



Clwstwr

Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed

Attendance Policy

2025-2028

Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed's Cluster Attendance Policy has been agreed by all schools and Governing Bodies within the cluster.

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Principles, aims and objectives

Our shared principles

- Every child has a fundamental right to be educated, to flourish personally and to achieve their very best academic results. All children are far more likely to fulfil their potential if they attend school regularly.
- Having chosen Welsh medium education for your child, you will be aware that academic and social success are dependent on fluency in the Welsh language. Our cluster feels strongly that this can only be achieved through regular attendance at school.
- By law all children of compulsory age must receive a good quality full-time education.
- Parents/Carers and teachers have a duty to ensure the best possible attendance at school.
- Our cluster expect every learner and Parent/Carer to aim for 100% attendance in each academic term and year.
- Regular non-attendance to school or frequent unauthorised absences are considered to be Safeguarding issues and will be investigated as per our Safeguarding policy.

Our shared aims

- To foster and ensure maximum learner attendance in every class and every year group in every term.
- To encourage learners to take full advantage of their educational opportunity by attending regularly.
- To recognise the external factors which influence learner attendance and work in partnership with parents/Carers and the EWO to address difficulties.

Our shared objectives

- To identify patterns of non-attendance at an early stage and work to resolve any personal/social difficulties.
- To eliminate unauthorised absences.
- To provide an effective and efficient system for the monitoring of attendance.
- To praise high levels of attendance and improvement in attendance every term.

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The wider aims of our cluster attendance policy are to:

- Share the message of the importance of excellent 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 excellent attendance and punctuality.

Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed's cluster aims 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, family background, religion or any other individual characteristics. We aim to ensure that all stakeholders also share these values.

Excellent and regular attendance at school is essential if learners are to succeed and fulfil their potential. To ensure this, Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed's cluster employs a whole school approach toward attendance with class teachers, Form Tutors, Pastoral teams, School support/attendance officer, designated leadership and the Educational Welfare Officer all fully involved in monitoring learner attendance.

Excellent attendance is given a high profile throughout all schools and we all aim to ensure that the learners 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.

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 learners and parents feel safe, secure and valued.
- A motivating, relevant and accessible curriculum for all learners.
- A high priority of attendance and punctuality monitoring.
- Regular and efficient recording of attendance; twice daily.
- Early contact with parents when a learner fails to attend school without good reason.
- Early contact on any notified problems.
- Efficient, effective and supportive communication between home and school

What learners can expect from school

- A safe learning environment in which learners feel valued and secure.
- Consistently applied rewards and recognition for excellent 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.

Newport City Council Education Welfare Service will:

- Provide support to schools, learners 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 learners 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.

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Attendance Policy Guidance and Procedures

The oversight of attendance will be the responsibility of the designated school leader in each school with the whole school responsibility for Attendance. Support will be given by the School Support/Attendance officer who will act as coordinator of the SIMS system.

Specific responsibilities include:

Encouraging excellent attendance and punctuality is the shared responsibility of our schools, parents, carers, learners, 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.
- Keep parent/carers informed of any attendance related issues.
- Register learners accurately and keep up to date records.
- Complete accurate and timely CME (Child Missing Education) referrals.
- 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 each day of their child’s absence.
- To take holidays during the school holiday periods; any leave of absence during term time must be applied for in advance.

Learner responsibilities

- To aim each year for 100% attendance and to attend school regularly.
- To 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.

In the case of absence our Parents/Carers will:

- Contact school via telephone to notify of absence.
- Arrange medical appointments outside school time whenever possible.
- Arrange family holidays during the school holidays.
- Contact the School Support/Attendance Officer to report any attendance concerns.

Our primary class teachers and secondary form tutors will:

- Raise the profile and importance of excellent attendance.
- Monitor attendance of their class/tutor group daily and ensure SIMS attendance records are updated.
- Support learners in achieving attendance targets.
- Follow up attendance and punctuality concerns, robustly.

Secondary school subject teachers will:

- Liaise with Leaders of Wellbeing and Progress about learners whose learning is being negatively affected by repeated lateness or absence.
- Raise the profile and importance of excellent attendance.

Secondary school setting Leaders of Wellbeing and Progress, with the support of the Attendance Officer, will:

- Monitor attendance weekly.
- Monitor the lateness of learners who are late on a daily and weekly basis.
- Follow up on all learners who have been absent for 3 days or more through home contacts.
- Follow up with the parents of students who are repeatedly late.
- Liaise with the Educational Welfare Officer on a regular basis.
- 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 learners whose attendance can be improved and work with these students.

- Use attendance rewards to improve attendance.
- Meet with parents as appropriate.
- Provide a regular report on attendance in year groups for the designated senior lead.
- Issue warning letters.
- Refer to the Education Welfare Officer as appropriate.

