



**Birmingham
Independent
College.**

BIRMINGHAM INDEPENDENT COLLEGE (BIC)

Parent/Carers & Student Handbook 2025/2026

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1. Welcome

Welcome to Birmingham Independent College (BIC). We are delighted to have you join our thriving and supportive community. As a small but successful college, we take pride in offering a personalised learning experience. This document provides key information to support both students and parents throughout the academic year.

2. Our Vision

At BIC, our vision is to deliver exceptional academic teaching and meaningful learning experiences, complemented by focused vocational and employment training. Each student follows an individualised learning plan, carefully designed to help them reach their full potential. Whether pursuing a functional, vocational, or academic pathway, our goal is to equip students with the skills and confidence to succeed in their chosen career.

3. Our Aim

- To nurture and celebrate the unique strengths of every student, empowering them to achieve their full potential.
- To prepare students for a fulfilling life by introducing them to diverse, stimulating, and enjoyable experiences.
- To develop articulate, literate, numerate, and resilient individuals who can thrive in all aspects of life.
- To be an inclusive community that consistently strives for the highest standards in teaching and learning.
- To foster a strong partnership between parents, the wider community, and the college, ensuring that education is a shared responsibility and a collective achievement.

4. Term Dates 2025-2026

Autumn Term 2025

Term Starts: Monday 1 September 2025

Half Term: Monday 27 October 2025 to Friday 31 October 2025

Term Ends: Friday 19 December 2025

Spring Term 2026

Term Starts: Monday 5 January 2026

Half Term: Monday 16 February 2026 to Friday 20 February 2026

Term Ends: Friday 27 March 2026

Summer Term 2026

Term Starts: Monday 13 April 2026

Half Term: Monday 25 May 2026 to Friday 29 May 2026

Term Ends: Monday 20 July 2026

5. Important dates for the College Year (these are subject to change)

Important Dates	Dates
Teacher Training Days	2 nd - 4 th September 5 th January 13 th April 20 th July
Functional Skills Exam	On Demand
GCSE/BTEC/A Level Exams	As directed by exam boards – details will be provided
College Visits/Trips	Usually during the final week before the end of each term. More details to be announced.
Bank Holidays	25 th December, 26 th December, 1 st January, 3 rd April, 6 th April, 4 th May, 25 th May, 31 st August.

6. Contacting BIC

The college is open Mondays to Thursdays, from 8:30am to 16:30pm. A member of the SLT/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) team will be available throughout the holiday period for urgent safeguarding concerns.

Your first point of contact is: Ms Vivienne Lambert

Ms Lambert is the Operations Manager and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and can be contacted by telephone on **0121 507 0904 or 07486 888054** or email at **vlambert@biccollege.org**.

The college address is:

Birmingham Independent College
Albert Hall
Witton Road
Aston Birmingham
B6 5NU

The college website is www.biccollege.org. the college email is info@biccollege.org.

If Ms Lambert is not available please contact Ms McIntosh, Head of College/Designated Safeguarding Lead.

7. The College Day at BIC

At Birmingham Independent College, the college day runs from Monday to Thursday 8:45am to 3:00pm. Every student follows an individualised timetable and/or transition plan, tailored to their needs. These are issued on the first day in both paper and electronic formats (please ensure we have your most up-to-date email address). We also recommend that students take a photo of their timetable as a backup.

Students on Functional Skills, GCSE, A Level and BTEC programmes will also receive a diary in which they can record and keep their timetable. For students with Complex Needs, a daily log is provided. This outlines the day's activities and must be returned to college the following day, including any feedback from parents/carers.

Each timetable includes a registration period, usually 15 minutes before the first lesson. For students with complex needs - many of whom travel over 50 minutes - this is adapted to include a calming Morning Circle to reduce travel-related anxiety. To close the day, these students also enjoy Story Time, a reflective session that supports wellbeing and helps them transition smoothly from college to home.

As each student's timetable is unique, no two days look exactly the same. Below are examples of the different learning programmes available at BIC.

BIC Complex Needs Programme

Activities	Activities
Numbers	Sensory Play
Letters	Pampering
Reading	Games
Writing	Sports
Colours	Music
Drawing	Farm Visits
Craft	Gardening

Functional Skills Programme

Core Subjects	Additional Learning
Functional English	Citizenship / BSL / Food Skills / ASDAN courses
Functional Maths	Food Technology
ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)	Food Hygiene & Safety
Entry Level Science	PSHE (Personal, Social & Health Education)
	Life Skills
	Careers
	Relationships & Sex Education (RSE)

BIC Complex GCSE Programme

Core Subjects	Additional Learning
GCSE English Language	BTEC Health and Social Care
GCSE Maths	Hospitality and Catering
GCSE Combined Science	Food Technology & Hygiene
GCSE Sociology	Life Skills
GCSE Psychology	Careers
	Relationships & Sex Education (RSE)

BIC Complex A Level Programme

Subjects
BTEC Applied Science
BTEC Psychology
BTEC Forensic & Criminal Investigation
Physics
Maths
Further Maths

8. College Uniform

BIC Orange Hoodie

All students are required to wear the official BIC orange hoodie, which helps identify them as members of the college community. Hoodies must be purchased from the College Office before the start of term at a cost of £35.00 each. Students are expected to keep their hoodie clean and presentable at all times, as it is part of our college identity and a reflection of our standards. In addition, every student will be provided with a BIC Hi-Vi's vest. This must be worn whenever students are outside the college grounds, ensuring safety and easy identification.

Sports Uniform

As part of PSHE lessons, all students will take part in regular sports activities. For these sessions, students should wear:

- BIC Hi-Vis vest (provided by college)
- Loose-fitting t-shirt or top
- Jogging bottoms
- Trainers

Students with **long hair must tie it up** for safety. Further guidance on sports uniform and expectations will be shared on the first day of college.

9. Equipment List (Functional, GCSE and A Level Students)

Students must bring the following equipment to college every day:

- Writing pens (black, blue and red)
- Writing books/paper
- Pencils
- Rubber/Eraser
- Ruler
- An English dictionary
- Lever arch folder(s)
- A calculator
- A large bag for college work

Students are not allowed to leave the building under any circumstance between the hours of 8.45am and 3.00pm, unless authorised to do so.

During class times students should only leave their lesson when authorised
- by a member of the college team.

10. Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for every student's progress and success. Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure their child receives a full-time education that is suitable to their needs. Where a child is not receiving full-time education and no valid reason is provided, parents may face a fine. In more serious cases, they may be required to attend court, which could result in both a fine and a criminal record. To achieve their best at college, students must:

- **Attend regularly** – every lesson matters.
- **Arrive on time** – punctuality sets the tone for learning.

Daily Attendance

- If your child is absent from college, then please ring college as early as possible stating the reason why your child will not be in college.
- If your child is attending a medical appointment, then please provide the Office with proof of the appointment, otherwise it will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

- If we do not know why a child is not in school, then parents/carers will receive a phone call by 10am from the Office.
- If there is no reply, then they will leave a message asking parents/carers to phone college immediately.
- If college has not heard from parents/carers by 11.30am, the Office will call for a second time.
- If there is still no response, then college will send a text asking for parents/carers to contact college urgently.

Longer Absence

- If a child has been absent from college for more than 5 consecutive college days, then the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Ms Lambert) will contact parents/carers to have a conversation about how the student is and if college can provide any support.
- If a student is absent for more than 7 consecutive college days, then Ms Lambert will either do a safe and well visit or a zoom call so she can physically see the student.
- If a student is known to be off for a longer period of time, then Ms Lambert will discuss with SLT as to how to proceed.

Did you know?

- 5 minutes late every day means around 3 ½ days of education are missed
- A score of 90% in a test would be a good result but 90% attendance means that a child will have missed around 100 lessons over a school year.

Being on Time Matters

At BIC, we want you to get the very best out of every day. Arriving on time shows respect for yourself, your classmates, and your teachers. It means you don't miss out on important learning.

Here's what happens if you're late:

- **After 8:45am** – You'll get a detention the same day: every 5 minutes late = 20 minutes detention.
- **After 9:15am** – Your parent/carer will be contacted. You'll need to provide a reason for being late. If it's not a valid reason, you'll have a 60-minute detention that day.
- **If you are late more than twice in a month** – Your parent/carer will be invited in for a meeting with us, so we can find a way forward together.

We know sometimes things happen that can make you late, and we'll always listen. But being on time helps you start the day calm, ready, and confident. Every minute in class counts!

11. BIC Code of Conduct

At BIC we foster strong and positive relationships with every student by promoting attitudes of tolerance, mutual respect and confidence. We expect students to try their best and commit themselves to the highest standards of behaviour.

We expect our students to:

- Learn without disruption
- Respect themselves, other's points of view, irrespective of their race, gender, religion or background
- Do their best
- Be polite and courteous to teachers and other students
- Act with honesty and responsibility
- Be punctual
- Have a positive approach to all aspects of college life

We will not tolerate:

- Using mobile phones during the college day – phones must be handed to the Office at the beginning of the day and will be handed back at the end of that day
- Using gadgets (MP3, Tablets, Smart watches etc) during the college day
- Dressing inappropriately and immodestly
- Wearing jewellery (only small stud earrings or a small watch)
- Social media
- Bright coloured lipstick (natural coloured lip gloss)
- Using a computer or network for a purpose not permitted by the college
- Physical contact
- Bullying of any kind
- Any type of violence
- Vandalism, graffiti, or littering
- Cruel or insensitive behaviour
- Possession of or dealing in drugs or alcohol
- Smoking cigarettes/Vaping
- Any signs of disrespect to any member of the community
- Arriving late to college or to lessons

- Leaving the college without permission or missing lessons

In the unlikely event that students engage in behaviour that is contrary to our expectations, sanctions will be applied. Please refer to the BIC Behaviour Policy for more details.

CHEWING GUM IS NOT ALLOWED IN THE BUILDING!

FOOD IS NOT ALLOWED IN CLASSROOMS!

12. Personal Hygiene

We are all aware that health and hygiene is paramount to maintaining good physical and mental health, and particularly for those who need support with personal care. We know that some students may want to shy away from some of these activities, but it is our duty to ensure their health and wellbeing and that it is of the highest standard to keep everyone safeguarded.

BIC has taken the stance that all students must comply with the 5 points below and if these points are not applied as a minimum, we may ask that students are collected from college and not returned until the 5 points have been implemented.

Therefore, with effect from Monday 8th September 2025, we are urging parents/carers to comply with the following 5 health and hygiene points ensuring that their child arrives at college:

- 1. In clean and fresh clothing**
- 2. With their faces washed**
- 3. With their teeth brushed**
- 4. With their hair washed and combed**
- 5. Deodorant/anti-perspirant applied**

We know majority of our parents meet all the 5 points above, so please use this as a reminder and confirmation of the support you are providing to our young people.

We hope that you will appreciate that BIC wants all our students to be respected citizens and that in part means their personal hygiene and presentation is taken seriously.

We would encourage all parents to speak to us if you have any concerns with implementing the 5 points above.

13. Leave of absence/holidays/illness

If you are unable to attend college during term-time (e.g a medical appointment, family emergency) please contact the college before the day of request. It is very important that you attend college every day so please avoid taking family holidays in term-time. Medical appointments, where possible, should be made after college has finished.

If your child misses college, they must make time to catch up on any missed work and be available for extra lessons if necessary.

14. Free School Meals

College lunches will be charged at £4.50 each per day. A BIC lunch includes a balanced meal, fruit/dessert and drink. We serve a wide variety of vegetarian lunches both hot and cold including: Sandwiches, Quorn Chicken Burgers, Quorn Shepherd's Pie, Sweet & Sour Quorn Chicken, Pasta/Rice, Quorn Minced meat and Rice, Macaroni Cheese, Pizza, Chips.

IMPORTANT: Please also let us know of any dietary requirements and/or allergies that your child may have.

If you wish your child to have a BIC lunch we would need payment by cheque or cash a term in advance. Please speak to Office for further details.

If you believe your child is eligible for free school meals, please provide evidence using the directive from Birmingham City Council below:

You may be eligible to claim free school meals for your child, up to the age of 19 years, if you (or your child) get one of the following:

- Income support
- Income-based Jobseeker Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for the 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Universal Credit

Once we receive confirmation of your child being eligible we will provide a free lunch service to them.

Alternatively, you must send in a balanced packed lunch with your child each day.

15. Growth Mindset

In February 2016 BIC launched its Growth Mindset programme. This programme aims to establish a 'growth mindset' in all of our students. In contrast to a 'fixed mindset', a 'growth mindset' recognises that nobody's intelligence is fixed. It embraces the potential that talents and abilities can be developed through effort, good teaching and persistence. At BIC, failure is viewed as an opportunity to learn and improve abilities; and of utmost importance is resilience and determination to keep going in the face of a challenge.

We work to develop a growth mindset in our students in order to avoid the fixed mindset that often limits their learning potential. We want our students to achieve

their full potential, **to be the best that they can**, and our Growth Mindset programme helps turn a 'can't do' attitude into a 'can do' attitude. We expect our students' families to support this mindset and we will send out further guidance to help you do this.

16. BIC Mobile Phone/Devices Policy

Students are not allowed to use mobile phones/or devices whilst in school.

All students **MUST** put their mobile phones and/or devices into their named mobile phone container as soon as they arrive at college.

Student mobile phone containers are held in the Office and will be locked away until the end of the college day.

Students who do not hand in their mobile phone and/or devices will have it/them taken away from them and have it returned at the end of the next college day (parents will be informed) - plus 1 hour detention as a sanction.

If a student does not hand in their mobile phone and/or devices for a second time their phone will be taken away from them and return when their parent/carer comes into college and collects it – plus 1 hour detention for 3 days.

If a student does not hand in their mobile phone and/or devices for a third time their phone will be taken away from them and return when their parent/carer comes into college and collects it, at which point the student's sanctions will be formerly reviewed.

17. Parental Permission

Please see Appendix A for our parental permission form for your completion and return to the Office.

