

2017

Attendance Policy



Crickhowell Community
Primary School

M.Wakeley

Crickhowell Community Primary School

2/8/2017

DESIGNATED STAFF MEMBER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE

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DEPUTY STAFF MEMBER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE AT THE SCHOOL

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NAME:

Contacts within the Local Authority

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RATIONALE

- The school bases its attendance policy on the guidelines as set out by the ERW Consortium.
- Whilst the legal responsibility for regular school attendance rests with parents/carers, the school shares with them, and the **local authority** (LA), responsibility for encouraging **good** attendance and **improving poor attendance**.
- The school is required by law to maintain specific records and to produce specified information on the attendance of pupils.
- Statutory obligation apart, the school is **committed to** improvements in attendance standards as a **direct stimulus to raising pupil achievement**.
- Poor attendance is destructive of educational achievement, undermines the well-being of each pupil and demoralises staff.

STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

The legal framework governing attendance is set by the Education Acts and their associated regulations (which relate to schools and Pupil Referral Units).

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that "...the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/ her to receive full time education suitable to his/ her age, aptitude and ability and to any special education needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise..."

Section 444 further states “ ..the parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable by law...”.

Compulsory school age means that children **and young people should attend school from the start of the first term commencing after their fifth birthday** and are of compulsory school age until after the last Friday in June of the school year in which they have their 16th birthday

An offence is not committed if it can be demonstrated that:

- the pupil was absent with leave (**authorised absence**);
- the pupil was **ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause**;
- the absence occurred on a day set aside for **religious observance** by the religious body to which the pupil/ parent/carer belongs;

Absence from the centres will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- **sickness;**
- **unavoidable medical or dental appointments;**
- **days of religious observance;**
- **exceptional family circumstances,**

All other absence will be deemed as unauthorised absence.

Parents are asked to make all medical and dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible.

Schools are required under the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 to take an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The accuracy of the register is important to support any statutory interventions that may be required. It should be noted that it is **an offence** not to maintain accurate registers.

The Welsh Government (WG) Education (Penalty Notice)(Wales) Regulations 2013 states that Local Authorities (LAs) are required by law to adhere to the Education Act 1996 section 444 to include Penalty Charge Notices as one of the interventions to promote better school attendance.

Sections 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996 provide that certain cases of unauthorised absence can be dealt with by way of a Penalty Charge Notice

PART TIME PUPILS

In the event of a parent requesting that a pupil who is under the statutory age of 5 attends school on a part time basis, this will be agreed in discussion with the school and will usually be for a specific reason such as a medical reason or a reason that the pupil needs to be reintegrated to full time school. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time.

The school may also specifically recommend that an individual child attends on a part time basis if this is deemed to be in the child's best interests. In such cases this will be discussed with the child's parents.

The normal procedure for part time pupils at Crickhowell Community Primary School will be that the pupil will attend either a morning session (9am-12pm) or an afternoon session (1.15pm-3.15pm) and not a combination of different sessions throughout the week.

A long term plan to ensure the pupil can attend school on a full time basis when at statutory age will need to be put in place. This will be based on a gradual increase of the part time hours on a session by session basis.

HOME EDUCATED CHILDREN

On receipt of written notification to home educate, schools must inform the local authority, and arrange for the pupil to be removed from the admission register.

Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full time education.

TRUANCY

All staff believe in the importance of continuity in every child's learning. Staff are also concerned about each child's safety, welfare and happiness. Although truancy is very rare at Crickhowell Community Primary School, if staff are suspicious that a child might be playing truant, action is taken immediately.

If truancy is suspected, the Head Teacher and the Educational Welfare Officer are notified. Parents are contacted, either by telephone or a home visit. We encourage parents to bring their child to school, so that the reasons for truancy can be discussed and, we hope, resolved.

PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

Clear systems and procedures will govern response to all pupil absence. The school will follow the attendance pathway (see appendix A)

The school encourages good attendance and punctuality by;

- creating a caring and nurturing environment whereby pupils' feels safe and appreciated as young adults;
- developing positive relationships with parents / carers and external agencies working with the family/ pupil;
- working closely with multi agency colleagues and the Education Inclusion Service to improve attendance and punctuality;
- monitoring attendance data and trends and reporting this information to the Governing Body.

Specific Actions:

- The school will make its policy on attendance clear to parents and pupils through: the initial transition meeting prior to admission and on the **school website**.
- If **no contact** is received by the parent/ carer of an absent pupil on the first morning of the absence, **a telephone call is made by the school's administration staff to investigate the reason for the absence**. If the school is not able to contact the family then this will be recorded as N (no reason yet provided for absence).

