

**PORTHCAWL COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL**  
**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**PREAMBLE**

Our school is committed to ensuring that regular attendance at school is a priority, which will in turn provide pupils with the best possible chances in life to succeed and achieve their goals.

Regular school attendance is essential for all children and young people. Failure to regularly attend can increase the risk of leaving school without any qualifications, and can also increase the likelihood of pupils being drawn into criminal and anti-social behaviour.

Our school will endeavour to work with parents/carers, pupils, the local authority and Central South Consortium Joint Education Service, to ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate education and attend school regularly.

This attendance policy reflects the local authority's Attendance Strategy.

**POLICY**

This policy aims to ensure that attendance and punctuality remain a key focus for all, including governors, teachers, parents/carers, pupils and partner agencies. We will strive to:

- offer a safe and friendly environment which welcomes children regardless of race, disability, gender, religion or ability.
- raise standards and ensure all pupils reach their full potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- ensure all stakeholders receive information on the importance of regular school attendance.
- identify those pupils with irregular attendance at an early stage and work with partner agencies to try and address any barriers that stop pupils from attending school regularly.
- keep accurate and up to date attendance data.
- ensure all pupils are safe, and for schools to follow the local authority's 'Children Missing Education' guidance.
- reward those pupils who have excellent attendance as well as those who have made significant progress in raising attendance levels.

This document is supported by the All Wales Attendance Framework.

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolhome/pupilsupport/framework/?lang=en>

**Legal Framework**

The law outlining attendance is:

**The Education Act 1996 which places a legal obligation on:**

- the local authority to provide and enforce attendance;
- school to register attendance and notify the local authority of a child's absence.

**Section 7 of the above act states that**

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full time education suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.

**Section 444 further states that:**

'The parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable in law'.

**School Attendance Orders (SAO):**

Under the Education Act 1996 section 437- 443 a School Attendance Order applies when a parent/carer of compulsory school age fails to prove that the child is receiving a suitable education and where the authority believes the child should attend school. A School Attendance Order may be used to direct a parent/carer to send their child to a specified school, and should be used when a pupil is not on roll at any school.

**The Education (Penalty Notice) Wales Regulations 2013 :**

This legislation came into force in September 2014 and has given local authorities new powers to issue fixed penalty notices. (FPN). A code of conduct has been agreed by Bridgend County Borough Council on the issuing of the FPN which includes the following criteria:

- Minimum of 10 unauthorised absences in the current term which do not have to be consecutive.
- Minimum of 10 sessions of lateness after the close of registration.
- Parents/carers who chose to take their children out of school on holiday during term time without authorisation from the Head teacher for a minimum of 10 unauthorised sessions.
- Pupil regularly coming into contact with the police during school hours without a justified reason.
- Parents/carers failing to engage with school/Education Welfare Service (EWS) but where prosecution has not been instigated.

The Head teacher will inform the parent/carer by letter that a request for a fixed penalty notice will be completed and sent to the Lead Education Welfare Officer(Lead EWO) for the local authority. The Lead EWO will consider the request, taking into account levels of absence, level of parental engagement, any equality implications, history of attendance and also any statement of special educational needs.

For 4 out of the 5 bullet points listing the criteria for issuing a fixed penalty notice shown above, a 'fixed penalty notice warning' may be issued and a period of 15 days will be monitored for an immediate improvement. However, a 'fixed penalty notice warning' may not be issued in respect of an unauthorised holiday in term time.

A penalty notice is £60 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, increasing to £120 if not paid within 28 days. If not received by 42 days then the local authority can prosecute parents/carers for the child's absence.

For further information please see the BCBC website.

[www.bridgend.gov.uk](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk)

## **Definitions**

Compulsory school age – under section 8 of the Education Act 1996, children and young people should attend school from the start of the first term commencing after their fifth birthday. The ends of the term dates are 31<sup>st</sup> March, 31<sup>st</sup> August and 31<sup>st</sup> December. A young person ceases to be compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they have their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

'Parents' section 576 of the Education Act 1996 includes:

- All natural parents whether married or not.
- Any person who although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a young person or child, and any person, who although not a natural parent has care of a child or young person.

