



Attendance



At Bristol Free School

“Children who miss out, miss out as adults” Department for Education

Our school target for attendance is for every student to attend school for **at least 96%** of the time.

We know that high attendance at school and achieving high grades are linked. The following information is taken from the latest research on GCSE outcomes and attendance:

- Of students who miss more than **50% of school**, only **3%** manage to achieve five A*/9 to C / 5, including English and Maths.
- Of students who miss between **10% and 20% of school**, only **35% manage** to achieve five A*/9 to C / 5 GCSEs, including English and Maths.
- Of students who miss **less than 5% of school**, **73%** achieve five A*/9 to C / 5 including English and Maths.
- If a student’s attendance is **less than 90% for the year** they will have **missed 4 weeks of lessons and learning**.

Bristol Free School

Values excellent attendance and students with consistent attendance make good progress. We hold fortnightly attendance lotteries for students who have had 100% attendance for the last two weeks, an end of year prize draw, attendance certificates, tutor group attendance celebrations and in-school competitions such as the tutor group attendance trophies.

Where attendance gives cause for concern the student will be placed onto attendance Stage 1 as per the document below detailing attendance phases at BFS. This document also illustrates how the school responds to poor attendance.

What if a student isn’t well enough to attend school?

Many children experience common ailments from time to time. Most of these do not need a prescription, are rarely serious and do not require time away from school (see guidance below). Often treating your child’s ailment or illness yourself, or with advice and medicines from your pharmacist, can be the quickest and easiest way to deal with it.

If your child is unable to attend school through illness you should inform us by telephone:

0117 950 8157 - clearly leaving the child’s name, tutor group if known, and brief reason for absence.

Or

Via the Study Bugs App using your mobile phone, which is the **quickest and easiest way of informing the school of absence**. Study Bugs is a free app and available through your normal app store.



Students are expected to be in school by 8:25am every morning so that Period 1 can start promptly at 8:30am. If your child is going to be absence you should **call or send a message via Study Bugs that your child is absent by 8:30am**.

Attendance at Bristol Free School

% attendance	What this means to you	What will Happen
96%-100%	This is excellent attendance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congratulatory letter home at the end of term • Attendance rewards, awards and certificates • Tutor group celebration
95%	Tutor identifies you as dropping below government target of 96%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring by tutor and Year Leader • Sets targets
94%	Stage 1 Attendance still dropping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Officer will send out a Stage 1 letter and Year Leader may invite you in for a meeting to set targets
93%	Stage 2 Attendance is now dropping worryingly low.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Officer will send out Stage 2 letter and invite parent/carer in for an attendance plan meeting. • To be reviewed regularly by Attendance Officers, and Year Leader
90%	Stage 3 Attendance is continuing to fall. Absence may now require medical evidence before it is authorised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Officer will send out a Stage 3 letter and a warning notice of possible Penalty Notice / Prosecution. • Meeting to review attendance plan, and modify if necessary.
Failure to improve	Stage 4 Attendance has continued to fall. Pending Prosecution with Local Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter home regarding the lack of attendance of student. • Prosecution paperwork to be drawn up by Attendance officer

How can I help my child with their attendance?

- If your child is feeling poorly but is not being physically sick, do try to encourage them to attend school (see the guidance that follows). If your child feels unwell in school they will be sent to the school medical administrator who will contact you/send your child home if they feel that it is necessary.
- If your child has missed a day of school, please speak to them, or email their teachers, to check that they have collected any work missed from the 6 lessons of that day.
- If you notice that there is a particular barrier that is preventing your child from attending school, please contact your child's Year Leader.
- Every 2 days of attendance to school means that your child's attendance will increase by 0.1% Therefore, within a month, your child could move up a whole 1%
- Value school and your child's education. It can open many doors and provide a wealth of opportunities.



Medical Absence Guidance

Is my child too ill for school?

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school, when they're unwell but there are [government guidelines](#) for schools and nurseries that say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't. If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school on the first day. Let them know that they won't be in and give them the reason. If your child is well enough to go to school but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, let their tutor know.

Chickenpox

If your child has [chickenpox](#), keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared. Please let your child's tutor know.

Cold sores

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a [cold sore](#). Encourage them not to touch the blister, or to share things like cups and towels.

Conjunctivitis

You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have [conjunctivitis](#). Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

Coughs and colds

It's fine to send your child to school with a minor [cough](#) or [cold](#). If they have a persistently high temperature and are feverish, keep them off school until the fever goes. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

Ear infection

If your child has an [ear infection](#) they can come to school, however if accompanied by a fever or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling well enough to return or their fever goes away.

Fever

If your child has a fever, keep them off school until the [fever](#) goes away.

Hand, foot and mouth disease

If your child has [hand, foot and mouth disease](#) but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

Head lice and nits

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. **See your local pharmacist who will be able to advise medication.**

Treatment is only needed if live lice are seen. Dimeticone, a silicone oil (like Hedrin) or malathion, an insecticide are recommended treatments. Alternatively, lice can be physically removed by combing through hair that has been lubricated with a conditioner using a fine-toothed detector comb.

Impetigo

If your child has [impetigo](#), they'll need antibiotic treatment from the GP. Keep them off school for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share towels or cups (or similar) with other children at school.

Ringworm

If your child has [ringworm](#), see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see your GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

Scarlet fever

If your child has [scarlet fever](#), they'll need treatment with antibiotics from the GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics

Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have [slapped cheek syndrome](#) because once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. If you suspect your child has slapped cheek syndrome, take them to the GP and let their school know if they're diagnosed with it.

Sore throat

You can still send your child to school if they have a [sore throat](#).

Threadworms

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have [threadworms](#). Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.

Vomiting and diarrhea

Children with [diarrhoea or vomiting](#) should stay away from school for 2 days.

For further details see NHS guidelines

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/#coughs-and-colds>