



Attendance & Punctuality Policy 2018

STATEMENT OF INTENT

With the intention of enabling all our pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them, Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School aims to encourage high levels of attendance and punctuality.

1. Regular attendance is essential if a pupil is to have a successful education. Poor attendance, poor punctuality and truanting can also endanger a pupil's general personal development and future prospects.

Basic Principles

2. The school believes that attendance can be improved if:-
3. Registers are kept accurately and according to the agreed regulations.
4. There is effective monitoring of attendance and truancy generally.
5. All parties work together – pupils, parents, teachers, E.W.O., external agencies.
6. There is a clear whole school policy, which deals with the causes of non-attendance with sufficient follow- up action and support.
7. Ultimately attendance levels will depend upon the quality of the school's curriculum, ethos and relationships inside the school – the better the school, the better the attendance.
8. Achieving good attendance and punctuality is a high priority for the school.

Measuring and Monitoring Attendance

9. Registers are taken during am registration and every lesson during the day. Registration closes at 8:50 for am registration. Registration is quiet, well-disciplined and an important occasion in the school day. Form Teachers use the symbols identified within SIMS. These clearly distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence.
10. Should a pupil arrive after the registers have closed he/she should sign the late book in Room 15 and will be marked as "late".
11. Attendance Support staff phone on the first day of absence. Evidence of this is entered in the register column for that day. If there is no response, the Head of Year is informed through the first day absence list. As a general rule prompt action is essential.
12. Notes should be encouraged for all absences. Telephone messages are acceptable if the office is happy that they are from adults and seem genuine – if there is any doubt they are checked. The note/message must be adequate in that it fully explains the absence; if this is not so then it must be followed up and more detail sought. Cases of persistent failure to produce a note should be

referred to the **Heads of Year? Or Key Stage 3 / Key Stage 4 Leaders?**.

13. All absence notes/messages should be signed and dated by the Form Teachers. If in doubt about notes, Form Teachers should check the handwriting on previous notes or in pupil files.
14. Form Teachers should keep the Head of Years informed of any attendance concerns, e.g. a pattern of odd days for a pupil.
15. Head of Years check their registers at least once a week checking procedures and looking for patterns of absence.
16. The Education Welfare Officer meets with Head of Years weekly and concerns are reported to the Deputy Head teacher, **Mrs R Reed** when necessary.
17. **Community Governors Sub Committee reviews attendance and punctuality at every calendared meeting.** THERE IS NOT A COMMUNITY GOV MEETING
18. All staff are asked to take registers at each lesson and to send a message to the Attendance Support staff immediately if there are any absences that seem suspicious. Heads of Years also carry out spot checks at various times. **Some pupils will be put on report;** these need signing by the teacher at each lesson. This is usually a short-term measure.

Measuring and Monitoring Punctuality

19. Poor punctuality is as serious as poor attendance and the two are often closely linked. Should a pupil arrive after the registers have closed he/she should sign the late book in Room 15, providing an explanation for their lateness.
20. **Form Teachers and Head of Years check punctuality weekly and sanctions are imposed by them, usually taking the form of a detention.** The reason for the lateness should be checked. Each pupil is treated on an individual basis. Parents are always involved in cases of regular lateness and in some cases it is a matter of persuading parents to give more support and treat lateness more seriously. When a pupil is persistently late without good reason and the school's efforts to effect improvement have been unsuccessful the matter will be referred to the E.W.O.

Strategies for improving attendance and punctuality

21. Monitoring and checking is vital, but this one alone is not enough. Essentially attendance will improve if a school reviews its curriculum and teaching methods and create a positive atmosphere inside school.
22. For dealing with individual attendance problems the school's strategy is not different from that which is the basis of its overall pastoral system, i.e:
 - treating pupils as individuals
 - excellent liaison with parents on a continuous basis

- appropriate support

With each poor attendee it is necessary to ascertain the cause of the poor attendance and then work specifically on these root causes. Pupils will open up if they trust the Head of Year or Form Teachers and there is sensitive counselling.