## **PROCESSES**

Attendance is everybody's concern and the school will expect all stakeholders to play a part in improving attendance. This will contain all having clear expectations and roles which include:

### **Role of Head teacher:**

- To be responsible for overall management and implementation of this policy.
- Work closely with the school's governing body, ensuring regular attendance reports are shared with governors.
- Set attendance targets with the Central South Consortium challenge advisors and governors, and take advice from the local authority if needed.
- To use discretion when receiving applications for holiday requests and to provide reasons to parents/carers if requested.
- Work closely with the local authority's Lead EWO and nominated school EWO, and other support services.
- To notify the local authority when a 'child is missing education' and follow the local authority's 'Children Missing Education' guidance.
- Ensure policy is readily available for stakeholders including at the school, and on the website.
- To work with CSC Challenge advisors and to provide a comprehensive plan in terms of attendance, including future plans.

### **Governing Body:**

- Approve the policy and amend if necessary.
- Receive reports from the head teacher on a regular basis.
- Attend meetings as and when required.
- Ensure policy is shared with all relevant stakeholders.
- Appoint a lead governor for attendance.

### **Senior Management Team:**

- Work with all staff responsible for attendance and punctuality.
- Work with Heads of Year (HOY), to look at attendance data on a weekly basis, linking in with the school's EWO.

- Regularly check registers.
- Ensure all absences are recorded in line with the 'Guidance of Codes' document including those unauthorised absences and no reasons provided.
- Facilitate training on attendance as and when required for all relevant staff e.g. using the LA ICT SIMS team.  
New teachers are given training on attendance during their induction to the school. It is the responsibility of the senior mentor to ensure that student teachers are aware of their responsibilities for attendance.
- Raise issues of those staff not compliant with the completion of registers.
- Discuss any initiatives with all staff.

### **Heads of Year:**

- Ensure all pupil absences are recorded, and notes received.
- Registers are completed on a daily basis and folders returned to the Attendance Office.
- Work closely with the school's attendance clerk e.g to 'Mop up' missing marks,
- Work closely with the school's EWO to review attendance data and discuss those not achieving the threshold of 92%. To attend set and pre-arranged meetings with the EWO.
- Contact parents/carers of those pupils who have not attended and not provided reasons for absence on a daily basis.
- Ensure truancy concerns are dealt with.
- Arrange letters and meetings for those parents/carers whose children's attendance is posing a concern.
- Monitor patterns of irregular attendance.
- Arrange the distribution of rewards to those pupils with improved or excellent attendance.

### **Form Tutors:**

- Carry out the role of completing attendance registers on SIMS during registration and PSE lessons.
- Ensure absences are accounted for by way of a note provided by parents/carers.
- Follow up unaccounted reasons for absence and raise any concerns with the Head of Year.
- Continue to raise the profile of attendance and punctuality to all pupils, including setting and reviewing individual attendance targets with pupils.

### **Class Teacher**

- Carry out the role of completing attendance registers on SIMS at the start of each lesson throughout the day.
- Contact the attendance clerk or duty officer with any concerns e.g. suspected truancy.

### **Pupils:**

- Attend regularly and on time unless unwell or have been granted an authorised absence e.g. school visit, sporting activity.
- Bring to school a note explaining reasons for absence and give to form teacher or attendance clerk.
- Discuss with the form teacher any planned absences.

- Make a request for leave of absence by providing a letter from their parents/carers to the Headteacher.
- Report any medical issues that arise during the school day, in the first instance to the class teacher who may then refer them to the school First Aider. It is the decision of the Headteacher whether to send a pupil home on medical grounds in consultation with parents/carers.

