

PORTHCAWL COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

PREAMBLE

- Parents or guardians of pupils of compulsory school age have a legal duty to ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education by attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996)
- This policy is written with regards to “The Education (pupil registration) (Wales) regulations 2010”
- The school keeps records electronically. The school is aware that when records are kept on a computer there must be a print-out at least once per month, and that at the end of the year the print-outs must be bound into annual volumes.
- The school is registered with the Information Commissioner under the **Data Protection Act 1998**.

POLICY

- The school is committed to a positive policy of encouraging pupils to attend school regularly. The school will work with parents and pupils to secure this aim.
- The school is committed to maintaining an efficient system, known to all, for ensuring that pupils who should be attending the school have registered twice daily, or the school knows a reason for non-attendance.
- Pupils’ of compulsory school age must have their attendance registered twice per day. It is the practice of this school to register ALL pupils (including those over compulsory school age).
- The register must be updated twice daily at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. In addition all teaching staff must check that the pupils who should attend each lesson do so, this is achieved via hourly electronic lesson registration.
- The register must record one of the following: **present, absent, or attending an ‘approved educational activity’**. **The L.E.A. codes must be used at all times**. These were amended during school session 2010/11

An 'approved educational activity' is defined as:

- one taking place off the school premises
- approved by a person authorised by the governing body or the Headteacher
- supervised by a person approved by the governing body or Headteacher
- of an educational nature, including work experience, field trips and educational visits, interviews with prospective employers, or for a place in Higher or Further Education.
- Link courses where pupils attend an FE college for part of their time, or franchised pupils receiving part of their education off-site at another location while remaining on roll and under school supervision (e.g. sick children being taught at home), or attending approved sporting activity.
- When a pupil is absent it must be marked as an 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence.

PROCESSES

Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- approve the policy and any proposed changes
- receive reports from the Headteacher
- review the working of the policy in the light of the Headteacher's report
- ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the school, and is known by the parents.

The Headteacher will:

- set attendance targets as part of the development plan and target-setting process
- monitor progress
- ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the school
- determine (in collaboration with SMT and Head of Year) whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the school's official form, or absences which have taken place for which no request was made
- instruct notification of parents as appropriate that if a pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence
- initiate with appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance
- liaise with the LEA via the E.W.O over persistent absentees

- liaise with the LEA and police when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school
- make an annual report with statistics to the governing body
- review daily absence using the Absence Report
- ensure the accuracy of the daily attendance report via H.O.Y
- engage in special initiatives cracking down on truancy.

SMT will:

- oversee the attendance arrangements
- work with Heads of Year to ensure the efficient running of the system
- make periodic checks of the registers to monitor pupil absence
- make regular checks on absence notes and the reasons for absence
- ensure that unaccounted for absences are followed up
- deal with issues of inadequate registering
- arrange appropriate training for staff
- keep the Head informed of the progress of the policy
- advise the Head on any strategies that could be initiated or improved
- review daily absence using the Unauthorised Absence Report
- oversee absence/attendance as part of duty officer rota.

Heads of Year will:

- ensure that all pupil absences are noted and absence notes received from parents
- ensure that all registers are completed each morning and folders returned to the Attendance Office
- make regular checks on the efficiency of the registering
- make regular checks on absence notes
- ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with
- contact parents over pupil absences where appropriate
- liaise with outside agencies on absence
- make reports to SMT on the efficiency of the system as requested
- liaise with SMT over training needs
- review daily absence using the Unauthorised Absence Report
- liaise with attendance re: attendance queries / new pupil admissions
- monitor attendance hour by hour as duty officer.

Form Tutors will:

- ensure that pupils are registered accurately
- ensure that pupils bring absence notes
- follow up cases of unaccounted for absence or unacceptable notes
- keep the Head of Year informed of any signs of suspected truancy or truancy
- inform the Head of Year of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences
- review daily absence using the Unauthorised Absence Report

Classroom Teachers will:

- register pupils at their lessons
- inform Administration of suspected truancy i.e. Attendance Clerk Ext.292
- inform the (Head of Year) of the names of pupils who are absent without notification
- contact attendance officer (292) with any queries regarding pupil attendance
- contact duty officer.