23. Teachers should be asked to keep an eye on the signs that attendance may be a problem, e.g. pupils feeling ill in lesson; missing certain lessons on a regular basis; comments of peers; pupil unhappiness etc. They should pass on any concern to the Head of Year.
24. The EWO visits and sees all Head of Years once per week, as well as checking registers.
25. The EWO, Head of Year and Deputy Headteacher decide together which cases the EWO should take up personally. The EWO supports the school by working with cases where:-
 - Attendance has fallen below 80%.
 - Home visits are essential, e.g. parent condoned absence or problems at home.
 - Where the school has been pursuing certain strategies with an individual pupil, but is making no progress.
26. The EWO can also help where there are other family/social problems involved, which are affecting the attendance and she is also able to secure the involvement of other agencies e.g. Education Psychologist, Child Guidance, Social Services.
27. Pupils and parents are constantly reminded of the importance and value of good attendance.
28. Often poor attendance begins in the primary school and it is expected that at the time of transfer the Transition Head of Year will have identified these pupils and discussed with their teachers the probable causes of the poor attendance so that they can keep a close eye on them in Year Seven and be ready if problems arise.
29. Attendance certificates are given out each term by Head of Year. Good and improved attendance will be promoted and rewarded.
30. Letters are sent home to parents re attendance including specific information such as what is needed in a note re absence, definition of authorised and unauthorised absences.
31. Termly reports are made by the Deputy Headteacher to the Community Governors and also these minutes are shared with the school's Governing Body at Full Governors Meetings.
32. In the case of school phobia – specialised help may be necessary. In other cases the solution may be simple, e.g.:-

- if the problem is one of relationships with a teacher, then a timetable change can be made.
 - if one subject is too difficult then special help can be given or a set change made.
 - if there is bullying then the bullying can be stopped.
 - if uniform or equipment cannot be afforded then money can be made available.
33. If the problem lies in parents condoning absence in some way then it is necessary to enter into dialogue with parents at various levels
- All parents can be encouraged to see how vital good attendance is to their child's education.
 - Parents can be asked to make medical appointments for their children out of school time and/or not let them take a whole day off for a 30-minute appointment. Parents are also urged not to take their holidays during school time.
 - Where parents are themselves condoning the absence because they do not mind the child being at home or they cannot get the child to school, then the school, via the Head of Year, will take up a range of approaches from support to joint strategies and from discussion and counselling through to "threats" of LEA action. In bad cases it will always be necessary for the school to work with the EWO whilst never just handing over responsibility and giving up on its own attempts, in liaison and co-operating with EWO to improve the situation.
34. It is vital that the school handles sensitively and professionally the return of a pupil to school after a period of non-attendance or intermittent attendance, the whole process should be structured and planned, e.g.:-
It is the Head of Year who will set up and oversee such a strategy, but it is the responsibility of all teachers to help make it work.
The pupil might be re-integrated via the Study Support Centre.
35. Work being sent home to absent pupils helps their return to school. Where absence is for an extended period it is essential to send work home so that learning is not affected unduly.
36. Ultimately pupils and parents need to see the gains of attending school in terms of education, personal and social development, references and career prospects.

Attendance Data and its use

37. Each term attendance data will be collected and analysed in order to assess performance and trends.
Data collected and analysed will include:
- whole school attendance rates
 - weekly totals
 - weekly attendance % for each class and year
 - rates of unauthorised absence

Data is checked by the Head of Year, E.W.O. and Deputy Headteacher. The aim is to keep over 93% in each year. Attendance data is used to set attendance targets for the whole school.

At Cefn Saeson we take unauthorised absence to mean:-

- I. truancy (absence without the knowledge and permission of the parent).
- II. condoned absence by the parent, which is clearly not for an acceptable reason, for example shopping, looking after young children etc.

Attendance in aggregate terms and in terms of authorised / unauthorised absence is shown on the pupil's yearly report.

Monitoring Impact

Effective monitoring and policies can improve the attendance for individual pupils and thus the overall attendance picture.

The Deputy Headteacher is the named member of staff responsible for monitoring the impact of the policy.

The policy is to be reviewed annually.

Links to other policies

- Managing Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying