



Cluster Attendance Policy

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This policy was adopted by the Governing Body in June 2021 and is due for review June 2024

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Aims

We actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all students. There is a strong partnership with parents/**carers** and close liaison with a variety of outside agencies.

The Newport High School Cluster Attendance Policy, has been agreed by all schools and Governing Bodies within the cluster.

The aim of the Cluster Schools Attendance Policy is to:

- Share the message of the importance for good attendance and punctuality with children, young people and their families.
- Support families with individual needs to improve attendance and their access to education.
- Work effectively with our partners to maximise levels of attendance.
- Raise levels of attainment and achievement at school through high expectations of good and better attendance and punctuality.

At Newport High School, we aim to ensure that the provision outlined in the Attendance Policy considers the varied individual needs and expectations of all stakeholders. We aim to ensure that everyone has equal access to this provision regardless of race, ethnic origin, language, gender, disability, age, sexuality, nationality, religious or non religious belief, family background or any other individual characteristics. We aim to ensure that all stakeholders also share these values.

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to succeed and fulfil their potential. Newport High School employs a whole school approach toward attendance with Subject teachers, Subject Team Leaders, Form Tutors, Heads of Year, Assistant Headteacher, School Support Officer and the Educational Welfare Officer all fully involved in monitoring student attendance.

Good attendance is given a high profile throughout the school. We aim to ensure that the students in our school attend regularly and on time, and where this is not the case, staff follow a staged procedure designed to encourage consistent attendance.

In accordance with Newport Local Authority guidance, absence due to family holidays will be considered by Newport High School against the criteria which may be found in the request for leave forms.

Regular attendance is required by law and Wales is introducing Fixed Penalty Notice and Fines for parents who have children with more than 5 days of unauthorised absence. This can be issued for any absences not authorised by the school, including holidays. Newport City Council will issue these notices when concerns are raised by school or the police. The fine is £120 unless paid within 28 days when it is £60.

Responsibilities

Encourage good attendance and punctuality as the shared responsibility of our schools, parents, carers, students, cluster staff and our cluster partners.

Our Cluster can expect all schools:

- to use the Cluster Schools Attendance Policy- to guide attendance tracking and monitoring and investigate any problems that may lead to non-attendance; including challenging parents about regular or intermittent illness absence
- to keep parent/carers informed of any attendance related issues
- to contribute to the Attendance and Punctuality Working group
- to have a common Holiday absence policy
- to register pupils accurately and keep up to date records
- to complete accurate and timely CME (Child Missing Education) referrals
- to use a wide range of attendance support strategies and have a robust system of keeping accurate records of all contacts and actions taken

Parent / Carer Responsibilities:

- To perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age attend regularly. Absences should only be for genuine illness or in exceptional circumstances.
- To ensure their children attend school punctually.
- To provide school with their current and at least **two** emergency telephone number(s), an email address for school records and keep school updated on any changes.
- To inform schools on the first day of their child's absence.

- To take holidays during the schools holiday periods; any leave of absence during term time must be applied for in advance.

Student Responsibilities:

- To attend school regularly.
- To arrive at school on time and follow school procedures for registration.
- To arrive at school in the correct uniform and equipped for learning.
- To seek support in school regarding any barriers to attendance, attainment and achievement.

What the Cluster can expect from Newport City Council Education Welfare Service:

- Provide support to schools, pupils and parents/carers to ensure regular attendance and address problems relating to absenteeism.
- Liaise with multi-agencies, in order to assist with providing important links between home and school and will work in partnership, so that that pupils will benefit from the educational opportunities available to them.
- Provide statutory support in the form of Fixed Penalty Notices, Cases for Magistrates Court proceedings and supervisory function for Education Supervision Orders.
- Swift follow up on CME (Children Missing Education) referrals

What Parents/Carers can expect from each school?

- An All cluster School Attendance Policy which has been approved, is reviewed regularly by the Governing Bodies and is available to parents/carers on the school website (and/or the school office)
- Clear advice and guidance relating to the policy and procedures including the use of Fixed Penalty Notices.
- A positive and welcoming atmosphere in which students and parents feel safe, secure and valued.
- A motivating, relevant and accessible curriculum for all students.
- A high priority of attendance and punctuality monitoring.
- Regular and efficient recording of attendance; twice daily.
- Early contact with parents when a student fails to attend school without good reason.
- Early contact on any notified problems.
- Efficient and effective communication between home and school

What pupils/students can expect from school?

