobile phone. If there are members of the public on campus at St George's it is likely that they are attending parties, other lettings or the Fitness Suite located in the Sports Hall. It is extremely unlikely that boarders will encounter members of the public other than on the route from the main car park to the sports hall (see Appendix 17 of the school's Health and Safety Policy). However, in the event that they do encounter members of the public either on or off site it is important that boarders know how to deal with any uncomfortable or dangerous situation and House Staff should ensure that boarders know what to do.

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Other than signing out correctly, being in the correct group size and having with them a mobile phone it is essential that they know to manage risky situations with members of the public. This could potentially be an issue both when onsite and offsite. Boarders are advised to walk away from what could develop into a dangerous situation and alert House Staff at the earliest possible moment. Other strategies include saying no, shouting, telling a trusted or known adult straight away. Boarders are not permitted to be on the 'Nicky Line' after dark. If it is deemed necessary, boarders are strongly advised to avoid certain areas in Harpenden.

REACH

Signing in and out of the House out of school hours and roll call now happen using REACH (www.stgeorges.reach.cloud) or the app students have downloaded. The only way that weekend leave may be applied for will be through REACH and parents and boarders have their own REACH accounts through which this happens