



# CONNAH'S QUAY HIGH SCHOOL

Creu Llwyddiant | Creating Success

# Attendance Policy

This Policy has been written in accordance with the most recent Government guidance. This Policy will be rewritten as necessary to reflect the changing emphasis of the school and the changes in Government legislation and reviewed biannually.

Policy Title	Attendance Policy
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SLT Lead	Assistant Headteacher – Susan Woosey

## INTRODUCTION

The importance of school attendance cannot be understated. Research has shown that even small amounts of absence can have a significant impact on learner outcomes. Connah's Quay High School is committed in ensuring that all learners fulfil their potential and regular attendance at school is one of the biggest factors in achieving this. Please see Appendix 1 for days lost due to poor attendance

## OUR VISION – Creating success

We aim to provide a **caring community**, which encourages every child to achieve their **full potential** and develop their social confidence and well-being. In short, every child at Connah's Quay High School matters.

The most important factor contributing to a learner's success at our school is regular attendance. The link between attendance and attainment is firmly established. Those learners who attend more achieve better qualifications and are more able to access higher education, employment and training. Regular attendance is vital if learners are to achieve their full potential.

- We believe that regular attendance is the key to enabling learners to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who can realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community. Historically learners with 90% attendance have performed half as well compared to those with 96% and above.
- We seek to ensure that all learner's receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for all.
- We strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels safe and valued.
- School staff will work with learners and their families to ensure each learner attends regularly and punctually.
- We will further develop an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of learners to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those learners and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- Connah's Quay High School recognises that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning.

## 1. Aims

- To improve the overall attendance of learners
- To reduce the number of learners classified as persistent absentees and those learners on track to become persistent absentees; that is, those learners whose attendance falls below 90%, the equivalent to 19 days absence in a school year.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including learners, parents, staff and governors.
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and learners.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance and punctuality related data,
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- To implement a system of rewards and sanctions relating to attendance and punctuality.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority and other external agencies.
- To recognise the needs of individual learners when planning reintegration following a significant period of absence.

## 2 Roles and Responsibilities

### 2.1 The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of the school.
- Ensuring that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

### 2.2 Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for:

- Following the attendance policy, and for ensuring learners do so too. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance and punctuality behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual learners to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.

- Designated members of staff will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of each afternoon session.

**2.3** The school will ensure that every learner has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

**2.4** The school will inform the LA of any learners being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they:

- Are being educated at home.
- No longer live within a reasonable distance of the registered school.
- Have an authorised medical note.
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning.
- Have been permanently excluded.

**2.5** Parents will be expected to:

- Take responsibility for their children's attendance during term time.
- Promote good attendance and ensure their children attend school every day.

**2.6** Learners are responsible for:

- Their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.
- All learners are responsible for their punctuality to lessons.

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

**3.1** The school defines "absence" as either:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

**3.2** The school defines an "authorised absence" as:

- An absence for illness for which the school is satisfied the student is not fit to attend school.
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be arranged at another time and for which the school has granted leave.

- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave. 7.3. The school defines an “unauthorised absence” as:
- A child who is absent from school without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have not been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no legitimate reason during the day.

3.3 The school defines “persistent absenteeism (PA)” as:

- Missing 10 percent (19 days) or more of school across the academic year for any reason.

## **LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES**

As mentioned earlier this policy has clear links with the wider safeguarding agenda and specifically all policies that make up the safeguarding suite of documents. It should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy. When ratifying or reviewing the policy, links should be made with the other relevant policies. This policy outlines what we expect from all our learners in terms of their attendance and punctuality, and the sanctions that will be enforced if this policy is not adhered to. Good attendance and self-discipline are vital for pupils to carry with them both during and after their school years

## **LEGAL CONTEXT**

Regular School Attendance Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, states that the parent/carer is responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age (5-16 years) receives efficient full-time education that is suitable to the child’s age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have.

This can be by regular attendance at school or by education otherwise (the parent/carer can choose to educate their child at home).

If it appears to the Local Authority (LA) that a child of compulsory school age is not receiving a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, they must begin procedures for issuing a School Attendance Order under Section 437 of the Education Act 1996. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, then the parent/carer is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Since March 2000, there has been a further offence where a parent/carer, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend (Education Act 1996, Section 444(1A) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000). This offence requires proof that the parent knew of their child’s non-attendance and failed to act. Under this aggravated offence, a warrant can be issued compelling a parent to

attend court and conviction can lead to a custodial sentence.

## **REGISTRATION PRACTICES**

The Education (Learner Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 set out the requirements on schools to maintain admission and attendance registers.

Schools must keep two registers: an admission register, which serves as the school roll, and an attendance register. The admission register should include details of learners from the date they have been admitted to the school.

Registration takes place at 8.50am every morning and at the start of lesson 4 in the afternoon; this is at 1.15pm for KS3 and 2.15pm for KS4. Where a pupil arrives late but the register is still open the pupil should be marked as late but counted as present for that session.

Authorised absence means either the school has given approval in advance, or that a satisfactory explanation has been given afterwards (the absence should be classified as unauthorised until that time). Registers need to be up to date so that schools can account for all learners particularly in an emergency.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the LA using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

This includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- day trips and holidays in term time.

