

Bridge School Malvern



Parent/Carer Handbook

Welcome

Welcome to the Bridge School Malvern. This handbook provides important information about what you and your child can expect as part of our community of learners.

We are committed to making sure Bridge School Malvern is a safe and happy environment for pupils and staff. We maintain a relaxed and friendly environment, which nurtures and values each individual child. We have high expectations for ourselves and for pupils, encouraging good levels of achievement in both learning and personal development.

You can be assured that we will do all we can to make your child's time here a worthwhile and rewarding experience.

Please take the time to go through this information with your child so that you both know what to expect when they start.

Sue Hornby
Head Teacher

About the school

Bridge School Malvern is an independent Special Needs School supporting 11-19's to flourish and progress to successful adulthood. We have a creative and therapeutic approach, recognising emotional and social well-being is key to achieving well.

Pupils aged 16-19 attend our sixth form, Bridge Business Centre, based in Barnards Green in Malvern. Here we have three micro businesses: online retail, manufacturing and catering. Young people are supported by Vocational and Careers staff to develop their independence and skills needed to be ready for work. When they are ready young people undertake regular work experience as part of their overall programme

Mission statement and values

Bridge School Malvern exists for the benefit of children and young people who need an alternative approach to learning, or who need help preparing for transitional life stages such as secondary school to employment or further education or training.

Our aim is to meet young people's learning and emotional needs, and to support them in improving their employment and life chances. The development of positive attitudes to learning and aspirational life goals central to the support we provide.

Meet the Management Team

Headteacher	Sue Hornby
Deputy Headteacher	Simon Rowe
Chief Executive Officer	Neil Hornby
SENDCo	Sarah Whitelaw
Employability & Careers Manager	Lucy Hodgkins
Head of Sixth Form	Vicky Gundersen
Assistant Head of Sixth Form	Emma Thomas
Designated Lead for Child Protection	Vicky Gundersen and Sue Hornby
Deputy Designated Lead for Child Protection	Emma Thomas
Deputy Designated Lead for Child Protection	Izzy Hancocks
Designated Lead for Looked After Children	Vicky Gundersen

The school day

9.00am Arrival

Bags and personal items placed into individual lockers, mobile phones, smartwatches or other technology is to be handed in.

Session 1	Session 2	Break	Session 3	Lunch	Session 4
9.15am - 10.15am	10.15am - 11.15am	15 mins	11.30am - 12.30pm	30 mins	1.00pm - 2.00pm

Pupils are given the option to move between the social spaces or quiet rooms during break times and lunch times up to the point where they are granted permission to venture into Barnard's Green to visit local shops during their free time. This is something that is earned over time and granted with parental consent. Whilst on site, pupils are supervised at all times but when given permission to go into Barnard's Green they do this without staff supervision.

A cooked lunch is provided daily and will cater to dietary requirements as needed. And as at the high school site there is no staffroom, staff and pupils eat lunch together. Parents/Carers may choose to send a packed lunch, or pupils may wish to purchase food from Barnard's Green once they have permission.

Contact details

To contact the sixth form, call 01684 778400 or email vickygundersen@bridgeschoolmalvern.org

Absence due to sickness

Please let the school know **by 9am** if your child is to be absent from school. There will be extra support available if your child cannot go to school for long periods because of a health problem.

Administration of Medication

If medicine needs to be administered during school time, then a parent/carer must bring it to the school and fill in the Administration of Medication Permission & Record form. Please refer to our Administration of Medicine policy available on the school website [Administration of Medicine Policy](#).

Prescription Medication

Prescription medicines should be administered at home wherever possible, for example medicines that need to be taken three times a day can usually be taken before school, after school and at bedtime. Parents are encouraged to ask their GP whether this is possible. Prescription medicines will only be administered by the school where it would be detrimental to a child's health if it were not done.

Medicines should always be provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist and include the prescriber's instructions for administration. The exception to this is insulin which must still be in date, but will generally be available to store inside an insulin pen or a pump, rather than in its original container. The Bridge will not accept medicines that have been taken out of the container nor make changes to dosages on parental instruction.

Non Prescription Medication

Where possible, the school will avoid administering non-prescription medicine. However, we may do so if requested by the parent, perhaps to finish a course of antibiotics, to apply a lotion or to administer paracetamol for toothache or other pain. However, such medicines will only be administered in school where it would be detrimental to a child's health if it were not given during the day.

When a child requires immediate non-prescription medication during the school day the parent/carer will be contacted by telephone for verbal permission. If medication has been administered the parent/carer will be asked to complete the Administration of Medication Permission & Record form and return it to the office as soon as practicable.