- A safe learning environment in which students feel valued and secure.
- Consistently applied rewards for good and improving attendance.
- Support when experiencing any difficulties.
- Contact with home when feeling unwell.
- Home visits from the schools Education Welfare Officer (EWO), School meetings, letters, and telephone calls with Parent/Carers regarding attendance issues.

Attendance Policy Guidance and Procedures

The oversight of attendance will be the responsibility of the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Attendance. Support will be given by the School Support Officer who will act as coordinator of the SIMS system.

Specific responsibilities include:

Form Tutors will:

- raise the profile and importance of excellent attendance
- monitor attendance of their tutor group daily and ensure SIMS attendance records are updated
- issue and monitor attendance cards where necessary
- collect information from students regarding any absence
- meet with Parents/Carers as appropriate
- use previous attendance figures to negotiate termly attendance targets with each member of the tutor group
- support students in achieving attendance targets
- set detentions for students who are late

Heads of Year will:

- monitor attendance weekly
- monitor the lateness of students who are late on a daily and weekly basis
- follow up on all students who have been absent for 3 days or more through home contacts
- follow up on students late 3 times or more in a week and issue sanctions
- follow up with parents students who are repeatedly late
- meet the Educational Welfare Officer fortnightly
- discuss attendance issues with Form Tutors at weekly briefing sessions and team meetings
- distribute rewards for attendance and ensure attendance receives a high profile in assemblies and through displays
- co-ordinate work for long-term absentees
- target a 'spotlight group' of students whose attendance can be improved and work with these students
- use attendance rewards to improve attendance
- arrange for the production and distribution of attendance certificates termly
- meet with parents as appropriate
- provide a regular report on attendance in year groups for the Assistant Headteacher

School Support Officer will:

- monitor the SIMS system and report faults to the Assistant Headteacher

- contact all students on first day of absence by telephone/text message or letter
- refer students who have been absent for 3 days with no response to the Head of Year
- update attendance data daily with parental returns/holiday forms/manual registers
- produce registers and statistics weekly for Form Tutors, Heads of Year and the Assistant Headteacher
- send text messages to Parents/Carers of students who arrive late
- submit monthly attendance report to Local Authority
- provide monthly attendance report to the Assistant Headteacher

Subject Teachers will:

- Liaise with Heads of Year about students whose learning is being negatively affected by repeated lateness or absence
- raise the profile and importance of excellent attendance

Assistant Headteacher will:

- ensure that all staff are aware of whole school and year group attendance targets and progress on achieving these
- produce summary documents for Governors and the Headteacher
- produce an Attendance Matters Booklet annually
- organise Governors' Attendance Panel meetings with parents of target students annually
- ensure parents, staff and students are made aware of changes to attendance recording or reporting
- monitor attendance weekly
- negotiate annual attendance targets based on previous attendance figures
- liaise with Heads of Year and the Educational Welfare Officer to ensure resources are used effectively and students monitored appropriately
- meet with parents as appropriate
- ensure attendance is discussed in fortnightly meetings between all Heads of Year and line managers
- raise the profile of, and reward, good attendance on a regular basis
- review persistent unauthorised absences, issue warning letters and liaise with the Local Authority over the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices

Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) will:

- liaise with the School Support Officer about daily contacts
- meet with Heads of Year fortnightly to discuss attendance issues
- prosecute parents where all other avenues have failed
- visit parents of students who have unsatisfactory attendance and devise suitable home-school agreements for their reintegration to school
- visit parents as requested by Heads of Year or Assistant Headteacher

Parents/Carers will:

- contact school via telephone (**01633 820106**) to notify of absence
- arrange medical appointments outside of school time whenever possible
- arrange family holidays during the school holidays
- contact the School Support Officer to report any attendance concerns

Absence from school:

- All schools will use the correct authorised and unauthorised codes, set out by the Welsh Government 2010.
- Authorisation of absence is only at the discretion of the individual Head Teacher.
- **Authorised absence:** An absence is deemed authorised when the school accepts that there is good reason for the absence and communication from the parent has been received.
- **Unauthorised absence-** An absence is deemed unauthorised when there is; no communication from the parent/carer, exceptional leave has been requested but declined, leave of absence has been taken without prior request, the child has higher than average illness, where no medical proof (appointment card, prescription etc.) has been provided or is a persistent absentee where an attendance plan may be in place.