We will strongly challenge the reason for absence and not readily accept it and automatically mark an absence as authorised simply because a parent/carer has contacted the school; medical evidence should be requested where appropriate.

## **ABSENCE CODES**

Connah's Quay High School will use national attendance codes to enable the school to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way. The following codes will be used.

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

## THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that their child attend a registered school. It is also the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school as soon as possible if their child will be absent, and ensure a satisfactory explanation is given to the school.

Parent/carers can do a great deal to support the regular and punctual attendance of their children at school taking the following actions:

- Start good habits early, arrive at school on time and keep to school rules.
- Inform the school on the first day of any illness or absence, by phone, providing medical evidence where appropriate.
- Make it known that they do not approve of poor attendance, lateness or truancy. Ensure their children only miss school for legally allowed reasons such as illness or days specifically set aside for religious observance.
- Use their child's school pocket book explain an absence.
- Avoid booking family holidays during term time.
- Attend Progress Evenings and other school events.
- Read all letters that the school emails home.
- Talk to the school or the Education Welfare Service about any problems or difficulties they may be experiencing.
- Support school in encouraging good behaviour in school as well as out of school.
- Take an interest in their child's schoolwork and homework.

Having poor attendance can have an impact on learner progress and result in underachievement.

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

## WORKING TOGETHER TO PROMOTE REGULAR ATTENDANCE

In working to create a pattern of regular attendance, everybody must value their own contribution and responsibilities – parents/carers, learners and all members of school staff.



To enable us to work as a team and focus on this we will:

- Inform you of any unexplained absences
- Report to you on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments
- Celebrate good attendance
- Reward good or improving attendance
- Ensure attendance data is available to parents/carers and students via Satchel One

Learners may be absent from school due to illness, however, occasionally a learner may be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes the situation worse.

## **PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW IF YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT**

If your child is absent, you must:

- Contact the school office on **01244 813491** as soon as possible on the morning of each day's absence
- Write a signed note, in your child's pocketbook, on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us
- Speak to your child's Pastoral Coordinator if you have a concern that your child's reason for absence is not genuine.
- If your child is absent, we will:
- Endeavour to telephone or send you an email on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.
- Following repeated or prolonged absence we will:
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with the appropriate member of staff
- Aim to work in partnership with the family and offer support where needed
- If attendance falls below 90%, we will consider asking your child to join an attendance group (90% equates to 1 day's absence per 2 weeks or 1 year's absence over the full period of schooling)
- Coordinate appropriate work with outside agencies, to help impact upon your child's attendance
- Refer the matter to the Pupil Attendance & Education Welfare Officer
- If significant improvement is not evident following a period of mentoring and intervention, request that the student and family attend an official Attendance Panel meeting

## **IF YOUR CHILD IS ILL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

If a learner needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff. Learners should NOT phone home but must report their Form tutor or PC who will discuss the illness with your child. If the school feel it is in the best interests of your child to go home, the pupil must be collected from the school office by a parent/carer or another authorised adult and signed out.

No learner will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

## **MEDICAL/ DENTAL APPOINTMENTS**

Parents/carers should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a child to miss a whole day's schooling for an appointment, unless absolutely necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is. If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected from the school office by the parent/carer or another authorised adult and signed out.

No learner will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation. Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments, unless it is an emergency appointment, and must be supported by providing the school with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter – only then will the absence be authorised.

## **RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE**

Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends. In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence.

## **PUNCTUALITY**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they will miss work and vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons. Persistent lateness has an adverse effect on the quality of your child's education and consequently can lead to increased absence.

- All learners must arrive by 8.45am each day
- The morning register will be taken at 8.50 am and closes at 9.10am
- Our afternoon register is taken during lesson 4, this is at 1.15pm for KS3 and 2.15pm for KS4.
- A learner who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late (L) – which counts as present.

- Learners who are late to registration will get a level 1 behaviour point; this will be added to Satchel One by the form tutor
- Learners who are late to lesson 1 will get a level 2 behaviour point, this is added by the PC's
- Two lates in a week will result in an after school detention (Data will be collated from a Wednesday to Wednesday)

When a child arrives late to school, they miss important events like assembly, teacher instructions and introductions. Children often also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late.

The table below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage children and disrupt the learning of others.

Minutes late per Day	Equates to Days of Teaching Lost in one Year	Which means this number of lessons missed
5 minutes	3 days	15 Lessons
10 minutes	6 days	30 Lessons
15 minutes	9 days	45 Lessons

Poor punctuality will be addressed, as follows:

- PC/APC on duty in reception from 8.50am until 9.50am
- Names of learners who are late are taken down, and a discussion with the learners around reasons for their lateness, to occur.
- At 9.50am the list is given to reception, who will give all learners a level 2 behaviour point, this will be seen by parents/carers.
- This should be followed up by a phone call home, by the PC's.
- Learners who are late will be put on a Friday after school detention