If non-prescription medication is to be administered, then the parent/carer must complete an Occasional Administration of Medication – Permission & Record form, for non-prescription/over the counter medicines and handed into the office, with the medication in its original packaging, when the child arrives at school.

Attendance and punctuality

Bridge School Malvern will work with pupils and families to support good attendance and punctuality. Parents will be supported to address poor punctuality and attendance where necessary.

For pupils to have a future with as many choices and opportunities as possible, it is important that they are in school regularly and punctually. Learning is a progressive activity; each day's lessons build upon those of the previous days. Teachers use discussions, demonstrations, experiments and practical participation in their daily learning activities, and these cannot be made up by those who are absent. There is a clear link between attendance at school and achievement. Regular school attendance also promotes good social and coping skills and the development of responsible patterns of behaviour.

Children with SEND

Naturally we hope for 100% attendance but recognise that many children with SEND may have a variety of hospital and specialist health appointments to attend and may struggle with anxiety. All these things will be taken into account when reviewing absence at various attendance review points. Staff will work to support pupils and families at all times.

Reporting an Absence

For absence reporting, please call the office on 01684 778400. Melissa is responsible to collecting daily attendance. If you need to inform us of any upcoming medical appointments where you child will be absent, please email melissasmith@bridgeschoolmalvern.org

Attendance review levels

Below 95%

The reasons for absence will be reviewed. Hospital appointments and other specialist interventions will be taken into account. If the attendance figure is still below 95% then there will be a letter of concern sent to parents and a meeting arranged between parents/carers and the Assistant Head of Centre where we can look at ways we can work together to improve attendance.

Below 93%

The Assistant Head of Centre will work with parents/carers to agree a four week home-school attendance contract and provide any support the school can to implement targets in the contract.

Below 91%

If attendance sinks below 91%, then a referral to the local Authority Education Welfare Officer and other external support will be sought, such as Family Support.

No improvement

If there is no improvement, or if attendance drops below 91% then a penalty warning notice will be issued and possible prosecution.

What the percentage figures mean for your child in days out of school

The following chart shows what attendance percentages mean in days absent and lessons missed. It is essential that children come to school every day and on time so they can make the best possible progress in their learning and to experience positive unstructured social opportunities.

% Attendance	Days out of school	Number of lessons missed
100	0 days off	0
99	2 days off	10
98	4 days off	20
97	5 days off	25
96	7 days off	35
95	9 days off	45
94	11 days off	55
93	13 days off	65
92	15 days off	75
91	17 days off	85
90	19 days off	95
89	21 days off	105
88	23 days off	115
87	25 days off	125
86	27 days off	135
85	29 days off	145

Banned items

We ask that pupils are mindful of the snacks they may choose to bring or buy and this will be monitored by staff who have the option to intervene if deemed unacceptable. Energy drinks and sports drinks remained banned at all times.

At the sixth form, some rules may be adjusted to give pupils the option to keep their mobile phones and devices in their lockers or on their person if they show an appropriate level of responsibility and it is seen as a positive step forward - this could be to help them learn appropriacy of phone usage in the workplace for example.

Behaviour and safety

We believe all pupils and staff should feel physically and emotionally safe; and personally valued and respected. We recognise when pupils feel safe and happy they are best placed to learn. All staff have pupils' safety and general wellbeing at the top of their priorities and work to positive behaviour management guidelines in accordance with our behaviour policy. This means that the behaviour we want to see is positively acknowledged and rewarded. We have a dedicated pastoral team who work with pupils to develop their learning on behaviour and who liaise closely with home.

We recognise positive behaviours and attitudes through 'Student of the Month' certificates as well as regular praise and recognition. The approach to pupil's facing challenges will vary depending upon the needs of the individual and will be managed by our pastoral staff to find the best support for each pupil.

Bullying

We want every pupil to feel safe and valued at the Bridge. Of course, misunderstandings can arise between pupils and staff work hard with pupils to help them know the difference between a misunderstanding and bullying. The Bridge does not tolerate bullying. Repeated incidents are classed as gross misconduct and will result in fixed term exclusions. Please see our Anti-bullying Policy on the website [Anti-Bullying Policy](#).

Communication

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Because of our ongoing conversation with parents, we do not have parent's evenings. Our pastoral team is available by phone and email daily, and teaching staff are available to meet with parents on request.

The pastoral team is available from 8.30am in the morning for you to let them know your day to day concerns about your child.