Our School Support/Attendance Officers will:

- Monitor the SIMS system, and report concerns and faults to the relevant class teachers and school leaders.
- Contact all learners on first day of absence by telephone/text message/email or letter.
- Refer students who have been absent for 3 days with no response to the Leader of Wellbeing and Progress or designated school lead.
- Update attendance data daily with parental returns/holiday forms/manual registers.
- Produce registers and statistics fortnightly, monthly for the school lead and Pastoral team.
- Send text messages/emails to Parents/carers of students who arrive late.

The designated senior lead/(In Secondary school this is the Deputy Head) will:

- Ensure that all key staff are aware of whole school and year group attendance targets and progress on achieving these.
- Produce summary documents for Governors and the Headteacher.
- 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 Leaders of Wellbeing and Progress and the Educational Welfare Officer to ensure resources are used effectively and learners monitored appropriately.
- Meet with parents as appropriate.
- Ensure attendance is discussed in fortnightly meetings between all Leaders of Wellbeing and Progress and line managers.
- Raise the profile of, and reward, good attendance on a regular basis.
- Review persistent unauthorised absences and liaise with the Local Authority over the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices.

Our Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) will:

- Liaise with the School Support Officer about daily contacts.
- Meet with the designated lead/Deputy Head regularly to discuss attendance issues.
- Prosecute parents where all other avenues have failed.
- Visit parents of learners who have unsatisfactory attendance and devise suitable home-school agreements for their reintegration to school.
- Visit parents as requested by the designated school leader.

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Absence from school and re-integration

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, leave of absence 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:

Code	Meaning	Statistical category
∧	Present at registration	present
L	Late but arrived before the register closed	present
B	Educated off-site (not dual registration)	approved educational activity
D	Dual registered (ie present at another school activity or at a PRU)	approved educational activity
P	Approved sporting activity	approved educational activity
V	Educational visit or trip	approved educational activity
J	Interview	approved educational activity
W	Work experience (not work based training)	approved educational activity
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	authorised absence
F	Agreed extended family holiday	authorised absence
H	Agreed family holiday	authorised absence
I	Illness	authorised absence
M	Medical or dental appointment	authorised absence
S	Study leave	authorised absence
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made	authorised absence
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	authorised absence
N	No reason for the absence provided yet	unauthorised absence
O	Other unauthorised (not covered by other codes or descriptions)	unauthorised absence
G	Family holiday (not agreed or sessions in excess of agreement)	unauthorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the register closed	unauthorised absence
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	not required to attend
Y	Partial and forced closure	not required to attend
Z	Pupil not on roll yet	not required to attend
#	School closed to all pupils	not required to attend

Registration:

- All schools have their own individual registration times.
- In Secondary school, registers will be taken in each lesson every day.
- 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.

Procedure for Absence Concerns:

- Mark register with the appropriate code.
- School to initiate first day response to Parent/carers via telephone call or email.
- When the absence remains a concern, school will make further contact with home via phone and email.
- 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.

Medical Appointments:

All schools will code absences 'M' as medical if sufficient evidence has been provided by the parent/carer.

Our cluster reserves the right to trust what our parent/carers tell us, but for extended medical absence or if there is any doubt about absence then an appointment card or letter will be requested.

Entertainment Licenses:

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

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.

Leave of absence will be considered by the Headteacher/Attendance lead and the Governing Body and is at their discretion. For the leave of absence to be authorised the following criteria will be considered:

- 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 maximum amount of time authorised for any leave of absence would be 10 days.
- Punctuality
- 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.

Holiday requests

In accordance with Newport and Monmouthshire Local Authorities' guidance, schools can only authorise absence due to family holidays in special or exceptional circumstances. The Cluster takes a consistent approach and does not automatically authorise holidays in term-time. FPNs may be issued if a highly significant number of days are taken for holiday.

Fixed Penalty Notices

***Each school in the cluster will take its own stance on the issue of FPNs in accordance with their context and understanding of the best way to tackle absence from school.** Therefore, the decision around the issue of an FPN rests with the Head teacher and the Governing Body in each individual school.

For those schools in the cluster using FPNs, these may be considered appropriate when:

- At least 10 sessions (5 school days) are lost due to unauthorised absence during the current term. These do not need to be consecutive.
- Unauthorised absences of at least 10 sessions (5 school days) due to holidays in term time or delayed return from extended holidays.
- Persistent late arrive at school, i.e., after the register has closed, in the current term. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of late arrival.
- Truancy, where the child has come to the attention of the Police or public during school hours for being absent from school, without an acceptable reason.
- Fixed Penalty notices are currently set at £60 and must be paid within 28 days. Non-payment within this timeframe results in a total Penalty of £120. Non-payment of fines will result in prosecution.

Child Missing Education (CME)

- 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 process.
- When a child's absence is unexplained, schools will contact the parents on the first day of absence and endeavour 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.

Admissions and deletions from school roll:

- Schools are required to inform the Local Authority in every circumstance when they are about to remove a learner's name from the admissions register.
- This would include informing the Local Authority of the learner'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.

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 designated school leader for attendance in conjunction with supporting staff.

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