CLUSTER ATTENDANCE POLICY
Polisi Presenoldeb y Clwster

Between
CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
and
PARTNER PRIMARY SCHOOLS

CHRIST THE KING PRIMARY SCHOOL

HOLY FAMILY PRIMARY SCHOOL

ST BERNADETTE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

ST JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

ST PETER'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

ST PHILLIP EVAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Corpus Christi Cluster Attendance Policy
St Philip Evans, St Peter's, St Joseph's, Christ the King, Holy Family, St Bernadette's

1. Introduction and aims

1.1 The success of a child at school is likely to be affected negatively if their attendance is below 95%. Those who do not attend regularly will certainly fall behind in their learning, leading to a failure to reach their full potential. As a school, we seek to provide a Catholic environment in which all young people can flourish as a member of a happy, caring and safe community. It is our goal that all pupils attend school regularly and on time, making the most of all the opportunities available to them.
1.2 Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated very seriously. Each case is dealt with independently as we will always try to support families to improve attendance and punctuality. This Attendance Policy is designed to help teachers, parents and pupils understand their rights, responsibilities and roles when it comes to school attendance. By working in partnership, it is our hope that every pupil achieves over 95% attendance.

1.3 The Corpus Christi cluster of schools aims to:

- Give attendance and punctuality the highest priority;
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities to ensure consistency and rigour;
- Provide support, advice and guidance to families;
- Use attendance data systematically to evaluate success;
- Use rewards to celebrate good attendance;
- Use sanctions sensitively, when necessary;
- Work in partnership with the Attendance Manager at Corpus Christi to liaise with families and refer to the Education Welfare Service, as required; and
- Support pupils returning to school after significant periods of absence.

2. Rights, responsibilities and roles

2.1 The Corpus Christi Cluster has its basis in Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We believe that all young people have the right to education, based on equality of opportunity, and that the school, in partnership with parents and other parties, must take measures to encourage regular school attendance and reduce rates of absenteeism.

2.2 Corpus Christi's cluster schools are required under The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010, to take attendance registers twice a day; at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

2.3 Parents are required under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that their child receives effective full-time education.

2.4 Cardiff Local Authority is required under section 437 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that a child for whom they are responsible is receiving suitable education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

2.5 Corpus Christi's Cluster Attendance Policy is written to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and in the understanding of life based on the Catholic faith.

2.6 Corpus Christi's cluster schools aim to work in partnership with young people, parents and families so that pupils can benefit from the educational opportunities provided for them at school. Key members of staff include:

- Mrs E Jones (Education Welfare Service Team Leader)
- Mr N Hampson (Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Attendance, Corpus Christi High School)
- Mrs J Miller (Attendance Officer, Corpus Christi High School)
- Mrs M Brooks (Attendance Officer, Corpus Christi High School)
- Mrs S Watham (St Philip Evans Primary School)
- Miss D Williams (St Joseph's Primary School)
- Mrs E Conway (St Peter's Primary School)
- Mrs H Jenkins (Holy Family Primary School)
- Mrs N Butler (Christ the King Primary School)
- Mrs M Norman (St Bernadette's Primary School)

2.7 This framework operates in conjunction with Cardiff Local Authority's 'Five Step System of Attendance Management'.

3. Procedures

Registration procedures

3.1 To ensure accuracy and consistency, all pupils are registered via Cardiff's Schools Management Information System - Arbor.

3.2 Pupils are registered every lesson at Corpus Christi and every session in Partner Primary Schools.

3.3 Teachers, Cover Supervisors and Supply Teachers are informed and comply with all registration procedures.

3.4 In instances of lateness, the absent (N) mark is altered to the late (L) mark. The degree of lateness will be recorded using the appropriate procedures.

Categorisation of absence

3.5 The following codes, as set out by the Welsh Government 2010, are used by the Cluster:

/ Present
N/O Absent
L Late
B Educated off-site
D Dual-registered
P Approved sporting activity
V Educational visit
J Interview
W Work experience
C Other authorised circumstance
I Illness
M Medical appointment
E Excluded
R Religious observance
T Traveller absence
O Other unauthorised circumstance
G Family holiday (not agreed)
U Late (after registration closed)

Where pupils are not required to attend school the additional codes X, Y, Z and # may be used.

Procedures for absence and lateness

3.7 Parents are asked to report their child's absence to school on the first day of their child's absence. Designated staff in each school monitor absence each morning and First Day Response procedures are triggered.

3.8 Should the school be unable to ascertain the reason for a child's absence, parents are contacted in order to seek an explanation.

Authorisation of absence

3.9 Absences may only be approved by authorised representatives of the school. Corpus Christi's cluster schools exercise caution in the authorisation of absence and parents must seek to provide the school with a full picture of the reasons leading to their child's absence.

3.10 The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 give schools discretionary power to grant leave for the purpose of a family holiday during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw their child from school for a holiday and, in law, have to apply for permission from the school in advance. Holidays during term time will not be authorised.

4. Intervention

4.1 Corpus Christi's cluster schools recognise the important role that parents play in promoting good school attendance. The school therefore seeks to provide professional, quality information and advice, reported frequently through the school's communication channels.

4.2 Attendance Officers and other staff closely monitor post-registration attendance lists in an attempt to identify instances of truancy. In such cases, senior staff are alerted. Parents are telephoned so that action can be taken to locate missing pupils and return them to safety.