Absence Codes:

B Educated off-site	Approved Educational Activity
C Other authorised circumstance	Authorised Absence
D Dual-registered	Approved Educational Activity
E Excluded	Authorised Absence
F Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
G Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence
H Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
I Illness	Authorised Absence
J Interview	Approved Educational Activity
L Late (before registers close)	Present
M Medical appointment	Authorised absence
N No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence
O Unauthorised absence	Unauthorised Absence
P Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity
R Religious observance	Authorised Absence
S Study Leave	Authorised Absence
T Traveller absence	Authorised Absence
U Late after registers close	Unauthorised Absence
V Educational Visit or Trip	Approved Educational Activity
W Work Experience	Approved Educational Activity
Y Partial or enforced closure	Attendance not required
X Non-compulsory school age abs	Attendance not required
# School closed to all pupils	Attendance
Z Pupils not on role	Attendance not required

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Registration:

- All schools have their own individual registration times
- Registers will be taken in each session every day.
- Registers will be closed no later than 30 minutes after school starts.
- A child arriving late and before the registers are closed will receive an 'L' mark.
- Any child arriving after the registers have closed will received the 'U' code, which will be followed up by school as with all other unauthorised absences.

Leave of absence in term time

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations, make clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are Exceptional Circumstances.
- If the leave is granted, Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school.
- When unauthorised leave of absence in term time has been taken, the school may apply for a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- If the child fails to return to school on the agreed date, the school must take action and consider following the Child Missing in Education (CME) process.

Leave of absence will be considered by the Headteacher/attendance lead and the Governing Body. For the leave of absence to be authorised, all of the following criteria must be met:

- The child is of statutory school age (5 years and above)
- The child's average level of attendance across the rolling 12 months prior to the date of requested leave is 95% or above
- The child is always punctual to school
- The child's attendance record for the current academic year shows no unexplained or unauthorised absences
- The requested leave does not fall within the assessment/examination period for the year group

Medical Appointments:

All schools will only code absences 'M' as medical if an appointment card/letter/evidence is produced.

Entertainment Licenses:

Schools will only consider granting leave of absence for pupils who are in possession of an up to date Entertainment / Performance License.

Child Missing Education (CME)

- When a child's absence is unexplained, schools will contact the parents on the first day of absence and endeavor to continue to make contact throughout the day until they can speak with the parent/carer.
- If the absence remains unexplained, the school must take steps to establish the child's safety and whereabouts.

- All reasonable enquires with emergency contacts, friends in school and neighbours should be made before a CME referral to the Local Authority is completed.
- The CME referral should be made to the Local Authority after enquiries have proved unsuccessful.
- If a child moves out of the Newport City Council Authority, not attending school and school are unable to locate the child / family, a CME referral to the Local Authority must be actioned.

Fixed Penalty Notice:

- It is noted that the law empowers designated Local Authority Officers, Head Teachers, and the Police to issue Fixed Penalty Notices to the parents of children who have unauthorised absence from schools. These powers were adopted by Newport City Council on the 1st October 2014.
- Please refer to the school's Fixed Penalty Notice Policy and the Local Authority's Code of Conduct for Fixed Penalty Notices.

Admissions and deletions from school roll:

- Schools are required to inform the Local Authority in **every** circumstance when they are about to delete a pupil's name from the admissions register.
- This would include informing the Local Authority of the pupil's name, address, parents' name(s), parents email address and contact telephone numbers, expected new destination and proposed new school name / Local Authority, within 5 days of the pupil leaving their school.

Procedure for Absence Concerns:

- School to initiate first day response to Parent/Carer.
- Mark register with the appropriate code.
- When the absence remains a concern, school will make further contact with home and if required, also send written correspondence (Letter 1) and/or, invite the parent for a school meeting.
- School to action further correspondence (letter 2), should there be insufficient improvement with the attendance.
- All on-going absence concerns, must be reported to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- As attendance improves, school will continue to monitor.
- Action a referral to EWS for the following reasons:
 - On-going concerns.
 - No response or poor response from the parent.
 - Parent fails to fully engage.
- School must continue to keep the EWO regularly update with all absence concerns.

Re-integration

The school has arrangements to reintegrate students who have been absent for extended periods. In such cases each student will be treated individually and arrangements will be made that are most

appropriate to the individual's circumstances. All reintegration plans are formalised by the Assistant Headteacher responsible for inclusion and monitored by Inclusion Centre Staff.

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