

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

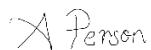
(Criminal Procedure Rules, r. 16.2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9)

STATEMENT OF Annie Person

Age of witness Over 18

This statement consisting of 5 pages is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Signed:



(Witness) Date: 10/04/2025

I am the Attendance Administrator employed by OneGloucester School, based at Bristol Road, Gloucester, GL1 1AB. I am authorised to make this statement on behalf of OneGloucester School and do so from my own knowledge unless otherwise indicated.

I can confirm that Ali Jones is 12 years old (DOB 01/02/2013), and is a registered pupil at OneGloucester School.

From our records, Ali Jones lives with Sarah Jones at 43 Bristol Road, Gloucester, GL1 1CD. They live 0.1 miles from the school.

Since 06/12/2024 to 06/02/2025, Ali has attended 50 sessions out of a possible 100. The total number of unauthorised absences is 46.

Signed:



(Witness) Date: 10/04/2025

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The OneGloucester School's attendance policy is attached as exhibit AP01. It defines regular attendance as: pupils are expected to attend every session of every day that the school is open to them. The policy also states that a request for absence during term time will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. An exceptional circumstance is defined as: where the case has been deemed as such by the Headteacher.

Ali's attendance is 49.4%, see exhibit AP02. I can confirm that I personally took the certificate to be signed by the headteacher as a true copy. This level of attendance is in breach of the OneGloucester School's attendance policy.

Attendance has been of concern since Ali began at OneGloucester school and from 11/09/2024, the school has been in regular and increasing contact with Sarah Jones to ascertain the reasons for Ali Jones's non-attendance. The school's centrally-held communication log for Ali Jones shows the support and communication between the school and Sarah Jones, see exhibit AP03. Text message and phone calls were made on every occasion of absences. Sarah Jones did not respond to any messages or telephone calls left about absences. Her communication with the school has been sporadic, and since October 2024, via email only. When Ali has attended school, he has been unaccompanied and he is collected from school by his uncle, who is aged 17.

On 10/09/2024, Ali Jones' teacher, Greg Neilson, and the class Teaching Assistant, Joy Banner, spoke to Ali about how he was finding the new year, see exhibit AP04. In the meeting, held during the morning teaching session, Ali said that he felt he did not attend due to 'feeling unwell' and 'unable to concentrate' in class, experiencing 'anxiety and stress' related to schoolwork and social interactions and lacking motivation to attend school regularly.


Signed: *Annie Person*

(Witness)**Date:** 10/04/2025

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On 23/09/2024, a letter was sent to Sarah Jones about Ali Jones's attendance, as he had attended 29.7% of the school days of the term to date. In the email, it offered support to Ali Jones and Sarah Jones, see exhibit AP05. The letter included references to support from other professionals beyond the school, and gave the website address for the Education Inclusion Service. An Attendance Contract Meeting was booked to be held at the school for 25/09/2024, following a conversation with Sarah Jones on 23/09/2024, when she brought Ali into school.

Attendance Improvement Meetings were arranged to be held with Sarah Jones on 25/09/2024, 14/10/2024, 20/11/2024, 10/12/2024 (see exhibits AP06, AP09, AP12 and AP15, AP17 and AP20) and Core Group Meetings were held on 11/02/2025 and 03/03/2025 (see exhibit AP03). Sarah Jones did not attend the meetings; she did not contact the school before the meetings or after to rearrange them. Ali Jones was absent from school on the days of the meetings (see exhibit AP02) so they did not go ahead.

On 25/09/2024, an Attendance Contract Meeting was booked to be held, but neither Ali Jones nor Sarah Jones came to the meeting. The meeting did not go ahead, as per our school's attendance policy (see page 12 in exhibit AP01). The notes of the preparation for the meeting are in exhibit AP06.

On 04/10/2024, a letter was sent to Sarah Jones, which included information about Notices to Improve, Penalty Notices and potential legal intervention, as the school were concerned about Ali Jones's absences to date. The letter also included: We will always work with families to address barriers to attendance before considering legal enforcement. Please contact us by 11/10/2024 to arrange a meeting where we can discuss the support we can put in place for Ali and your family, see exhibit AP07.


Signed: *Annie Person*

(Witness)**Date:** 10/04/2025

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On 10/10/2025, a letter was sent to Sarah Jones, as Ali Jones's attendance was 36.5%, which was a serious concern. The letter included the school's expectations for regular attendance, which was: our target is for every student to attend school every day and on time. In the email, it said that a conversation would be held between Ali Jones and his class teacher, Greg Neilson, and Sarah Jones was encouraged to speak with the teacher about Ali's attendance, too. A reference was made to Notices to Improve should the threshold of '10 unauthorised absences within 10 school weeks' be met, see exhibit AP08. The letter invited her again to a meeting on 14/10/2024 at 9.30 to discuss 'the ongoing concerns regarding Ali's attendance.' Sarah Jones was asked to respond to the meeting request by 12/10/2024. No response was received about the Attendance Improvement Meeting. The preparation notes for the meeting that could not take place are in exhibit AP09.