## ATTENDANCE REWARDS

### Criteria

- 99% - 100% attendance
- Improved attendance

### Example rewards

Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rewards points on Satchel one for 100% weekly attendance</li> <li>• Tutor group raffle for a 'jump the lunch queue' card</li> </ul>
Half termly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postcard home</li> <li>• Breakfast with the Headteacher</li> <li>• Jump the lunch queue</li> <li>• Raffle in assembly to include               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ £5 Amazon vouchers</li> <li>○ Jump the lunch queue</li> <li>○ Free lunch</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Termly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postcard home</li> <li>• Raffle in assembly to include               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ One £50 Amazon voucher</li> <li>○ £10 Amazon vouchers</li> <li>○ Jump the lunch queue</li> <li>○ Free lunch</li> <li>○ VIP lounge?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Year 11 – beautician voucher for prom</li> </ul>
Yearly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End of year trip bowling for certain number of points for attendance (TBC)</li> <li>• Raffle in assembly to include               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ One £100 Amazon voucher</li> <li>○ £10 Amazon vouchers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA)

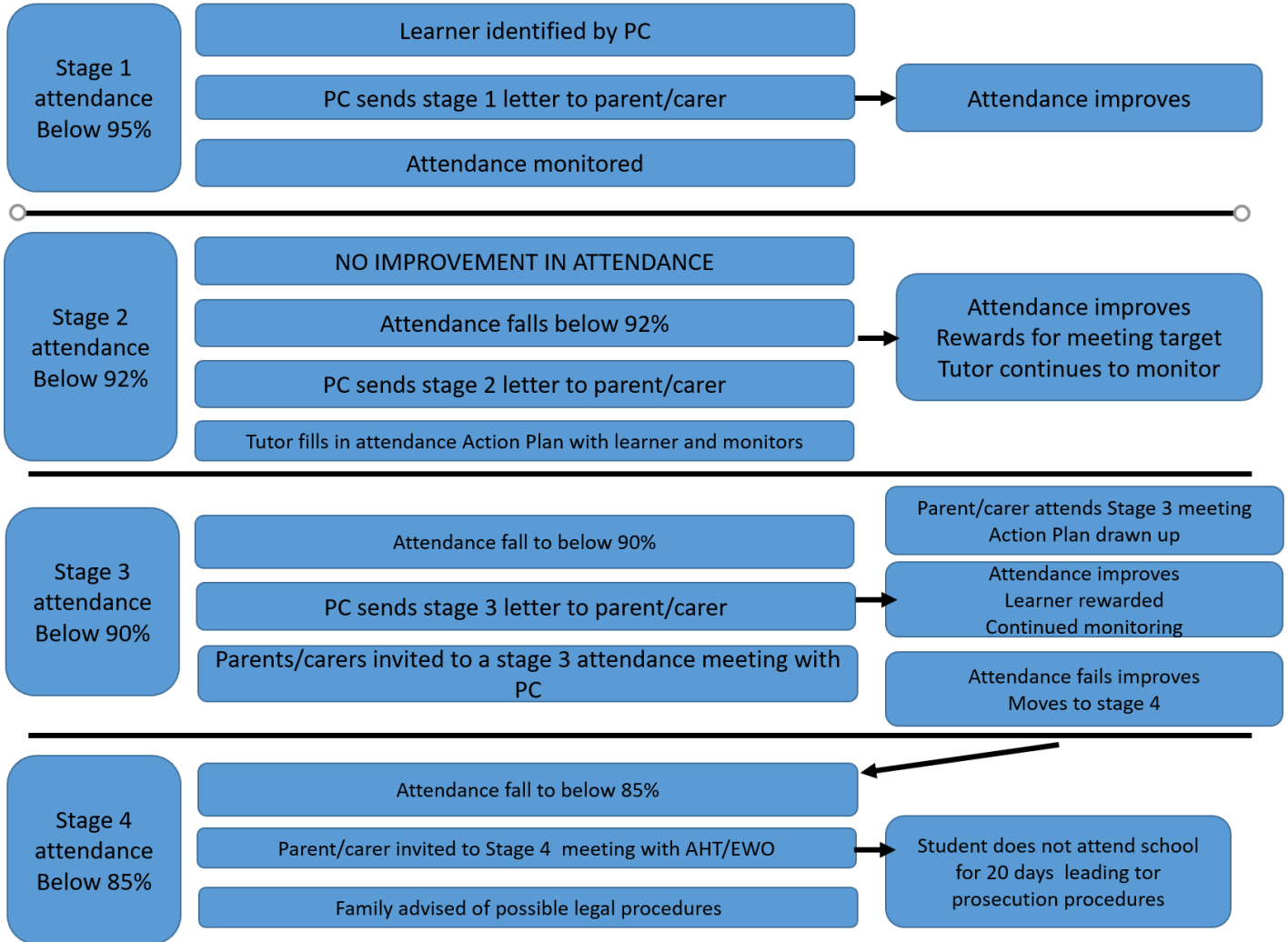
A pupil becomes a 'Persistent Absentee' when they miss 20% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we will need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

Connah's Quay High School monitors all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment. All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan.

All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Education Welfare Officer. Where improvements are not made, parents will be referred to the Early Help service for support.

## ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE



### Appendix 1



Sample stage 2 letter

Sample stage 3 letter

Sample stage 4 letter