### **Parents/Carers:**

- Ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- Notify the school if their child is unable to attend, on the first day of absence and every day thereafter. The absence line is 01656 774170.
- Keep the school updated on parents/carers contact details, including mobile numbers and new addresses.
- Work with school and partner agencies to address any issues of irregular attendance of their children.
- Work with their child in relation to homework, not completing homework is not a reason for missing school.

### **Role of Attendance Clerk:**

- Check messages on the schools absence line answerphone.
- On a daily basis establish and record reasons for pupil's absence and send text messages to those parents who haven't contacted school.  
Other staff will assist in this role, including the school's Pastoral Support Officer who may telephone parents/carers individually in order to establish reasons.
- Record absences daily and ensure registers are completed on SIMS as and when required e.g. when a class register is taken by a supply teacher.
- 'Mop up' missing marks, providing reasons for absences and inputting reasons on the red flag system on SIMS.
- Work closely with EWO and support staff in school.
- Work with the Senior Management Team and Headteacher closely.

### **Role of Data Manager:**

- Ensure transfer of Common Transfer File (CTF) of pupils are completed in a timely manner, placing new pupils on roll or removing pupils from roll as appropriate.
- Assist with the collation of attendance data e.g. for the Welsh Government.

### **Keeping school registers**

The school's register is a legal document and under The Education (pupil registration) (Wales) regulations 2010 the school is required to keep an accurate record of attendance. Registers need to be marked twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Registers may be needed in a court of law if deemed appropriate.

Schools Information management system ( SIMS ) is used in all schools across BCBC to record all pupils attendance.

By the end of the school week the schools overall attendance registers will be completed and an overall attendance figure will be calculated by the school.

### **Types of absences**

It is important for parents/carers to understand the definition of the different types of absences. They are classed as unauthorised absence and authorised absence.

The schools head teacher can only decide on whether an absence should be classed in either one of these categories, parents/carers cannot.

Absences maybe authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness.
- Religious observance.
- Medical/Dental appointments during school hours.
- Fixed term and permanent exclusions.
- Holiday agreed by the head teacher.

Examples of what are classified as unauthorised absence are the following, however they are not limited: Absences may be unauthorised for the following reasons:

- Truancy.
- Late after the close of registration.
- Staying at home for no reason – condoned absence.
- Going shopping.
- Birthdays.
- Holiday not agreed by the head teacher.

In addition there are several codes classed as a present mark which include the following:

- Late before the close of register.
- Educated off site, pupils attending vocational courses at college/pupils attending alternative provision agreed by school.
- Sporting activity.
- Educational visit.
- Traveller absence.
- Interview.
- Work experience.
- Where pupils are on roll at school and also at another education establishment.

Please see appendix 1 which includes a breakdown of codes set by Welsh Government.

## **Punctuality**

Punctuality is a legal requirement and pupils must attend on time. Persistent lateness has a detrimental effect on a child's learning and also disrupts other pupils within the class and throughout the school.

Those parents/carers of pupils who are persistently late will be contacted by the Head of year. The school has a set of procedures for lateness. (see school 'Punctuality and Lateness' policy on the school website).

All pupils who are late (arrive after the gates have been locked) must sign in at the attendance office or reception and must enter through reception in 'A' block.

## **Medical absences**

Where a child is continually absent from school on the grounds of medical reasons, it will be necessary for the parent/carer to provide medical evidence to school. This will be initiated by the school and the EWO which will result in the pupil and family receiving the appropriate support in assisting in attending school regularly. There may be times where a reintegration plan may be necessary which will be a partnership agreement between the family, pupil, EWO and school.

## **Holidays during term time**

Parents/carers do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school during the school term for a holiday. Under the Education (pupil registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010, head teachers have discretion to authorise a holiday of up to 10 days during term time, over 10 days can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

All requests for holidays must be completed by the parents/carers in a letter to the Head teacher. (please see Appendix 2).

The head teacher will make the decision and may include the following contributory factors:

- Time of year.
- Length of time.
- Overall percentage of attendance.
- Impact on the child's learning e.g. proximity of examinations.

