

The Bridge Academy

Important Information



This pack contains important information about attending The Bridge Academy.

Please read this carefully together as a family, and consent that you agree to follow these key areas in the 'Group Agreement'.

Senior Leadership Team

Mr Payne - Head of School

Mrs Franks - Deputy Headteacher (responsible for what children learn)

Miss Evans - Senior Leader for Welfare (responsible for children's safety and their attendance to school)

Mr Lloyd - Assistant Headteacher (responsible for how children behave and opportunities)

Mr Kellyman - Assistant Headteacher (responsible for how children learn and achieve)

Ms Wakefield - Assistant Headteacher (responsible for helping children learn in all lessons and SEND)

Mrs Robb - Office Manager (responsible for the administration of the school, and examinations)

School Times

Monday to Thursday 9:00-2:15pm

Friday 9:00- 1:15pm

Terms Dates

The most recent Term Dates can be found on our website: <https://thebridgeacademy.atlp.org.uk/>

Uniform

Bridge polo shirts and jumpers will be issued on admission. To be accompanied with an all black appropriate length skirt or trousers, black shoes/trainers to be worn (No sliders are permitted).

School Dinners and Menu

We provide school dinners and details of the menu will be discussed in the admission meeting. The Bridge Academy does not encourage packed lunches due to possible contamination affecting students and staff with food intolerances and allergies. Snacks and drinks are provided during break times.

Attendance

We have developed a new approach to supporting you as families with the attendance of your child. It is important that we work together to ensure that your child's attendance at school is the highest priority. You will see below, our six new 'Attendance Foundations'; supported by clear thresholds for actions to be taken and what to expect from us as a school to best support you and your child in achieving the highest attendance.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Foundations	CULTURE & EXPECTATIONS <i>A school where all children can, and want to, be in school.</i>	MONITORING <i>We use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance.</i>	LISTENING <i>We understand barriers to attendance and work with you, and your child to remove them.</i>	SUPPORTING <i>We access support to overcome barriers outside of school.</i>	ESCALATING <i>We begin a process to formalise support, with support from the local authority.</i>	ENFORCING <i>We use statutory intervention, as a last resort, to protect the students right to an education.</i>
Thresholds	100%	4 sessions absence	8 sessions absence	12 sessions absence	16 sessions absence	20 session absence or more in a 12 week period.
Actions	Reward students who attend every day. Positive phone calls home, by RAISE Tutor <i>We celebrate improvements in attendance.</i>	Trigger 1 letter sent to families. Internal monitoring by Assistant Headteacher (AHT) & Attendance Team <i>Earliest Help considered as a preventative measure. Possible early help support offered.</i>	Trigger 2 letter sent to families. Meeting with RAISE Tutor to explore barriers and set targets to improve attendance. <i>Early help support reviewed or offered.</i>	Trigger 3 letter sent to families. Family meeting with Attendance Intervention Lead to implement Attendance Intervention Plan; early help and other intervention programmes. <i>Consider the support of external services.</i>	Trigger 4 letter to families. AHT to explore next steps with Education Welfare Officer. Family meeting with AHT to implement Attendance Intervention Plan; early help and other intervention programmes. <i>Continued support of the child and family.</i>	Final Notice letter to sent to families. AHT to submit Statutory Action Request to the Education Welfare Service at Staffordshire County Council. <i>The student is now Persistently Absent. The child and family will continue to be supported.</i>

The Bridge Centre does all it can to prevent escalating absence.

As a school, we will always do what we can to work with you, and your child, to ensure that attendance remains high or improves where there are absences. Where possible, we want to promote working together, to avoid taking statutory action, however, I am minded to inform you that we have a duty to involve the Local Authority Education Welfare Service, if your child is absent for 20 individual sessions or more (the equivalent of 10 school days) in a 12 week period, excluding school holidays. We believe that we all have a responsibility for ensuring that children can attend school, every day.

Working in partnership, we expect parents and carers to:

- ensure that their children arrive at the school on time and in the correct uniform
- promote the importance of regular school attendance at home
- follow the correct procedure for reporting the absence of their children from the school, which includes contacting the main office by 09:00am at the latest on each day of the absence. If you child is absent for more than 2 days due to an illness or medical condition, we would need to see evidence from a GP or doctor to that effect
- avoid unnecessary absences, by arranging appointments outside of the school week
- keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their children's attendance
- not take their children out of education for holidays during term time
- inform the school in advance of any proposed change of address for their child(ren), along with the name of the parent with whom the child shall live
- observe and fulfil their responsibilities set out in the guidance issued by the Department for Education: Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance

We therefore expect students to:

- attend school every day and on time
- follow the correct procedure if they arrive to school late

Anti Climb Paint

We are writing to inform you that due to Health and Safety and Safeguarding purposes, it has become a necessity to paint all our gates and fences with anti-climb paint. Please note that if your child happens to get this on their person, it will be very difficult to clean off, therefore, can you remind your child that this measure has been taken. Warning signs are erected around the school premises.

Visits consent

Whilst your child attends Bridge there will be some activities which involve travel off the School's premises to participate in Outdoor Educational Opportunities or to attend sporting or cultural events. Travel to these activities may be on foot/coach/minibus or in staff cars, in line with Local Authority Policy. All activities undergo a full Risk Assessment through Staffs County Council and minibus/coach drivers have undertaken a minibus licence as required by Staffs County Council. Staff may also take pupils in their cars for other reasons such as if the pupil is ill and needs taking home, or if a journey is to be made to the pupil's other school. This procedure is detailed in the 'Transporting Children in cars Policy' which is available on request. Parents/carers will be kept informed of all off-site visits and activities prior to each event. Please note that for any event involving an overnight stay or participating in a hazardous activity, full details will be given and parental consent sought on an individual basis. I give permission for my son/daughter to participate in off-site activities and to attend sporting or other events for educational purposes. I understand that these activities have been risk assessed and that any transport will be provided by appropriately trained and qualified drivers. I give permission for my child to travel in staff cars when necessary.

Photographic/Video consent

Occasionally we may take photographs of the pupils attending service provision. We may also make videos, DVD or webcam recordings for school to school conferencing, monitoring or other educational use. These images may be used in school and/or in print/social media e.g. our school Newsletters/School Facebook page. From time to time, we may be visited by the media, who may take photographs or film footage and pupils could appear in these images, which may be used in newspapers or television. To comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 we need your permission before we can photograph or make recordings of your child. Your consent is valid for one year from the signing date after which it expires.

Positive Handling consent

All Bridge Academy staff are trained in behaviour de-escalation which is done verbally and using skilled planned methods. Should a child be unsafe or causing a situation where others may be deemed unsafe, staff are trained to use positive handling to prevent harm. Parents will be contacted should any positive handling be necessary and staff and pupils debrief after any occasion to prevent repeat occurrences. Further information is available on request.

Privacy notice for parents/carers/students

Under the data protection law, individuals have a right to be informed about how the school uses any personal data that we hold about them. We comply with this by providing 'privacy notices' (sometimes called 'fair processing notices') to individuals where we are processing their personal data.

Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones

The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school administrators, teachers, students and parents take steps to ensure mobile phones are used responsibly at school. Our Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can clearly be identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by students. We do not allow Mobiles Phones, or individual electronic devices into the main Academy. Children are asked to leave these in their lockers, or come to school without them. This is a non-negotiable.

Acceptable Use of School Computer Network

The school computer system provides internet access to students for learning. This agreement to a set of rules for its use will help to protect our students and the school by clearly stating what is acceptable and what is not

SEND:

The school SENDCo is Mrs Emma Wakefield and she is available to advise parents on any matters concerning special educational needs or disabilities.

Keeping in touch

The Bridge Academy telephone number: 01543 255872 Please let us know about absences before 9.00am by leaving a message on the answer phone.

Website

www.bridge.staffs.sch.uk

Class Charts

From September 2024, we use ClassCharts to monitor behaviour and improve communication between Academy and Home. You will receive an invitation directly to create an account by email.

Medication that requires administration during school hours

If at all possible, you are asked to adjust the timing of your child's medications so it can be taken outside of school hours. By law, and for safety reasons, medication can only be given at school with specific written directions from your GP and with a signed request from you as the parent/guardian. Under no circumstances should any medication be sent into school without these written directions and your written request. This included all over the counter medicines such as pain killers, cold and allergy medications, asthma inhalers etc. Reasonable care will be exercised in the administration of any medication in school.

