

7th September 2020



Dear Parent/Carer,

Oasis Academy Brislington is working in partnership with parents, carers and Bristol City Council to encourage children back into education following several very challenging months for families and education settings. We would like to thank parents and carers for the work you have done in ensuring your children have received education during this period.

In March when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, the government made it clear that no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school. Schools and settings were then closed to all but a specific group of pupils; those of key workers and vulnerable children.

Now the circumstances have changed, it is vital for all children to return to schools and other settings to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on their education, wellbeing and wider development. We know that many children have missed being with their friends and the wider social aspects of school life.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. ***School attendance is therefore compulsory again from the beginning of the autumn term.***

This means from September 2020, the usual rules on school attendance apply, including:

- parents' duty to send their child to school regularly where they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability of local authorities to use legal sanctions, including penalty notices and prosecution in court.

If you are worried about your child attending the academy the first port of call is to discuss your concerns with us directly. Our specialist staff who may be able to help, and all schools work closely with health and council teams who may also be able to help if needed.

In addition, this is not the time to take your child out of school for a family holiday or other term time leave. It is unlikely that any leave will be authorised by the Head Teacher/Principal after so much enforced absence from school. The more your child is in school, the more they will improve their learning and enjoy the other benefits of their educational experience.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members.

Principal - Peter Knight
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No school or local authority wants to take legal action, and every attempt to resolve parent and carers' concerns and improve a child's attendance will be made before any formal action is considered.

After so much disruption to your child/ren's education over recent months, the most important thing is that we work together and support each other.

We wish you and your child all the best for the coming academic year.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N Pugh'.

Natasha Pugh
'Best Culture'
Vice Principal