## **School procedures**

Parents/carers are expected to contact school on the first day of absence and to provide reasons for their child's absence. This will then need to be followed up by an explanation note and handed into the class teacher/form tutor which will be kept on record by school.

If parents/carers fail to notify school, then the school will make every effort to contact the parents/carers and also other persons listed as a point of contact. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if no contact is made. Failure to receive any contact on the third day of absence may result in the involvement of the EWO.

As a school we have a duty to safeguard all our pupils. The Education & Inspections Act 2006 requires the local authority to make arrangements to enable them to establish the identities of

children residing within BCBC who are not receiving an education. For example these may be pupils who have not attended school for an excessive amount of time without any contact or reason for the absence. The duty lies within the Local authority to investigate further. The Common Transfer File will be sent to the forwarding school once being notified.

For further information please see  
[www.bridgend.gov.uk](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk) ( CME document )

### **Schools Strategies to improve attendance**

We aim that all pupils achieve 100% attendance, however there maybe instances where pupils unfortunately are unwell.

### **Standing agenda item**

Attendance and punctuality is a standing agenda item at Senior Pastoral Meetings and Year Group Meetings.

### **Callio**

The school operates a 'Callio' process which provides parents/carers with information on the links between attendance and attainment. This shows which category the child's attendance falls into when attendance is as follows:

GREEN	97% - 100%
AMBER	93% - 96%
RED	92% and below

Each parent/carer will receive a 'Callio letter' on a termly basis informing them of which category their child's attendance is currently in. This ensures that early intervention is received by pupils and families who are in need. (please see appendix 3).

### **Pupil Involvement**

By ensuring pupils are involved in this process and giving them responsibilities, it will improve their confidence and self-esteem. With support, pupils monitor their attendance and set targets.

### **School's Website**

The school's website will also provide parents/carers, pupils, governors and the public with relevant attendance information, including the school's attendance policy. We publish the school holiday dates and INSET dates on a school calendar on our website. Bridgend County Borough's website also publishes a school calendar showing the school holidays.

### **Porthcawl Post**

Our school's newsletter, the Porthcawl Post is sent out on a termly basis. As and when required it includes information on attendance and punctuality, including overall attendance figures.



## **The School Environment**

The school will provide a happy, welcoming and organised environment to ensure all pupils enjoy learning which results in good attendance.

## **Breakfast**

Whilst the school does not have a breakfast club, our canteen is available to all pupils between the 8:00 and 8:45 every day. During this time a small selection of food is served including toast and the vending machines are available

## **Attendance Assemblies**

The school holds regular attendance assemblies. Celebrating attendance should be a priority, and involving pupils gives them an incentive, motivation and encouragement, with a sense of self-worth. This promotes the wellbeing of children as well as rewarding them.

## **Transition Process**

As we are all aware it is difficult at times to deal with change. We as a school appreciate that pupils find it hard to cope with the transition from year groups and also from primary to secondary school. Our school ensures that we have all staff involved in this process and many transition activities take place, including extra support for anxious pupils through the 'Helping Hands' scheme.

## **Rewards**

Rewards can include the following:

- Pupil Certificates
- Badges/Pens
- Attendance cup for the form class
- 100% awards for the academic year for pupils.

Pupils are also entered into a draw at the end of term if they have had excellent attendance and some of the following may form the rewards:

- Cinema tickets.
- Book vouchers.
- I-tunes voucher.
- Bike

## **Additional Attendance Strategies**

### **Role of the Local Authority Education Welfare Service**

The Education Welfare service is a statutory service which supports schools in ensuring all pupils attend school regularly. We have a designated EWO who visits the school on a regular basis, depending on need. The EWO will meet with various senior members of staff and Heads of Year within school and discusses those pupils who have attendance of below 92%.