You can contact Izzy, Vicky or Emma on 01684 778400:

izzyhancocks@bridgeschoolmalvern.org

vickyundersen@bridgeschoolmalvern.org

emmathomas@bridgeschoolmalvern.org

The pastoral team will contact you if there is any cause for concern about your child in school. Parents should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

Email

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

Text messages

We will text parents about:

- Praise for your child
- Payments
- Forms for Consent
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Reminders for school events
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

Letters

We send the following letters home regularly.

- Letters about trips and visits
- NHS routine checks and consents
- Consent forms for external support

At the end of the half-term (termly for the sixth form) we issue a school newsletter giving you information about what's going on at the Bridge and informing you of future events as well as important dates for your diary.

Complaints

We try to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed as contained in our Parental Complaints Policy which is available on the website [Parental Complaints Policy](#). You can also request a printed copy from the office.

Curriculum

The aim of the Bridge School Malvern curriculum is to provide a broad and balanced education that enables children to accumulate personal and practical skills and knowledge they need for a successful transition to adulthood. The curriculum includes a high level of social and emotional skill development, and is specifically designed to enable pupils to make a positive progression to further education and training and employment. The curriculum offers a strong focus on developing an understanding of employability skills, independent living skills and vocational skills.

We recognise the crucial role which parents and carers play in their child's education and make every effort to encourage parental involvement in their educational process. We value the cultural, moral and spiritual development of young people, and encourage understanding of these values through the curriculum. We respect each child in our school for who they are, and we treat them with fairness and honesty. Further information is available on our Curriculum Policy on the website [Curriculum Policy](#).

Careers Education and Guidance

Careers guidance is an essential part of Bridge School Malvern's curriculum. The Bridge careers programme aims to encourage pupils to be ambitious, broaden their horizons and explore their own career aspirations throughout their life at school and ensure pupil readiness to take their next step in their learning or career.

Throughout their time at the sixth form, pupils will be given dedicated 1:1 careers guidance, a variety of work experience placements and employer interactions, employability skills development and a whole host of vocational skills and knowledge.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Pupils with EAL must learn in and through another language. In addition, they may come from different cultural backgrounds to their peers and face different expectations of language, education and learning. We welcome the cultural, linguistic and educational experiences pupils with EAL contribute to the school. We will ensure strategies are in place to support pupils with EAL to enable pupils with EAL to become confident, and to acquire the language skills needed to reach their full academic potential. We will provide

a welcoming atmosphere for newly arrived pupils with EAL. We assess the skills and needs of pupils with EAL and gather accurate information regarding children's backgrounds, cultures and abilities to equip teachers and support staff with the necessary skills, resources and knowledge to support pupils. We will use all available resources to raise the attainment of pupils and systematically monitor pupils' progress, and adapt policies and procedures accordingly. As a school we ensure all children's languages, cultures and identities are represented in classrooms and throughout the school. The school will maximise opportunities to model the fluent use of English and ensure pupils with EAL are acknowledged for their skills in their own languages. You can refer to our policy on EAL available on our website [EAL Policy](#).

Religious & Sex Education

The RSE curriculum is made available to all pupils. Given the SEND profile of pupils at the Bridge, and the wide range of needs presented, the delivery of the RSE curriculum will be delivered sensitively.

Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

The LA Sexual Health Team makes regular visits to the school and their visits form part of the delivery of this aspect of RSE. Parents will be informed of opportunities for their child to see the Sexual Health Nurse.

Teaching material will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and will allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment. Coaches will use distancing techniques, set ground rules to help manage sensitive discussion and use question boxes to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously.

Alongside being taught about intimate relationships, pupils will also be taught about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult.

Right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw)

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Before granting any such request, the Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child with reference to government guidelines.

Requests to withdraw a child from sex education must be made in writing.

There is no right to withdraw from relationships education or health education. Please see our RSE Policy on our website [Religious & Sex Education Policy](#).

Specialist Interventions

Many of our pupils require specialist interventions to help them make progress. These interventions can range from speech and language support, emotional literacy programmes and social skills programmes to name a few. Not all interventions mentioned in the EHCP can be delivered at once but rather spread throughout the time the pupil is at school. Interventions are carefully considered and introduced to the pupil at an appropriate time. Sessions will either be 1-2-1 or in small groups.

Spiritual, Moral & Cultural Development

The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC) at the Bridge is a whole school issue. It is promoted not only through all the subjects of the curriculum, but also through the ethos of the school and through the development of positive attitudes and values.

Sports

At the sixth form pupils get the opportunity to take part in weekly team sports sessions and also attend a local gym; this could be in timetabled sessions but they are also given the opportunity to make use of the gym membership in their personal time too. In addition to this there are ad hoc sporting events planned in throughout the academic year.

