



7th January 2026

Dear Parent/Carers

School is better when you're here!

We are writing to remind everyone of the importance of regular school attendance. Every day in school matters and is a valuable opportunity for our pupils to learn, grow, and thrive. When children are present, they not only benefit from lessons and learning opportunities, but also from friendships, routines, and the wider experiences that help them grow in confidence and resilience.

Cornwall Council's code of conduct for the issue of penalty notices requires that we share the information below with our families on a termly basis. Please do read this information carefully, especially given that there were changes to the government statutory requirements for attendance in August 2024, particularly around the Penalty Notice framework.

At Cury School, we understand that there are times when it may be necessary for a student to be absent from school, such as when they are genuinely unwell. In these instances, it is appropriate to authorise the absence. However, the Government has made it clear that children should not be taken out of school for other reasons unless the school agrees it is justified under 'exceptional circumstances.'

As part of this regulation, any requests for leave must be made in writing to the Head of Provision, using our school's 'Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances' form which you can get from the school office.

No absence for holiday can be authorised. Any absence required for exceptional circumstance will always be considered by the Head of Provision, but the definition of an 'exceptional circumstance' is very tight and most requests that we receive do not fall into the government's 'exceptional circumstance' category.

Penalty fines are issued to each parent, not jointly. Therefore, each parent would receive a penalty fine of £80 if a child was to accrue 10 unauthorised sessions from school. Below are some examples of how 10 unauthorised absence sessions could occur:

- 5 days of school missed due to holiday.
- 3 days missed for a holiday and 2 days where absence is not reported to school.
- 10 days of unauthorised lateness to school.

We have been asked to communicate the below information from the government:

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 and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.

If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further 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 and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days.

Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Absence not authorised by the school may also result in a 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. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

'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.



Cury School



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Thank you for taking the time to read this information. Working together, we can make sure that your child's attendance remains strong and that they benefit fully from all that Cury School has to offer.

We encourage you to contact the school if you have any concerns or if you need advice and support in helping your child maintain regular school attendance.

At Cury School, we are committed to working with parents and carers to ensure that every child is given the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Yours Sincerely

Jodie McGregor

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Family Liaison