

Vision statement
BRIDGE is a family of schools committed to high performance. We embrace a universal culture of excellence in the learning communities we build.
Aims
To continue building a Multi Academy Trust that promotes strong values, an excellent education for all children, develops highly effective Academy Teams, is financially secure, and ensures effective governance.
To nurture, support and encourage aspirations by providing excellent learning opportunities, inspiring teaching environments, and a creative approach to curriculum subjects that secures engagement from all our learners resulting in high levels of academic progress and outcomes.
To develop outstanding leadership, teaching and support teams by valuing committed, reflective staff, and providing rigorous and challenging professional development for continual School Improvement.
To develop hubs as centres of learning excellence to disseminate best practice, firstly within and then beyond, the MAT.
To successfully engage and communicate with parents/carers in our local communities, supporting pupil progress, well-being and achievement.

Attendance Policy

Purpose
For children to gain the greatest benefit from their education by attending school regularly.

September 2021

Policy Version	V1.1	Next Review Date	09/22
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Aims

1. Children to be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable
2. To work with parents and carers, communicating with them the importance of good attendance and punctuality
3. To achieve a Trust target of at least 96% attendance with a Persistent Absence target of under 8%

Principles and Practice:

Promote why regular attendance is so important related to learning and safeguarding. Learning: Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is the parent/carers legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding:

A child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, we will adhere to 'Working together to Safeguard Children' (2019): Protecting children from maltreatment. Preventing impairment of children's health or development. Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. Taking action to enable all children have the best life chances. Failing to attend our school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Our Method:

- We follow our Trust specific guidelines as detailed in the appendices
- We work alongside the Local Authority Education Welfare Officers
- We work closely with Alternative Provisions to ensure that all children are safeguarded
- We follow the law, abiding by legislation such as 'There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday and the government made an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 in September 2013 to reflect this.'

Roles and Responsibilities

Bridge Schools will:

- Provide a template policy and procedure to give a consistent approach in all the schools
- Support schools to improve attendance and punctuality
- Provide a consistent approach from the Education Welfare Officer, by reviewing progress on a termly basis

School will:

- Help to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.
- Give parents/carers details on attendance in a regular Newsletter/Blog;
- Report to parents/carers at least termly on how their child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- Provide parents/carers with an attendance leaflet, explaining types of absence, why attendance at school is so important and possible consequences of poor attendance;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings/events;

- Telephone/text/email parents/carers on the first day of absence if they have not heard from them; and continue to keep in close communication during any absence, ensuring that all children attend school whenever possible.
- Invite parents/carers in to discuss the situation with the Attendance Officer (usually Head of School), if the absences/lateness persist;
- May consider consulting with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) if attendance moves below 95%;
- Review each requested absence on an individual basis;
- Inform parents/carers of the school attendance target.

Parents/carers will:

- Work alongside school to ensure that smooth communication occurs, resulting in maximised outcomes for every child.
- Contact school as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – this must happen even if they have already telephoned school;
- Or, call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with parent/carer;
- Provide school with up to date phone numbers. Parents/carers have a duty to notify school as soon as possible of any changes to contact details;
- Contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. In line with KCSIE 2021, school requires at least 2 contacts for each child. This is nearly always successful;
- Ensure that their child is at school on time. If their child is not in school when the register is taken, they may receive a late mark. The register closes 30 minutes after the start of the school day. If a child arrives after that time, they can receive a mark that show they are on site, but will not count as a present mark- denoted as an unauthorised absence.;
- Understand that schools do not expect parents/carers to take their children on holiday in term time;
- Complete a 'leave of absence' request form at least 5 days prior to the requested leave date if needed;
- Work with school to improve the overall attendance, in line with its target.
- If an absence, including a holiday, has been refused for 5 days (10 sessions) or more, then Bridge Schools Trust may follow procedures to enforce a Penalty Notice. This refers to cases where parents/carers know their absence has been refused, but still withdraw the child/ren from school.

Flexi-Schooling:

Bridge Schools Trust is under no obligation to accommodate flexi-schooling. Some schools within the trust have previously agreed to specific cases where children attend school for part of the week combined with being educated at home. In such cases, these will continue, until the child leaves school or both parents/carers and school decide to change the arrangement.

In order to maximise the continuity of teaching, learning and safeguarding of children; Bridge Schools Trust have decided that they are unlikely to agree to any such arrangement (from September 2020). No flexi-schooling will be agreed in the EYFS (other avenues can be explored instead). Parents/carers of children in KS1 and 2 wishing for flexi-schooling to be considered, may express their interest, in writing, to the headteacher. Any such arrangement thereafter will be at the discretion of the headteacher, a formal agreed plan and timescale must be implemented. In any such arrangement, a formal agreed plan must be implemented.

We continue to follow all national requirements regarding COVID 19 and associated government procedures as demonstrated by the DfE