Trips

Pupils are encouraged to participate in the school trips we organise throughout the year. We recognise that for some pupils this can be challenging, so they are given lots of information in advance, as well as an allocated staff member for the duration of the trip. There is always a first aider on the trips.

Charging for School Visits

We do not charge for school trips. This is to ensure the inclusion of all pupils, irrespective of socio-economic backgrounds.

Visitors

Guest Speakers/Visitors

Throughout the school year we have a range of visitors to the school who further enrich the pupils' knowledge and experience. This may range from sports initiatives, local companies or local politicians.

Exclusions

The Bridge wants pupils in school. A decision to exclude, even for the remainder of the day, is not taken lightly, it has to be a serious incident for this to happen. A decision to exclude will only be made after support has been given and opportunities to engage in activities such as restorative justice or mediation have been unsuccessful. A non-exhaustive list of the sorts of behaviour that could merit exclusion includes:

- bullying
- verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against pupils or adults
- racist abuse
- sexual abuse (verbal or physical)
- damage to property
- physical assault against pupils or adults
- drug and/or alcohol misuse
- theft
- persistent disruptive behaviour
- disrespectful attitudes towards staff and noncompliance

Parents will be asked to collect the child from school if the exclusion is taking place part way through a school day. If the exclusion means a child will be at home for a day or more the child is expected to complete independent work set by the school. The school will lend a Chromebook and a charger for the period of time your child is excluded. These are to be returned to the chromebook storage cupboard.

There will be a re-entry interview when the pupil returns to school, which parents/carers are encouraged to attend. The reason for, and the events leading up to the exclusion will be discussed. Any subsequent consequences of the behaviour will be reviewed and a plan to move forward positively will be agreed. Where appropriate, restorative justice will be arranged by the Assistant Head of Centre, between parties involved in the incident. More information on exclusions is available in the Exclusion Policy on the website [Exclusion Policy](#).

There may be times when pupils are excluded from break and lunchtime activities, so that staff can support them to manage their anxiety and behaviour issues. Parents will be informed in these instances.

First Aid

We have staff who are trained to administer first aid when needed. If the nature of the injury means your child will require further medical assessment/treatment, you may be required to collect your child from the school.

If the nature of your child's injury is serious, the school will call an ambulance and you will be contacted by staff.

Health and Safety

At the Bridge we have a broad range of vocational areas, retail, manufacturing, catering, art and access to work experience placements. To enable pupils to benefit from the therapeutic benefits as well as the vocational skills, pupils are required to wear appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment) such as overalls, steel toe capped boots or wellies, protective gloves etc to keep themselves and others safe in our vocational areas. This is not optional, it is to keep them safe as well as others. If they do not wear these they will be unable to take part in the session. Within the vocational areas pupils will learn how to work safely in a working environment and learn employability skills such as risk assessment, teamwork, organisation skills, respect and responsibility. Within their sessions they are expected to tidy equipment and working areas as part of their team skills. Please see our H&S Policy on the website [Health & Safety Policy](#).

Leave during term time

The school will not give permission for family holidays in term time. You can only allow your child to miss school if they are too ill to attend, or other exceptional reasons. Applications for term time leave must be made in writing to the headteacher, before any tickets are purchased or other arrangements are made.

Being in school is important to children's academic achievement, wellbeing, and wider development. Young people benefit from positive peer relationships at school, which contributes to better mental health and wellbeing. Regular school attendance is a key to supporting economic and social outcomes in adulthood. It is widely accepted that pupils with the highest school attendance make more positive transitions to further education, employment and adult life.

Requests for leave can only be granted by schools if there are exceptional circumstances. Family holidays, shopping trips, or birthday treats are not considered exceptional. These activities must be arranged during school holidays or weekends. This applies to all families with school aged children.

Schools have various legal powers if your child is missing school without a good reason. Information regarding this can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance>

It is essential that you check with the headteacher whether term time absence will be considered as an exceptional circumstance BEFORE you book tickets or make other arrangements. Term time absence must be requested in writing to the headteacher.

You can be fined for taking your child on holiday during term time without the school's permission.

Meetings

Each year you will be invited to an Annual Review of EHCP meeting to discuss your child's progress and ways to forward their learning, both at home and in school. A comprehensive report is provided prior to the meeting and your views and your child's views will be taken.

Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures are available via the website or by request from the school. Our website address is: www.bridgeschoolmalvern.org

Pupil Online Safety

To support pupils in their safe use of the internet in school, they will be asked to sign our Pupil Acceptable Internet Use Agreement when they start. This sets out rules for using the internet on devices at the Bridge. We recognise there are many great aspects of using the internet but there are dangers too and we want to encourage parents and pupils to use the internet safely. During the time your child spends at school they will learn about online safety.

Online safety link

Bridge School Malvern has access to National Online Safety guides on topics from screen addiction, fake news, trolling, hacking, social media influencers and sexting etc.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/apps-guide/> for more information and download the free app.

Remote Learning

There may be occasions where your child is unable to attend school but may be able to join remotely for some sessions in the school day. Arrangements will be made for your child to use one of the BSM Chromebooks and you will need to sign for receipt of this. In these cases, where it is practically possible for staff to provide these lessons, one of our Pastoral Care team will be in communication with you. Your child will be familiar with the IT process to join in the session remotely and you will have already given your consent for recording the online lesson through the annual consents forms.

Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning. The report will be sent home termly and will provide information about their achievements in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance.

Restorative Justice

Where misunderstandings happen we often use a restorative justice approach. This brings those affected by a particular incident to play their part in bringing about a positive way forward. Staff facilitate a meeting between pupils or between a pupil and staff member. They work together to improve their mutual understanding and help them to reflect on how they interacted with each other to prevent it happening in the future.

Safeguarding Children

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

We have a number of policies and procedures in place that contribute to our safeguarding commitment, including our Safeguarding Children Policy which is available on the website [Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy](#). You can also request a copy from the office.

Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies, when there are concerns about a child's welfare. We will ensure that our concerns about our pupils are discussed with parents/carers first, unless we have reason to believe that such a move would be contrary to the child's welfare.

We actively support the Government's Prevent Agenda to counter radicalism and extremism.

The safeguarding team at the Bridge(6th Form):

Vicky Gundersen - Designated Lead

Emma Thomas- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Izzy Hancocks- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Post 16 Student Discount and Identity Card

The Bridge School Malvern is registered with the student ID and discount card scheme called Totum. This means that young people (aged 16 and above) can sign up to join. For information on how to join and what discounts are available, follow the link - [TOTUM](#) or go to totum.com. There are various options including a free digital option. For information on pricing, go to <https://www.totum.com/pricing>. You will need to use your student school email address and choose the establishment Bridge School Malvern.

Transport

Bridge School Malvern does not provide transport to and from school. Transport may be provided by the Local Authority. Parents should contact their local authority for information about the provision of transport or travel expenses.

Worcestershire

https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20275/special_education_needs_and_disabilities_travel_assistance

Gloucestershire

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/school-transport/transport-assistance-for-sen-pupils/>

Herefordshire

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/xfp/form/273>

Uniform

Pupils do not have to wear a school uniform at the Bridge, but we expect pupils to dress appropriately. Remember this is a school, and vocational centre. Clothes should be appropriate for the season, and appropriate for working outdoors and in practical settings such as a workshop, kitchen or work experience placement. Please note the following:

- Baseball caps and sunglasses are acceptable, but only for outdoor use in the summer. They must be handed in at reception when children are indoors.
- Shorts, skirts and dresses must not be above the knee.
- Sensible shoes suitable for vocational centre, ie no heels or open toed sandals, sliders or slaps.
- Hoodies can be worn, but hoods must be kept down when inside the buildings.
- No crop tops; off the shoulder tops; low cut tops that expose the chest/cleavage; or loose sleeveless tops that expose the chest area and/or underwear.
- No exposure of belly/back etc, ie tops must be tucked in and remain tucked in when arms are raised.
- No football shirts.
- Logos, pictures or lettering etc on clothing must be appropriate for school.

Jewellery and face or body piercings may need to be removed in accordance with risk assessment of tasks. Bridge clothing can be ordered online via the link on the school website.

Statement of Faith

The founders of Bridge School Malvern set the school up as a response to their Christian faith and values. These Christian values are important to us, they underpin our approach in valuing every child and adult, inspiring us to strive our hardest for the best outcomes for each individual. These values underpin all we do at the school and provide an environment and culture where young people can grow in confidence and happiness.

We believe that all young people are unique and of value. We want to help them to recognise their gifts and talents and help support them to develop the character and skills which will enable them to develop their unique role in the world. We want our pupils to embrace the future with hope, faith, confidence and compassion.

We want young people to have the opportunity to be able to find out about Christianity within the context of finding out about other faiths and no faith beliefs; and to be free to explore their own position on these.

Board of Governors

Bridge School Malvern

Chair of Governing Body (Proprietor) Sarah Slater - Email: sarahslater@bridgeschoolmalvern.org