

Attendance Policy

Reviewed	November 2017	Leader of Policy Review	Mr. G. Hughes
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Hawarden High School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her full potential.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure that each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping. It will challenge the attendance of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality and identify families who need support.

To meet these objectives, Hawarden High School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

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Aims

AIM No 1

To improve the overall percentage of pupil's attendance at Hawarden High School:

- Apply Whole School Attendance Policy consistently
- Establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality
- Relate attendance issues directly to the schools values, ethos and curriculum
- Monitor progress in attendance measurable outcomes.

AIM No 2

To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including parents, pupils, teachers and Governors:

- Use staff/school handbook, prospectus, WG/LA guidance
- Produce reports to parents/governors
- Hold an Induction Year 7 Evening for parents and pupils
- Provide INSET training for appointed/promoted staff
- Display expectations and consequences materials at focal points
- Discuss attendance issues with IWO and pastoral staff and in relevant staff meetings
- Recognise and reward the most positive attendance

AIM No 3

To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils:

Highlight attendance in the following areas;

- Prospectus
- Newsletters
- PSHE
- Assemblies
- Meetings (Attendance Strategy Meetings)
- Staff talks with pupils
- Public support offered by schools through tutor group and through the form tutor
- Set aside time/area for parents to speak to staff
- Maintain effective communication with parents
- Inform pupils about their attendance data, the implications of this and highlight the problems and the solutions
- Provide accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents through reporting system or, where necessary, one-to-one communication

AIM No 4

To develop a systematic approach in gathering and analysing attendance related data:

- Correct use of Electronic Registration to be emphasised at the start of each academic year
 - Standardise recording of:
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- Authorised / unauthorised absence and a time scale for decisions
- Presence etc. as in accordance with 'Flintshire Behaviour and Attendance Policy 2010'.
- Be consistent in the collection and provision of information.
- Decide what information if any, is provided for:
 - Pastoral staff/other school staff/ESW
 - Parents/Pupils (individual or group)
 - Identify developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness

AIM No 5

To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school:

- Initiate first day absence contact
- Make full use of computer generated letters
- Promote expectation of absence letters/phone calls from parents and copy to relevant staff
- Explore the wide range of opportunities for parental partnerships
- Provide information in a user friendly way (will include languages other than English where necessary.)

AIM No 6

To implement a system of rewards and sanctions:

- