

Porth County Community School



Attendance Policy

“When a child attends school on a regular basis, they take an important step towards reaching their full potential, and are given the greatest opportunity to learn new things and develop their skills.”

Policy Aim

The Porth County Community School Attendance Policy aims to assure compliance with current legislation, and provide a structured approach to monitor and support pupil attendance in line with School, Local Authority and National requirements. The school is committed to developing a positive ethos of encouraging pupils to attend school regularly, and has initiated a three year Strategic Attendance Plan. The plan serves to communicate and evaluate specific attendance initiatives.

This policy also aims to ensure that there is an efficient system, known to all stakeholders, for ensuring that pupils who should be attending the school have registered twice daily, or a reason for non-attendance is known to the school. Stakeholders and their role are clearly identified to avoid misconception of such an important whole school issue.

Background

Attendance at school, as well as being a legal requirement, is the passport to academic achievement. Attendance above 95% will result in students achieving their maximum academic learning potential. It is a legal and moral responsibility to ensure that their sons and daughters achieve this goal.

Improving attendance is a priority for the school, but also for our local authority. In line with the ‘Raising Educational Standards in Rhondda Cynon Taff’ three key aims underpin this policy;

Key Aim 1- Change student and family attitudes and behaviour towards absenteeism, raising the profile and public awareness of the advantages of good attendance, 95% or better.

Key Aim 2- Ensure a consistent and coordinated approach to responding to absenteeism, to include interventions and the provision of support services in a ‘predict and prevent’ strategy.

Key Aim 3- Improve systems that enable us to identify and address issues behind poor school attendance and to monitor outcomes on an individual, school and authority level.

Policy Principles

As stipulated by Welsh Government, the School requires all students to attend school regularly and expects the following:

1. Students must be punctual to registration every morning. School starts at 8.30a.m.
2. Students must be punctual for the afternoon session. The warning bell goes at 12.35p.m and lessons begin at 12.40pm.
3. Students must be punctual attending every lesson.
4. If students need to leave/ be absent from school a note/medical card requesting permission is required from parents/guardians;
5. Parents will provide information and/or reasons for every absence as required by Welsh Assembly Government regulations.
6. If parents wish to request a holiday in term time they must put this in writing to the Headteacher who is allowed to authorise up to 5 days. A request for more than 5 days must go for approval to the governor responsible for attendance. This can only be for up to 10 days in total. Holidays in term time will only be authorised for students who have good attendance.

Whole School Attendance Targets

The local authority set attendance targets for each school. Our schools attendance targets are;

2013/4 92%
2014/5 92.5%
2015/6 93.0%

Use of SIMS

The School has a computer-collated registration procedure. All staff have an essential role to play in monitoring student attendance both as form tutors and subject teachers. For this reason it is required that all staff should mark a register at the beginning of each lesson. Any pattern of absences from class should be referred in the first instance to the relevant wellbeing coordinator who has in turn has the responsibility for following the School Attendance Methods and Procedures.

If students are absent due to ill health the School will make every effort to provide appropriate work and help organise home tuition if necessary. On a student's return to school after a prolonged absence, staff, particularly form tutors, will assist with any difficulties that might occur.

It is important to expect our students to achieve the highest standards of attendance possible and the partnership between the school and parents underpins everything our school does with regard to attendance. If there are problems, parents should be involved at the earliest opportunity. The role of the Attendance Welfare Officer (AWO) should be maximised in order to achieve this goal.

All students are encouraged to achieve **at least 95%** attendance and an excellent punctuality record. In Years 10 & 11 students are registered for COMPACT, thus reinforcing the school's high expectation for attendance and punctuality.

Methods and Procedures

Appendices available for teachers in the staff handbook

1. Form Tutors / subject teachers will monitor students entering the room.
2. Students will sit in the room according to teacher's rules and seating plans. Equipment / personal organisers to be placed on desk and outside clothes removed.
3. The Register must be taken accurately within the first 10 minutes and saved. Any late marks must be updated immediately.
4. Absence of a 6th form teacher needs to be reported to Mrs Jenkins for appropriate alterations to the system.
5. Supply staff must use the same procedure as other members of staff following support training by colleagues or the member of staff responsible for cover arrangements.
6. Form tutors / subject teachers must verify with other students those who have not been recorded on the screen to enable them to check previous lessons' attendance of those marked absent and can if appropriate inform Key Stage wellbeing staff.
7. Wellbeing staff to receive a daily record of absence queries from information recorded from previous days. Form tutors to challenge students and report back to relevant admin staff.
8. Posters outlining the schools expectations for attendance will be displayed in every form room and in other strategic areas around the school. (Appendix 1)
9. Assemblies will promote good attendance. There will be one per month for each year group where the highest attending form and 100% attendance will be rewarded.
10. The school will recognise good attendance in school at all celebration events and parents evenings.