

September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

At Penrice Academy, we recognise that excellent attendance is crucially important to our students and we categorise this as achieving an attendance figure of 96% and above. Statistics show that if a child has excellent attendance throughout their school life, on average they will achieve one grade higher in their GCSEs, across all curriculum areas, when compared to a student with an attendance figure of 90% or below. This is the reason why we value attendance so highly - we believe that offering students the opportunities to succeed will enable them to reach their full potential and lead to improved life chances.

To encourage students to be in school every day, we will be promoting excellent attendance through the following:

- Reward trips for the best attending tutor groups are given out termly at celebration assemblies in Year 7 and 8.
- Reward trips for the 30 best attenders on a termly basis are given out at celebration assemblies in Year 9, 10 and 11.
- Students with over 96% attendance receive termly certificates.
- Awarding merits for 100% attendance each week.

### School Absence and The Law

As we venture further into the Autumn term, the usual coughs, colds and other minor ailments start to appear. I thought it would be useful to inform you of the school's policy when reporting illness, how punctuality can affect attendance and the legal requirements that the school has to uphold in relation to attendance. Also, I have included some useful NHS guidance for school absence due to illness.

### Absence from School

If your child is absent from school, you must contact the school with a reason for the absence. This can be via email at [attendance@penrice.org.uk](mailto:attendance@penrice.org.uk) or by telephoning 01726 72163 (option 1). If we do not receive any verbal or written communication from you, then the Admissions and Attendance Officer, or a member of the Pastoral Team, will telephone home. Failure to respond may result in a home visit being conducted. If there is no response to this home visit, your child may be referred to the Local Authority as a Child Missing Education. Contact may also be made with Children's Services and/or the Police – in line with safeguarding procedures. **Additionally, please be aware that the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.**

When advising the school of the reason for your child's absence, please can we ask you to be specific with the reason given.

If your child is absent from school for a prolonged period due to illness, we may request medical evidence to authorise this absence.

### Requests for Absence

All requests for absence should be made formally to the Headteacher, at least 15 days in advance, using the Request for Absence Form - this can



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**Headteacher:**

**Lucy Gambier**

Charlestown Road  
St Austell, Cornwall  
PL25 3NR

**44 (0)1726 72163**

**[enquiries@penrice.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@penrice.org.uk)**

**[www.penriceacademy.org](http://www.penriceacademy.org)**



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be found on the school's website here

<https://www.penriceacademy.org/student-absence/> or can be found

within the attendance policy (pages 23 & 24) here

<https://www.penriceacademy.org/policies-and-statutory-links/> . Once

completed, this form can either be emailed to [attendance@penrice.org.uk](mailto:attendance@penrice.org.uk) or passed directly to our Admissions and Attendance Officer. It is important that you provide the school with full details of the reason for requesting the absence.

I would like to remind you that a planned absence from school will only be authorised in 'exceptional circumstances'. This will be at the Headteacher's discretion and only if they are satisfied that **exceptional circumstances** exist.

**Please note**, Penrice Academy will make referrals to Cornwall Council for the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice where holidays are taken within term-time.

### The law states:

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 of the said Act. Penalty notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in 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. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to court. '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.

### Punctuality

To ensure that all students arrive promptly for an 8.30am start, the school gate is closed at 8.28am each morning. All students who arrive between 8.28am and 8.45am, must sign in when they arrive and their attendance will be coded as 'L' (Late). The appropriate sanction will be issued. If a student is significantly late (after 8.45am), they must enter via Reception - their attendance will be coded as 'U' (Unauthorised), which affects attendance negatively, and the appropriate sanction will be issued.

### NHS Guidance for Absence Due to Illness

<b>Coughs and colds</b> (Including a runny nose)	There is no need for your child to remain at home if they have a minor cough or common cold. However, if they have a fever they should be kept off until their temperature returns to normal.
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<b>Cold Sores</b>	There is no need to keep your child off school if they have a cold sore.
<b>Head lice and nits</b>	There is no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice or nits.
<b>Sore throat</b>	You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat, unless it is accompanied by a high fever.
<b>Vomiting and diarrhoea</b>	If your child has severe vomiting and diarrhoea please seek medical advice. If the advice is for your child to remain at home, please provide this evidence on their return.
<b>General illness</b>	Children should attend school once they feel better. If they are unwell in the morning, but better by the afternoon, they can return. If you feel this could be anxiety related, please seek advice from school as we can support with this, rather than keep them at home.
<b>Minor headache</b>	A child with a minor headache doesn't need to be kept off school. If the headache is more severe, a GP should be consulted.
<b>COVID</b> (It is not recommended that children are tested for COVID 19, unless directed by a health professional)	If your child has mild symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat or slight cough, and feels well enough, they can go to school. Your child should try to avoid contact with other people if they have symptoms of covid 19 with a high temperature and do not feel well enough to do their normal activities.
<b>Chickenpox</b>	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 appear.
<b>Conjunctivitis</b>	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 hands regularly.

Finally, if would like to discuss any issues your child may be experiencing, which are preventing them from attending school, please contact the school as soon as possible and speak to either your child's Head of Year or Pastoral Support Mentor.

Thank you for your continued support.

**Mr C Foster**  
**Deputy Headteacher**

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