Pupils are required to:

- attend regularly unless they are ill or have an authorised absence ('Attending regularly' means registering before the attendance register is closed for the session)
- if possible inform the school of their absence on the first day of non-attendance i.e. Parents/carers via absence phone line 01656 774170.
- bring an explanatory note on the day of return to school
- discuss with the tutor any planned absences well in advance
- make any request for leave of absence in writing to the Headteacher.

Inspection

The Headteacher will ensure that the School Admission and Attendance Registers are available for inspection by WG, Estyn or officers of the LEA.

Leave of Absence

Leave can be granted only by the Headteacher in consultation with SMT and/or Head of Year. Parents will be expected to write to the Headteacher to seek approval.

Holiday Leave

- Parents can be given leave by the Headteacher to take a child on a holiday.
- Formal requests must be made to the Head, via the Head of Year in writing.
- The application must be made by the parent (or person with parental responsibility) with whom the child normally resides, but the letter can be brought to the school by the pupil.

- The Headteacher will not give leave automatically but will take into account :
 - The age of the child
 - The time of the year proposed
 - The nature of the absence
 - Parental wishes
 - The views of the Head of Year
 - Circumstances as they affect the family
- If the pupil goes on a holiday that has not been approved by the school it counts as unauthorised absence.
- The School will only agree to absences of more than 10 school days in any school year in exceptional circumstances.

Short Term Leave

- The School can legally grant short-term leave for family reasons. It is for the Headteacher to determine the reasonableness of the request.
- Where a pupil becomes pregnant leave will be given of no more than 18 weeks after which the absence would be unauthorised. The school will do all it can to support the pupil remaining in school as long as possible.

(See. Circular 10/99 and Annex A Reasons for Absence)

- Dental and medical appointments are valid reasons for missing registration and constitute authorised absence. If the pupil leaves for an appointment after morning registration no absence needs to be recorded, but the pupil will sign out with the attendance clerk.
- The School may, exceptionally, sanction limited absence for young carers until other arrangements can be made. The Headteacher will set a time limit for such absences in consultation with SMT and Head of Year. The Headteacher may also seek advice from the LEA or appropriate agency before coming to a decision.
- Exclusions from school count as absences

Religious Observance

- There is no legislation or W.G. regulation on this matter. The Headteacher will review each application reasonably, and in consultation with SMT and Head of Year and the parents.
- The school expects advance notice, since religious festivals are likely to be fixed well ahead.

Distance from School

- A pupil will not have failed to attend regularly if the parent can prove that the school is not within walking distance (defined as two miles for children under 8 and three miles for children over 8), in each case measured by the nearest available route, and where the LEA has not made suitable arrangements for:
 - transport
 - boarding
 - changing to another school nearer to the home
- Where there are such occurrences the Head will consult with the LEA, and the Chair of governors as appropriate.

Taking a Pupil off the Register

The Head will authorise the taking of a pupil's name off the register in accordance with the current Regulations.

Monitoring and Review

The Head will review the working of the policy with the S.M.T. and make at least annual reports to the governing body.

PROCEDURES

Registration: Times

Morning Session	conducted by a Form Tutor or another member of staff at 8.45 am in Form Rooms
Afternoon Session	conducted by a Subject Teacher or Supervisor in subject rooms at: Monday –Thursday 2.25 pm Friday 1.40 pm
	N.B.: Sixth Form students with non-contact periods in the afternoon are registered independently.

Registration: Method

Morning Session	PPMS is used to record attendance for registration and each lesson.
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Absence Record

All absences are illustrated on the absences sheet which is issued daily to each Head of Year and monthly to each form tutor.

Attendance Clerk

- Will oversee the Attendance processes in school and keep senior staff informed at all times.
- Will produce a daily list of queries / errors for the Headteacher
- Generate and send a S.M.S message to parents of pupils whose attendance is unauthorised.

Raising the Attendance Profile

This is achieved via:-

- keeping and publicising information on attendance per pupil and per year group
- convening special Assemblies, including the COMPACT scheme
- rewards and incentives
- School Publications
- Senior Pastoral and Year Group Meetings – standard item on the Agenda
- following up Causes for Concern
- liaising with outside bodies
- taking steps to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- maintaining the image of the school as a centre of excellence

****See attached sheet of attendance procedures****