18. List of BIC Policies

Please see our list of policies in Appendix B which are on request most of which are available to view on our website.

BIRMINGHAM INDEPENDENT COLLEGE
PARENT CONSENT FORM: 2025-2026

Student's Name:

To demonstrate the achievements and progress of our students, the college following exam board requirements collects evidence in the form of **photographs and/or video recordings**. In some cases, this might be used to promote the college or as essential evidence which is part of the assessments for students to be awarded their qualifications.

All photographs and videos are stored securely within the college and are managed by the **administration and examinations team**. They are used solely for assessment purposes and are not shared outside the college or exam boards.

Please complete the form below to indicate whether you give permission for your child to be photographed or filmed for this purpose.

On the form below please indicate your permission for use of photographs/videos of your child.

Photographs/videos for use in college only

This includes for example photographs/videos of students on display in classrooms.

I give my consent to photos/videos on display	Sign:
I do not give my consent photos/videos on display	Sign:

Photographs/videos that we will publish on our website, prospectus or elsewhere.

I give my consent to publish photos/videos	Sign:
I do not give my consent to publish photos/videos	Sign:

Photographs/video accompanied by your child's first name only and published on our website, prospectus or elsewhere.

I give my consent for use of first name	Sign:
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I do not give my consent for use of first name	Sign:
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Additional consent required for photos used for school purposes

Sometimes your child will have a photo taken of them working with other students in their class or may even be in the background of another student's photo. Therefore, some photos that we share with other families may have your son/daughter in them or in the background of them.

I hereby give consent for such images to be shared.

I give my consent to photos with other students	Sign:
I do not give my consent to photos with other students	Sign:

Educational Visits

During the course of the college year your child will be going out on educational visits to various locations these visits will NOT include any hazardous activity.

I give my consent to educational visits	Sign:
I do not give my consent to educational visits	Sign:

Trampoline Permission

We have a trampoline in our Complex Needs classroom on the ground floor. Students will have the opportunity to use this equipment, one at a time, and accompanied by staff at all times.

We will assess them to check they are able to use it safely on their first use.

I give my consent to trampoline use	Sign:
I do not give my consent to trampoline use	Sign:

My child is familiar with trampolines, has used one regularly, and safely before, please select Yes or No.

Yes	No
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Massage Permission

There may be times when we practice hand and foot massage with our students.

I give my consent for HAND massages	Sign:
I do not give my consent for HAND massages	Sign:

I give my consent for FOOT massages	Sign:
I do not give my consent for FOOT massages	Sign:

Community Access Permission

Community access and preparing for adulthood forms an important part of our curriculum and so we ask for general consent for your child to go out on local visits during the course of the academic year.

I give my consent	Sign:
I do not give my consent	Sign:

Healthy snacks permission

Occasionally, students can be provided with snacks or food that has been cooked during cookery or life skills lessons which they can eat at college. Student's dietary requirements will be observed at all times.

I give my consent that food being made during lessons can be eaten at college	Sign:
I do not give my consent that food being made during lessons can be eaten at college	Sign:

I am aware that I may withdraw my consent at any time by notifying the college.

If at any point you are concerned about anything you see on the website, please let us know immediately.

If you are concerned about this in any way, please write to Ms. Lambert or contact the college by email on info@biccollege.org

Your Signature:	Date:
Name:	

APPENDIX B - List of BIC Policies

ADMISSIONS POLICY
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF (including low-level concerns) POLICY
ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
ATTENDANCE POLICY
AUTISM POLICY
BEHAVIOUR POLICY
BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN
CAREERS POLICY
CAREERS STATEMENT
COMPLAINTS POLICY
CURRICULUM
CYBERSECURITY POLICY
DATA PROTECTION POLICY
DISABILITY POLICY

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY
EQUALITY POLICY
EXCLUSIONS POLICY
FIRE DRILL/EVACUATION/FIRE ACTIVATION PROCEDURES
FIRST AID POLICY
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE
HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY - The management of health and safety at work regulations 1999 - Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

INTIMATE CARE POLICY
MARKING POLICY
MANUAL HANDLING POLICY
MEDICAL NEEDS POLICY
MOBILE PHONE POLICY
NO PLATFORM FOR EXTREMISM - No Platform Policy (from Birmingham City Council)
ONLINE SAFETY POLICY
PERSONAL EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN POLICY
PERSONAL EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN POLICY
PSHE CURRICULUM POLICY – COMPLEX NEEDS
PREVENTING EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION POLICY
PREVENT RISK ASSESSMENT
RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION AND HEALTH (RSE&H)
RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY
RULES OF ENTRY TO BIC
SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY
SEND POLICY
STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT
STAFF INDUCTION POLICY
STUDENT EXTERNAL TRAVEL GUIDE POLICY
STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK
WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

