

**Five Islands Academy**  
**Carn Gwaval**  
**St Mary's**  
**Isles of Scilly**  
**TR21 ONA**



**Headteacher**  
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*Equity, Excellence, Evolution*

*The Five Islands Academy is an all-age, multi-site, Church of England Academy,  
serving the island communities of Bryher, St Agnes, St Martin's, St Mary's and Tresco.  
It is part of the Leading Edge Academies Partnership.*

Tuesday 4 February 2025

### **Important information about school attendance**

Dear Parents,

At Five Islands Academy, we're ambitious about children achieving their goals and aspirations. Being in school and having the best attendance possible underpins all the many benefits of school for your child, such as their learning, wellbeing and wider development.

As a parent you are legally responsible for making sure your child receives a suitable full time education. If your child attends Five Islands Academy, you are also responsible for ensuring they attend school regularly. They must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or when given permission for an absence in advance from the school for a specific reason, such as to attend a doctor's or dentist's appointment.

There are some important changes that parents need to be aware of regarding school attendance that were published in the revised statutory guidance '*Working together to improve school attendance*' that was published in August 2024. If your child is absent from school without permission or a valid reason, you are likely to be breaking the law. When this happens, you will be contacted so that we understand the reasons. A new national threshold for issuing penalty notices has been introduced that could result in a penalty fine being issued for unauthorised absences including holidays taken during term.

You must request a leave of absence from school in advance if your child needs to be absent from school. The Five Islands Academy has an updated [Attendance Policy](#), which includes a new [Absence Request Form](#) (ARF), both of which reflect the changes in legislation. Paper copies of the ARF are available from reception.

We recognise that for some children, attending school every day can be harder than for others. This is why Five Islands Academy, Children's Services and other partners, are committed to working together with families to solve problems and support your child's school attendance. The Council's

***All aboard! Navigating together***

[www.fiveislands.scilly.sch.uk](http://www.fiveislands.scilly.sch.uk)

website is in the process of being updated with information and further guidance on how we will work together to support school attendance. You will also have seen the shared communication sent out on Friday from Anne Coyle and Kelley Butcher which clearly indicates the partnership working in place to reduce unauthorised absence from school.

Further information and support for parents and carers is available at:

<https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2024/07/aaa-guide-for-parents-on-school-attendance-19th-Aug-version.pdf>

For most parents, these changes will not impact upon them directly because their child(ren)'s attendance is already very high. We appreciate your support in sending your children to school for as many days as possible out of the 190 days of school available, and for making sound judgements regarding when they are too unwell to attend. Thank you for this ongoing support of your child's education and learning.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to attend a Headteacher's surgery, either in person or online, from 9am daily or email me directly at [rachelgibb@fiveislands.org](mailto:rachelgibb@fiveislands.org).

Yours faithfully,

Rachel Gibb  
Headteacher