

16 September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Attendance Update for the start of the Academic Year 2025 - 2026

Welcome to our first attendance update for the Academic Year 2025 - 2026! The Attendance Team have been glad to welcome back all students after the summer break.

After our INSET day on Tuesday 2nd September, it was so good to see life flow back into the school as students arrived back, firstly, on the Wednesday with our new starters in Y7 and Y12 and then with the rest of the school on the Thursday. The students had been missed by all staff and it was great to see them excitedly talking to each other about their summers and all they had been doing. Now Term 1 is fully underway.

Y7 are settling in well and are being looked after by their tutors and Ms Ford (Head of Year 7), Mr White (Deputy Head of Year 7) and Mr Campbell (Learning Mentor in Year 7). Please do contact the Year 7 team via enquiries@smrt.bristol.sch.uk or call the main school number: **01173772100** if you have any concerns or your child is struggling; we want to know and we want to support them!

Making sure students feel like they belong at St Mary Redcliffe & Temple School is paramount to us and we want to develop strong relationships with you to do all we can to settle students in. We appreciate students may be very tired but having them here is key, please send tired students into school, we will look after them. Absence in the first few days of school often becomes a pattern of absence in the future, as the Education Secretary made clear in her recent announcement: 'more than half of pupils who missed some of the first week went on to become "persistently absent" in 2024, compared with just 14% of pupils who fully attended the first week'. [Education Secretary announcement](#)

As part of ensuring students are given the best opportunity to succeed at school, we need to make clear that we do not authorise term-time holidays as part of schools' normal approach to absences. We appreciate that holidays are a lot cheaper outside of term-time, but this has a huge impact on the learning of students and their wellbeing as they try to catch up with missed lessons.

You may have noticed that we have invested in a new system of reporting absences for parents and carers. Studybugs is an app that can be downloaded to report any whole day absences eg. illness. This is the quickest and easiest method for you to report an absence and the letter attached explains more detail and gives a quick QR code for you to get it on your phone. If there are medical appointments or part days a student will need to miss school,

please call or email the attendance team at: attendance@smrt.bristol.sch.uk or call on: **0117 3532069** rather than using the study bugs app. Please try to make any appointments outside of school time, where possible.

If you are not aware, we have a clear approach when addressing lates at St Mary Redcliffe & Temple School. If students are very late, after registers close at 9am (that's 30 minutes after school starts) on more than 10 occasions (known as U codes), these will generate a Penalty Notice. We appreciate that with roadworks, bus strikes and unforeseen circumstances, there will be times that your child is late to school but we need to ensure that students have a clear understanding and they understand the expectations for them to be in school on time. We will let you know where there are a series of U codes, alongside our daily U code notifications that are sent out, so that you can take action and address this with your child. You may be surprised that students can be regularly late after 9am, but there are some students who choose to visit local shops and cafes rather than come in to school on time.

We hope that all students are able to settle back into school quickly and that they know that, for us as a staff body, they are the reason we choose to teach and support young people. Each day brings smiles to the faces of our staff as we watch young people learn, develop and grow. We remain committed to continue building strong relationships with you and your children, through the setting of safe boundaries, and ensuring that their learning is empowered and inspiring as they work hard to excel in their education and make their own unique contribution to the community and the wider world.

Take care

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Pike', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jon Pike

Assistant Headteacher: Safeguarding, Attendance and Belonging.