The school, in a joint discussion will then refer the pupil to the EWO if necessary. Individual circumstances of each pupil will be considered. The EWO will then either send a letter home informing parents/carers of their child's attendance, make a telephone call home, invite you into school or/and will conduct a home visit.

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually, or otherwise, under the Education Act 1996. Where parents/carers fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child or otherwise they are committing an offence and the EWO will need to be informed.

It is unfortunate on occasions but a punitive approach may be needed which may result in prosecution of parents/carers. (Please see BCBC Non-school Attendance Enforcement Policy)

However the EWS does not take this lightly and will endeavour to work and support parents/carers, schools and pupils to improve attendance levels.

### **Additional Local Authority Support Services**

The EWS sits within the Early Help Team which comprises of multi-disciplinary teams which are based in co-located areas across the county of Bridgend covering the North ( CCYD ), East ( Civic Offices ) and the West ( Pyle life centre ).

The Early Help Team consists of a variety of support services including family support workers, family engagement officers, counsellors, and youth workers. The Early Help Team is designed to support families and pupils where a need has been identified. All officers are professionally trained and work with families, schools and agencies to ensure all parents/carers and pupils receive the best possible support to enable them to have better opportunities in life.

Parents/carers can also self - refer into the service directly via:

[www.earlyhelp@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:www.earlyhelp@bridgend.gov.uk) or alternatively telephone on

01656 815420

### **Role of School's Challenge Advisors/ Central South Consortium**

Our school works closely with Central South Consortium which provides us with a nominated challenge advisor who visits our school and advises and supports us in our school improvement process. Challenge advisors and EWOs work closely with those schools needing additional support where attendance is a concern.

### **Good Practice Strategies**

In addition to the strategies above, other initiatives may be conducted at any point.

### **Attendance Drives**

EWOs across the county will work collaboratively with schools and Early Help Teams to complete an attendance drive which will consist of visiting homes to parents/carers of pupils who are absent from school on a particular day and whose attendance is below the agreed target. Members from the Early Help Team will assist the EWOs. This is a pro-active partnership approach in assisting schools, parents/carers and pupils in identifying issues with attendance and any other needs.

## **Attendance Panels**

Attendance panels are seen as good practice in schools and involve school governors, members of senior staff, EWO, parent/carer and on occasions include the pupil. Whilst the panel's aim is to address the attendance of pupils, it is not always in the best interest of the pupil to be out of class.

Parents/carers are invited into school to discuss their child's attendance, with a view to an action plan being completed and signed, which will regularly be reviewed. Letters of invitation will be sent to parents/carers in advance and parents/carers are asked to notify school as to whether they will be attending or not. If they are not available to attend then another letter will be sent. Failure to attend without notification may result in a visit or telephone call from the EWO.

## **Truancy Patrols**

Truancy Patrols are initiated by the school's police liaisons officers and the EWS. Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 this gives the Police the power to remove truants on the day of the truancy patrol. Any child found unaccompanied by an adult can be taken back to school or to a designated place of safety.

Parents/carers and pupils details are logged, along with the reasons for the pupil being out of school.

These patrols are held as and when needed throughout the academic year.

## **First Day contact**

Whilst we as a school operate a first day contact, there may be times when the Education Welfare Officer will conduct this, and contact parents/carers of those pupils who are absent on a specified day. This is deemed as good practice and identifies those pupils who are regularly absent at an early stage with a view to referring to additional support services.

## **Data Collection**

Our school's attendance data is continually being tracked and monitored electronically both on an individual pupil level and also as a whole school. This data is collated by the Lead EWO and shared amongst all schools across Bridgend on a termly basis.

## **Monitoring and reporting**

The school will regularly provide reports to the governing body, senior management, challenge advisors and the local authority, which will inform them of current attendance.

## Appendix 1

<b>Code</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Statistical meaning</b>
/\	Present at registration	Present
L	Late but arrived before register closed	Present
B	Educated off-site	Approved educational activity
D	Dual registered	Approved educational activity
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
V	Educational trip or visit	Approved educational activity
J	Interview	Approved educational activity
W	Work experience ( not work based learning )	Approved educational activity
C	Other authorised circumstances( not covered by another code)	Authorised absence
F	Agreed extended family holiday	Authorised absence
H	Agreed family holiday	Authorised absence
I	Illness	Authorised absence
M	Medical/dental appointment	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
E	Exclusion	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
T	Traveller Absence	Authorised absence
N	No reason provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Other unauthorised absence( no explanation provided)	Unauthorised absence
G	Family Holiday ( not agreed )	Unauthorised absence
U	Late arrival after the close of registration	Unauthorised absence
X	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age	Not required to attend
Y	Partial and forced closure	Not required to attend

<b>Z</b>	<b>Pupil not yet on roll</b>	<b>Not required to attend</b>
<b>#</b>	<b>School closed to all pupils</b>	<b>Not required to attend</b>

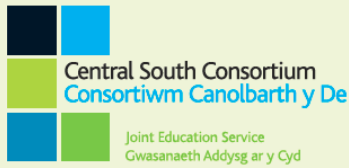
## **Appendix 2**

### **Holiday in term time request**

Please make requests for holidays or other requests for time off school, by writing to the Head teacher, at least 2 weeks before the dates.

The school will respond to your request.

## Appendix 3 – ‘Callio’

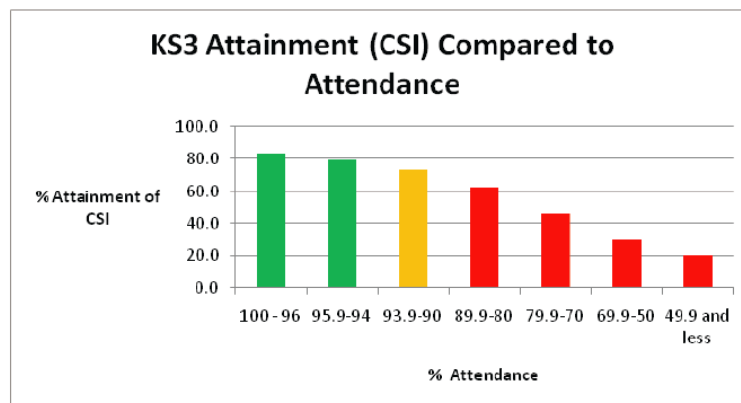


# Callio - KS3

*Every lesson counts, every school day counts!*

Green	100%	Not missing any lessons.
	99%	Missing about 10 lesson.
	98%	Missing about 20 lessons.
	97%	Missing about 30 lessons.
Amber	96%	Missing about 8 days of school. It will be difficult to catch up on the lost learning from about 40 lessons.
	95%	Missing about 2 weeks of school. Time to ‘callio’.
	93%	Missing 14 days of school. This is almost three weeks which is a significant amount of education to lose.
Red	92% and below	Missing more than 3 weeks of education. A serious loss of learning which is likely to have a detrimental effect on achievement and life chances.

The relationship between doing well at school and good attendance is clear.



The Core Subject Indicator (CSI) is a combination of attainment in English or Welsh first language, mathematics and science.





Central South Consortium  
 Consortiwm Canolbarth y De

Joint Education Service  
 Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd

# Callio - KS4

*Every lesson counts, every school day counts!*

Green	100%	Not missing any lessons.
	99%	Missing about 10 lesson.
	98%	Missing about 20 lessons.
	97%	Missing about 30 lessons.
Amber	96%	Missing about 8 days of school. It will be difficult to catch up on the lost learning from about 40 lessons.
	95%	Missing about 2 weeks of school. Time to 'callio'.
	93%	Missing 14 days of school. This is almost three weeks which is a significant amount of education to lose.
Red	92% and below	Missing more than 3 weeks of education. A serious loss of learning which is likely to have a detrimental effect on achievement and life chances.

The relationship between doing well at school and good attendance is clear.