- Details of the absence are recorded, if later received, and discussed with the head teacher and a decision will be made with regards to authorisation as soon as possible. If a reason for absence is not provided within one School week then the absence is marked as unauthorised. If the pupil is registered as a **Child in Need or on the Child Protection** register and absent from school without reason, then the school should contact Social Services as soon as possible.
- When a pupil returns to school from an absence, **but no explanation is offered, a reason for absence letter will be sent to the parent.**
- The School will **review individual pupil attendance half-termly**. For Pupils, whose attendance is **below 90%** a first letter will be sent to parents indicating the School is monitoring attendance. If there is no improvement within 4 weeks a further letter will be sent with a copy for the **school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO)**.
- Ultimately, if an attendance matter cannot be resolved by the school and the appropriate steps have been followed then a referral will be made to the LA **Education Welfare** Service and may result in an invitation to attend an Attendance Improvement Meeting.
- A formal request to the Local Authority for a Penalty Charge Notice can be made by the school, in relation to poor attendance at school. The LA can advise as to whether a penalty charge referral can proceed.

The school will also:

- ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures, registration regulations and education law relating to school attendance;
- complete school registers at the start of the morning session and afternoon session – the register is open for **5** minutes and closes at **9.05am**;
- stress to parents and carers the importance of contacting the school as early as possible on the first day of absence;
- promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence;
- consult with all members of the school's community and LA Service in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy;
- ensure regular evaluation of attendance by the Governing Body;
- work towards ensuring all pupils are supported and valued and so want to attend school.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children attend the school at which they are registered, regularly, on time, properly dressed and in a fit condition to learn

(parents are also responsible for ensuring that their children stay at school once they have registered).

Parents can do a great deal to support the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents should

- a) ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day;
- b) ensure that their child only misses school for reasons which are unavoidable or justified, such as illness or days of religious observance;
- c) always notify the school as soon as possible - preferably on the first morning - of any absence;
- d) avoid booking family holidays during term-time;
- e) talk to the school if they are concerned that their child may be reluctant to attend

Term Time Holidays

The Head teacher and Governing Body require notification of the intent to take a term time holiday. The School in line with other Schools in the Cluster are **unable to authorize term time holiday requests**. The Governing body has the **discretion to ask the LA to issue a fixed penalty notice** in the event of either of the following criteria:

1. The School did not receive notification of the intent to take a term-time holiday.
2. The attendance of the child/children who intend to take or take a holiday is below 90% prior to the start date of the holiday.

PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES

Regular and punctual attendance of pupils at school and alternative provisions is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. In law, an offence occurs if a parent / carer fails to secure their child's regular attendance at school / alternative provision and that absence is not authorised by the school.

The LAs within ERW are committed to the continual raising of achievement of all their pupils. There is an expectation that all its pupils, regardless of their individual circumstances or needs, are able to secure their entitlement to high quality teaching and learning.

The Governing Body, head teacher and staff at Crickhowell Community Primary School feel strongly that regular attendance is critical if all our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them. **Therefore the head teacher will not authorise any absence for holiday purposes**. All other absence will be at the discretion of the head teacher e.g. sporting events.

A Penalty Notice involves a fine of £120 but decreasing to £60 for early payment.

Guidelines from ERW and Powys on issuing penalty notices are as follows:

How a Penalty Notice will be used

- It is ONE of a number of tools that can be used alongside Education Supervision Orders (ESO) to improve attendance.
- It will be applied with an understanding of the context and background of the pupil's circumstances
- A pupil's attendance needs to drop below a particular level before a Penalty Notice is used.

How Penalty Notices will not be used

- It will not be used for a pupil on the first day that he/she is out of school
- It will not be used for every pupil who fits the criteria without taking into account the context. It will not be considered where there are mitigating factors.
- It is not a holiday fine or penalty notice for every pupil who takes a holiday. It will only be considered if there is regular non-attendance.

The key criteria for issuing Penalty Charge Notices are as follows:

- when a pupil has a minimum of **10 sessions** (five school days) that have been lost due to **unauthorised absences** during the current term and this brings the overall pupil's attendance to below 90% in the school year (these absences do not have to be consecutive);
- **unauthorised absences** of at least 10 sessions (5 school days) due to holidays in term-time if the absences take the overall pupil's attendance to below 90% in the school year to date (these absences do not have to be consecutive);
- **persistent late arrival at school** i.e. after the register has closed ('U' code as in the Codes Guidance Document 2010). Persistent for the purpose of this document means at least 10 sessions of late arrival within a term; these do not need to be consecutive but should bring the overall pupil's attendance to under 90% in the school year to date;

It should be noted that Penalty Charge Notices will only be issued by post.

It is only schools who can decide whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. Penalty Charge Notices are an early intervention tool and contribute drive towards improving school attendance and related outcomes for our children and young people in terms of attainment.

For further information on Penalty Charge Notices please refer to the Code of Conduct which can be found on:

<http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/schools-students/school-attendance-welfare/>

REGISTRATION

Keeping the registers

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. The register may be requested in a court of law as evidence in a prosecution for non- attendance. It will also be used for end of term reports, records of achievement and reference requests, and information for other schools, LAs and external agencies.

