

Attendance Letter September 2025

Unauthorised leave of absence (holidays)

Dear Parent/Carer,

Here at Bridge Schools Trust, we want every child to achieve their very best and enjoy coming to school. Regular attendance plays a crucial role in this by building confidence, resilience and positive friendships alongside strong academic outcomes. Even small amounts of absence can add up over time and this can sometimes make it harder for children to feel settled and make the most of the opportunities both in and out of the classroom that school has to offer. We recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence, such as when a child is genuinely too ill to attend school, has a medical appointment that cannot be taken outside of school hours or a request for leave has been agreed in exceptional circumstances. Please see advice from the NHS on the reverse of this letter if you are unsure of whether to send your child to school with an illness. We want to work with you supporting your child, so please do keep in touch with us about any absences.

However, the government does not support parents taking children out of school unless the school agrees this is appropriate under 'exceptional circumstances'. Any request for leave should be made in writing to the headteacher using the school's request form (you can find this on our school website or school office and at the end of this letter).

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act and as a result, you could be liable for a Penalty Notice. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days. If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3- year period, you will be committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days. Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs. Absence not authorised by the school may also result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs. Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government. 'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

You are welcome to contact the school to discuss any concerns you may have regarding this or if you feel you would like advice or support in helping your child attend more regularly. We know that life can sometimes be complicated. Please do talk to us about how we can help. We are committed to maximising the education of all our children and aim to work with parents to ensure this can be achieved.

Yours sincerely
Bridge Schools Trust

Every School Day Counts

0 days off school	100%	Perfection
Equates to 2 days off school each year	99%	Excellent
Equates to 5 days off school each year	97%	Good
Equates to 10 days off school each year	95%	Slight Concern
Equates to 20 days off school each year	90%	Concerned
Equates to 30 days off school each year	85%	Very Concerned

5 days absence over the whole year 97% - 100% Good chance of success and progress	20 days absence over the whole year 90% Less chance of success. Harder to make progress	20+ days absence over the whole year Under 90% Detrimental to success and progress
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Every Minute Counts

LATENESS = LOST LEARNING

(Figures below are calculated over a school year)

5 Minutes late each day	3 days lost!
10 Minutes late each day	6.5 days lost!
15 Minutes late each day	10 days lost!
20 Minutes late each day	13 days lost!
30 Minutes late each day	19 days lost!

**Be at the
classroom on
time and ready to
learn!**



Should I keep my child off school?

Yes

Until...

Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek



Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfec>.

Leave of Absence Exceptional Circumstances Request Form

(to be completed by each parent/carer)

APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER

If you consider an absence during term time to be an exceptional circumstance, please complete this form and return it to the Attendance Office at least 15 school days before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____

Year/Class: _____

Home Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Name of Parent/Carer completing this form: _____

First day of absence: _____ Date of return to school: _____

If leaving your home address before the first day of absence, please provide the date on which you will leave

Total number of days missed: ____ days

Reason for absence: _____

I understand that if the absence request is unauthorised the school may request that Cornwall Council issue a Penalty Notice. I understand that a Penalty Notice is issued to each liable parent/carer of each child taken out of school and that this carries a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid within 28 days. I understand that if I do not pay the fine, it may result in legal action being taken against me. I understand that parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) and Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

Please inform us if you have a child in another Bridge Schools Trust school – we will need to contact the school to discuss the absence request. Please note, we will need to share information about your child with the other school.

Name of child: _____ Year: _____

School: _____

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

(Please ensure you give at least 15 school days' notice of the proposed absence)

Below to be completed by the school:

FAO – Headteacher

% Current		% Last Year	Comments

Student Name: Year:

AUTHORISED:

Request has been authorised for the following dates only:

____/____/____ to ____/____/____

Or

UNAUTHORISED:

Reason why absence is unauthorised:

Signed: _____

Headteacher: _____

Date: _____

Letter sent / Phone Call / other	Signed: Date:
Action: PN Request	Signed: Date: