

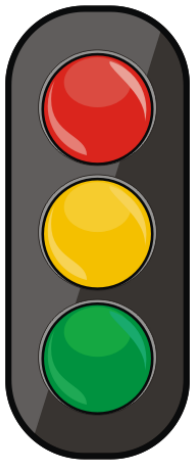


Strive | Believe | Achieve

Cwmbran High School

Attendance Policy




REVIEWED: February 2024
Approved by Governing Body



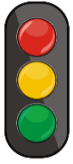
Here at Cwmbran High School we aim to provide an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach their full potential and to Strive-Believe-Achieve. This underpins our school values of Positivity-Kindness-Resilience-Respect-Creativity. For your child to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend every day, on time, unless the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that we work together to ensure that your child attends regularly, and this Attendance Policy sets out how ***we will*** achieve this.

At our school we are using the traffic lights system to demonstrate the impact that attendance has on progress and therefore attainment.

	80% Attendance	At least 7½ weeks of learning missed	Very poor attendance. At risk of prosecution and more importantly under achievement
	85% Attendance	5½ weeks of learning missed	
	95% Attendance	2 weeks of learning missed	Attendance will have a negative impact on learning
	90% Attendance	4 weeks of learning missed	
	100% Attendance	0 days of learning missed	Best chance of success

95%: Why regular attendance is so important



Learning

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.



Safeguarding

Your child may be at risk of harm if he / she does not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities of your child encompasses:

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti-Bullyin

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Promoting Regular Attendance



Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Deliver engaging lessons to ensure pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and attendance to school
- Give you details on attendance via email, our website and the Torfaen CBC website
- Make attendance a priority to discuss during form time
- Report to you regularly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments
- Celebrate good and improved attendance by displaying individual and form achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through form competitions, certificates, raffles, front of queue passes and outings/events
- Take part in all school events to promote good attendance

The Law Relating to Attendance

#Strive for 95+!

#Strive for 95!

#Not in Miss Out

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that ‘the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) to age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) to any additional educational needs he/ she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise



The law relating to safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and pupils under the age of 18.

Since March 2001 there has been an aggravated offence, where a parent of a child of compulsory school age, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause their child to attend.



Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason, for example, medical reasons which unavoidably fall in school time or emergencies. Appointments must be made after school hours.

Unauthorised absences are those which we do not consider reasonable and for which no “leave” has been given. This type of absence can lead to sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Examples of unauthorised absence include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time




Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any issues with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up the absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

Attendance & Punctuality in a Nutshell and the IMPACT on YOUR CHILD

If attendance is **80%**, this means your child will have missed:

- 1 day EVERY week
- 6 days EVERY half term
- 12 days EVERY term
- 36 days EVERY year
- 180 days in five years...

...that's nearly ONE WHOLE SCHOOL YEAR!

	100% Attendance	0 days of learning missed	Best chance of success
	95% Attendance	2 weeks of learning missed	Poor attendance: will impact on learning
	90% Attendance	4 weeks of learning missed	
	85% Attendance	5½ weeks of learning missed	Very poor attendance. At risk of prosecution!
	80% Attendance	At least 7½ weeks of learning missed	



Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss **15%** or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason.

Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

Absence Procedures



If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence. If you need to report your child as absent, then please let us know by **8:35 a.m. each morning by ringing 01633 643950** following the instructions to ensure that your message reaches the appropriate person.
- Please indicate clearly your child's name, year group, form and the reason for absence.



If your child is absent we will:

- Contact you by 10.00 a.m. on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you
- Telephone you by 11.00 a.m. if we still have not heard from you and invite you in to discuss any concerns with our Attendance Officer, Head of Phase or HoY
- Refer the matter to the Torfaen Education Welfare Service if attendance does not improve



Attendance/Signing Out

- All pupils **MUST** stay in school at break times and lunchtimes.
- If your child needs to leave school to attend a medical appointment, please write a note or telephone Reception.
- Routine appointments like a dental check-up should **NOT** be scheduled during school time.
- To ensure safety, it is expected that a responsible adult will collect your child from the Reception before they depart for their appointment. If this is not you as the parent, please let the school know who you have given permission to collect your child.