- No pupil should be marked present unless actually in attendance at school or other agreed educational activity.
- The register should not have missing marks.
- When a pupil arrives late but the register is still open, the pupils should be marked as late but counted as present for the session.
- When a pupil misses registration, she/ he should be marked as an unauthorised absence, unless a medical letter/ phone call by parent is received and deemed to be genuine.
- Pupils should not have access to the register.
- The head teacher is the only person who can authorize that a pupil be removed from the register – this can only be done with the agreement of the LA.

Punctuality/Lateness

A pupil's punctuality is a legal requirement and the parent/carer of a pupil who is persistently late is guilty of an offence, the law treats persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents can be prosecuted if persistent late arrival is not resolved. Registers for pupils will close at 9.15am each morning and any pupils arriving after that time will be marked **absent**. 'Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open. This should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session' After 30 minutes an 'L' for late become a 'U' for unauthorised absence. School Attendance Dept of Education 2014. The correct marking of the class register is the responsibility of the class teacher and is a legal requirement. Parents will be reminded of the policy by:

- **Mention in the School prospectus**
- **As part of regular newsletters sent home**
- **Via the School website and Schoop**

Registration Codes

/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Off Site Education
C	Other Authorised Circumstances

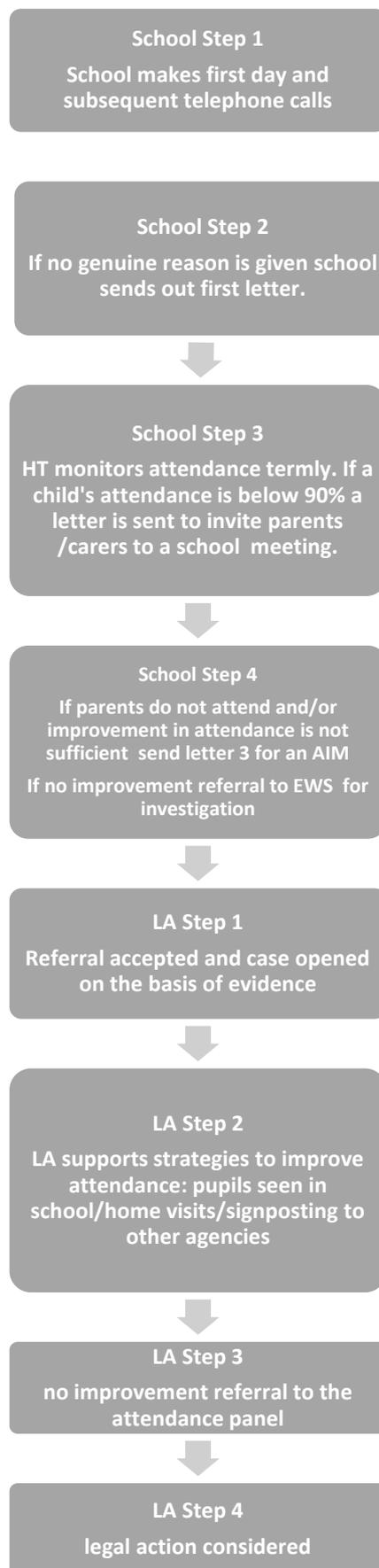
D	Dual Registered i.e Present at another school or PRU
E	Excluded (No alternative provision made)
G	Family holiday (Not agreed)
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (Before the registers closed)
M	Medical / Dental Appointment
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised Absence (Not covered by other code)
P	Approved Sporting Activity
R	Religious Observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller Absence
U	Late (after registers closed)
V	Educational Visit or Trip
W	Work experience
Y	Partial or Enforced closure
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
#	School closed to all pupils
Z	Pupils not on roll yet

What your Child's attendance record really means.

Days	Attendance	Days Lost	Weeks Lost
195	100%	0	
194	99.49%	1	
193	98.97%	2	
192	98.46%	3	
191	97.95%	4	

190	97.44%	5	1 school week
189	96.92%	6	
188	96.41%	7	
187	95.90%	8	
186	95.38%	9	
185	94.87%	10	2 school weeks
184	94.36%	11	
183	93.85%	12	
182	93.33%	13	
181	92.82%	14	
180	92.31%	15	3 school weeks
179	91.79%	16	
178	91.28%	17	
177	90.77%	18	
176	90.26%	19	
175	89.74%	20	4 school weeks
174	89.23%	21	
173	88.72%	22	
172	88.21%	23	
171	87.69%	24	
170	87.18%	25	5 school weeks
169	86.67%	26	
168	86.15%	27	
167	85.64%	28	
166	85.13%	29	
165	84.62%	30	Half a term
164	84.10%	31	
163	83.59%	32	
162	83.08%	33	
161	82.56%	34	
160	82.05%	35	7 school weeks
159	81.54%	36	
158	81.03%	37	
157	80.51%	38	
156	80.00%	39	
155	79.49%	40	8 school weeks
154	78.97%	41	
153	78.46%	42	

Attendance Pathway



Date:

Signed: **(Head teacher)**

..... **(Chair of Governors)**