Greg Neilson emailed his notes to me for the meeting he wanted to hold with Ali but as Ali's attendance was not improving, the planned meeting did not take place, see exhibit AP10.

I contacted the Inclusion Officer for OneGloucester School, Del Aberth, with the notes from Greg Neilson, to ask for Ali Jones' attendance to be a priority discussion in the Targeted Support Meeting with them booked for Monday, 14 October 2024, see exhibit AP11.

An email was sent on 15/10/2024 to confirm that Sarah Jones did not attend the meeting and that the school would be considering involving other professionals to support Ali's attendance, see exhibit AP12. In this email, a copy of the reviewed My Plan+ was sent to Sarah Jones to be signed and sent back. Ali is currently on a MyPlan+, which was written up as part of his transition to OneGloucester School for September 2024. It has not yet been returned to the school.

Signed: 

(Witness)

Date: 10/04/2025

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On 15/10/2024, Sarah Jones replied to the email and said: I understand how important it is to stay in contact... To be honest, it's all been a bit much lately, and I've been feeling overwhelmed... I've now seen the My Plan that was sent through, and I'll make sure to check it properly, sign it, and give it to Ali to hand in at school, see exhibit AP13.

This confirmed that the email address we had on file was accessed by Sarah Jones.

At 5.30pm I called Sarah Jones to discuss the reasons for her feeling overwhelmed. She said that she had changed jobs, and she was struggling to pick up Ali, as it cut into her visits. We discussed Ali coming to the after-school clubs that run from 3.30-5.15 on Mondays-Thursdays and she said she would think about it. She said Ali liked going home with his uncle because they got time to game together. I also asked if she would consider working with a Family Support Worker and the Early Help Team, as part of our referrals to them. She said she would think about it and let us know, see exhibit AP13.

I called our Inclusion Officer Del Abeth, who suggested that I email the Family Support Worker team and the Early Help Team for their advice and guidance. I sent an email, summarising the school's concerns for Ali and asked for support with the next steps, see exhibit AP13. A referral was completed for the Early Help team and I met with Marc Losito who was hoping to engage with the family, see AP13.

An email was sent on 18/10/2024 was sent to summarise the term's attendance to date, which was at 37.9%, with 44 unauthorised sessions logged. The email asked Sarah Jones to work with the school in the next term to support Ali's attendance, see exhibit AP14.

Signed: 
Annie Person

(Witness)

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On 05/11/2024 an email was sent to Sarah Jones to ask for her to attend an Attendance Improvement Meeting on 20/11/2024, see exhibit AP15. This meeting was not attended. A request was made to the Education Inclusion Service for a Notice to Improve to be issued to Sarah Jones. This was issued on 26/11/2024, see exhibit AP16.

An email was sent on 03/12/2024 to invite Sarah Jones to a meeting on 10/12/2024, as Ali's attendance was declining despite an initial improvement following the issue of the Notice to Improve, where he was in every day from 27/11/2024 to 02/12/2024, see exhibit AP17. The meeting could not take place, as Sarah Jones did not attend, and Ali was not in school for the day.

There were one or more unauthorised sessions per week following this until the end of term, see exhibit AP02.

On 13/01/2025, an email was sent to Sarah Jones to inform her of the last term's attendance. Ali's attendance was at 45.4% with 57 unauthorised absences, see exhibit AP18.

An additional email was sent on 13/01/2025, to inform Sarah Jones that Ali had attended a meeting with his tutor and the pastoral lead, Vix Norrello, to discuss his feelings about attendance, and support that the school were offering with regards to his attendance. The email included: Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need assistance.', see exhibit AP19.

On 07/01/2025, an email was sent to Sarah Jones, as Ali's attendance was 47.9%. In this email, it included that 'all future absences will be unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided, as we are struggling to contact you regarding the reasons for his absences.' Sarah Jones was invited in for a meeting on 16/01/2025 to discuss Ali's attendance, see exhibit AP20. On

Signed: 
Annie Person

(Witness)

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16/01/2025, Sarah Jones informed the school that she had planned to come to the meeting, but she had to go to an emergency vet appointment and would need to rebook the meeting.

On 06/02/2025, a penalty notice request was made to the Education Inclusion Service.

Following a MARF referral (see exhibit AP21), a Core Group meeting was booked for 11/02/2024 with Trey Goulding, Ali Jones' Social worker and Glyn Bones, the Outcome Coordinator from the Education Inclusion Service with Mrs Manning, Headteacher of OneGloucester and me; this could not take place as Ali Jones nor Sarah Jones attended the meeting. A CAHMS meeting was booked for 17/02/2025. OneGloucester School received an email to say that Ali did not attend the meeting, see exhibit AP22.

Another CAHMS meeting was booked with the CAHMS team on 24/02/2025, see exhibit AP23, and another Core Group Meeting was booked for 03/03/2025, but neither Ali Jones nor Sarah Jones attended these meetings.

We have not had any reports of any issues with bullying. There have been four sessions of illness-related absences for a toothache on 16/01/2025 and 17/01/2025, see exhibits AP02 and AP03.

Signed: *A Person*

(Witness) **Date:** 10/04/2025

Signed: *A Person*

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