4.3 When concerns are raised by parents or staff about a pupil's school attendance, Attendance Officers and/or school staff will make a telephone call or carry out a home visit. During the home visit they provide information and advice and seek to support the pupil in returning to school.

4.4 When a pupil has been absent for an extended period, they are welcomed positively on their return. Appropriate staff are responsible for ensuring that extended support is made available to the pupil, helping them to 'catch up' and move forward.

4.5 The Attendance Officer work in collaboration with the Corpus Christi's cluster group of St Philips Evans Primary School, St Peter's Primary School, St Bernadette's Primary, St Joseph's Primary School, Christ the King Primary School and Holy Family Primary School to ensure that good school attendance is maintained at all times. The Attendance Officers also ensure that attendance and punctuality are given a high priority throughout the duration of pupils' compulsory education.

4.6 Excellent attendance is celebrated and rewards may be given. Schools take every opportunity to raise the profile of attendance and praise pupils for excellent attendance and significant improvement.

Hierarchy of sanctions

4.7 Corpus Christi's cluster schools are caring schools and always seek to resolve matters of poor attendance through effective partnership working with parents. On the rare occasion that the

school are unable to elicit in parents the support deemed necessary to encourage pupils to attend school, sanctions will be used. In the first instance, parents may receive letters which:

- Request reasons for their child's absence;
- Request medical evidence for their child's absence;
- Express concern about their child's absence and offer advice and support;
- Advise them about their child's lateness and ask for their help in getting their child to school on time;
- Advise them that the school has taken the decision not to authorise an absence;
- Advise them that an Attendance Officer and/or school staff intend to visit their home;
- Advise them of their legal responsibilities to ensure their child attends school regularly;
- Advise them that they are at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice;
- Advise them that a referral has been made to the Educational Welfare Service.

4.8 In some circumstances, the school may request that the Educational Welfare Service issue parents/carers with a Fixed Penalty Notice under The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013. A FPN may be requested:

- Where there is a minimum of 10 unauthorised sessions (5 school days) in an academic year (these do not need to be consecutive);
- Pupils persistently arriving after the close of the registration period i.e. more than 10 sessions in an academic year (these do not need to be consecutive); (Recommended that registers be kept open for thirty minutes);
- A period of absence from school due to a holiday that was not authorised by school (a minimum 10 sessions);
- A pupil has regularly come to the attention of the police during school hours and is absent from school without an acceptable reason and there have been 10 unauthorised absences.
- A maximum of three FPN's can be issued to a parent in a 12 month period but only one of these can be issued for 10 unauthorised absences following a warning. FPNs may be issued in respect of more than one child in cases where there is more than one poorly attending pupil in a family.

Whilst there are no restrictions on the number of times a parent may receive a formal warning of an FPN it would not be acceptable to issue "warnings" repeatedly without making further investigations of the wider circumstances

4.9 Procedure for issuing a fixed penalty notice

The EWS will respond to all requests to issue penalty notices within ten school days of receipt. Requests can be generated by headteachers, the teacher in charge of the PRU, EOTAS Co-ordinator, the police and neighbouring local authorities.
EWS will:

- Send a formal written warning to the parent/carer notifying them that they may receive a fixed penalty notice and why
- Set a period of 15 school days to allow the parent/carer to respond. During the fifteen-day period the pupil must not have any unauthorised absences from school. This monitoring period can be taken across 2 terms
- If at the end of the 15 days there are unauthorised absences in this monitoring period, a penalty notice will be issued via first class post and will be deemed to have been received by the relevant parent 2 working days after posting the notice

- Where the school requests that a Fixed Penalty Notice be issued as a response to a period of unauthorised holiday absence the formal warning letter and fifteen-day improvement period will not apply

4.10 When the school feels that, despite its best efforts to support the family, attendance is not improving, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service. A referral might be made when, for example:

- A pattern of irregular attendance has developed;
- A period of entrenched non-attendance has become established;
- There is a lack of parental cooperation in ensuring a child's regular attendance; or
- A pattern of truancy is persisting.

4.11 Corpus Christi's cluster schools will liaise with the Education Welfare Service to provide the evidence required to prosecute parents who fail, without reasonable justification, to cause their child to attend school regularly, under sections 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

5.1 All staff are responsible for maintaining accurate attendance records for each pupil. Registration data and details of interventions and strategies are recorded using the relevant systems.

5.2 Attendance Officers in conjunction with other primary administrative staff produce detailed accounts pertaining to the attendance of pupils.

5.3 Attendance Officers meet regularly with relevant staff to discuss individual cases of absenteeism, truancy or lateness with schools and across the cluster and reflect upon the effectiveness of interventions or actions to date. Decisions are taken, as appropriate, as to whether individual cases meet the criteria for referral to the Educational Welfare Service.

5.4 Attendance Officers meet with the Educational Welfare Officer as appropriate to review cases and seek support. The Educational Welfare Officer is responsible for contributing to each school's aim to improve attendance through the implementation of this Policy.

5.5 The Education Welfare Officer, with the Attendance Officers, conduct Register Audits on a regular basis as outlined by the Education Welfare Service.

5.6 Attendance data is reviewed at the end of the academic year by the Senior Leadership Teams of the Corpus Christi's cluster schools and is used to improve both the Self-Evaluation document and the School Improvement Plan.

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