If your GP judges that it is absolutely necessary to have your child receive medication at school and he/she required help from staff, all drugs/medications being sent into school must be clearly labelled with the student's name and handed into the office on arrival at school, together with a signed permission to administer for attached. Parents must inform school immediately if their child's medication changes or is discontinued, or the dose or administration method changes.

Out of date medication will be sent home. At the end of the academic year all medication will be sent home. If your child has a medical condition that requires a care plan, please ensure an Individual Care Plan form is completed.

*Link to Medicine Consent

School Closure Procedure

We would like to draw your attention to the procedures we employ in the event of a school closure. It is important to point out that we make every effort to open and remain open. We appreciate that closure impacts on student's learning and parent's childcare arrangements. However, we also recognise our responsibility towards the safety of students and adults on site and whilst journeying to and from school.

In the event of a necessary closure, the school will use the following forms of communication to inform parents/carers:-

- ClassCharts message. Please ensure that you have provided The Bridge with the correct email address for you.
- School website - www.bridge.staffs.sch.uk
- Facebook ("The Bridge Academy")
- Staffordshire County Council School Closures List - www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/schoolsandcolleges/emergencyclosures/schoolclosurelist

Unless you hear from us that we are closed, please make the assumption each day that we are open as usual. Finally please bear with us. Conditions are changeable, and decision making can be problematic. There may be times when we have to close during the day. We would like to reassure you that we will not send pupils off site unless and until we are confident they can arrive home safely.

Acceptable use of ICT equipment

The school computer system provides internet access to students for learning. This agreement to a set of rules for its use will help protect our students and the school by clearly stating what is acceptable and what is not.

- School computer and internet use must be appropriate to the student's education
- Access must only be made via the user's own authorised account and password, which must not be given to any other person.
- Storage media e.g. flash drives must not be brought into school unless permission has been given by a member of staff.
- Copyright and intellectual property rights must be respected.
- Users must respect the work of others which might be stored in common areas on the system. Conversely, users should always try and store their files and data in their own secure area or on removable media. Files and data stored in common areas of the system must be transferred at the earliest opportunity to the user's own area. Files stored in common areas will be regularly removed from the system.
- Users are responsible for e-mail they send and for contacts made. E-mail should be written carefully and politely. As messages may be forwarded, e-mail is best regarded as public property. Anonymous messages and chain letters must not be sent.
- Users should report any unpleasant or offensive material or messages received to a member of staff.
- The use of public chat rooms is not allowed.
- The school ICT systems may not be used for private business purposes, unless the headteacher has given permission for that use. Use for personal financial gain, gambling, political purposes or advertising is forbidden.
- The security of ICT systems must not be compromised, whoever they belong to.
- Irresponsible use may result in the loss of internet access or use of school computing facilities altogether.

The school may exercise its right by electronic means to monitor the use of the school's computer systems, including the monitoring of websites, the interception of e-mails and the deletion of inappropriate materials in circumstances where it believes unauthorised use of the school's computer system is or may be taking place, or the system is or may be being used for criminal purposes or for storing text or imagery which is unauthorised or unlawful.

Vaping

The Bridge Academy, like many other schools, has seen a recent spike in incidents involving student vaping. Our school leadership team has become increasingly concerned with the number of students using these devices at school. The purpose of this letter is to inform you about some additional steps we are taking to reduce the use and abuse of vapes/e-cigarettes in and around our school premises.

As always, students are subject to search for items that violate school rules in places like their coats, bags, lockers, and other clothing. Any form of possession in school, use, or distribution of vapes/e-cigarettes containing THC oils (THS, etc.), hallucinogenic contents, or other illegal contents is a very serious violation of our School Behaviour Policy. Going forward, all vaping devices will be confiscated if bought onto the school site. This directly means that vapes or vaping paraphernalia are not allowed onto school property and this includes the lockers and locker room. If seen or found, any vapes or vaping paraphernalia will be confiscated and disposed of and students may be subject to fixed term suspension for failing to adhere to our School Behaviour Policy.

We take this issue very seriously due to the negative health effects vaping can have on our students and often find that our parents are often not aware of the risks. Please see enclosed a tip sheet about talking to your young people about vaping.