Telephone Numbers

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have at least 2 up to date contact numbers at all times. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.



The School Attendance Officer

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Torfaen Education Welfare Service.

Education Welfare Officers will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, the EWO's can prosecute in the Magistrates' Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from <http://wales.gov.uk/docs>

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their form tutor getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child, resulting on knowledge gaps which can also encourage absence.

Being 15 minutes late every day will add up to TWO WEEKS of school missed every year



How We Manage Lateness

School day starts at 8:35 am and we expect your child to be in form class at that time. Registers are marked by the form tutor and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At 8.50 a.m. the form registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence (u code). This may mean that you could face the possibility of being referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the Head of Year and/or Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Lateness is sanctioned with an after school detention or a 'catch up session', where your child will be expected to complete any of the work missed from the lesson.

Holidays in Term Time

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by **not taking children away in school time**. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

In exceptional circumstances, if you wish to take a holiday in term time, you must submit a holiday request form which can be found on the Torfaen website or collected from reception. This does not mean the holiday request will be authorised. It will remain at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Any period of leave taken in school term time may be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as are detailed in the Welsh Government All Wales Attendance Framework <http://wales.gov.uk/docs>. We will consider each application on an individual basis.

Consequences of Poor Attendance

Our attendance team will:

- Apply first day response consistently. Daily contact home if your child is absent and we have not been informed.
- Liaise with Form Tutors, Head of Year (HoY) and Head of Phase (HoP) to identify focus groups for monitoring and mentoring.
- Inform you by letter if attendance is below 90% (unless genuine reason established).
- Send out second letter if there is insufficient improvement in attendance and invite parents/carers to a meeting.
- Set up an Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) with parents/carers and implement an Attendance Action Plan (AAP).
- Hold discussions with our Educational Welfare Officer if parents/carers did not attend and/or improvement in attendance is not sufficient.
- Support strategies to improve attendance.
- As a last resort, consider legal action (Fixed Penalty Notices), FPN.

Use of fixed penalty notices

The law empowers designated Local Authority (LA) Officers, head teachers, including their nominated deputies and the Police to issue Fixed Penalty Notices to the parents of children who have unauthorized absence from schools that fall within the South East Wales Consortium (SEWC) area. The rules governing the implementation of these powers and the factors that should be taken into account when issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice are outlined in:

- The Education Act 1996;
- The Education & Inspections Act 2006;
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013 SEWC is responsible for developing a protocol with which all the partner agencies named in legislation will work.

This policy is to be used in conjunction with the Local Code of Conduct Education Fixed Penalty Notices - Torfaen

[School Fixed Penalty Notices | Torfaen County Borough Council](#)

[Local Code of Conduct - Education Fixed Penalty Notices \(torfaen.gov.uk\)](#)

Useful contacts

Miss H James Attendance Officer

Mrs S Allard Educational Welfare Officer

Mr R Whittington Head of Year 7

Mrs E Mellen Head of Year 8

Mr M Chapman Head of Year 9

Mr D Merrett Head of Year 10

Mrs Z Watkins Head of Year 11

Mrs C Haynes Head of Phase Years 6 & 7

Mrs A Jones Head of Phase Years 8 & 9

Mrs E Hughes Head of Phase Years 10 & 11

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#Not in Miss Out

Summary

At Cwmbran High School we have a legal duty to publish our absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All our staff are committed to working with parents and pupils to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

Date of Policy/Review:

February 2024

Year 7 Parent/Carer only

**Please sign and return this form
to your child's form tutor or class teacher by <insert date here>**

Pupil's Name		Class:	
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I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the attendance policy at Cwmbran High School.

Parent/Carer Signature		Date:	
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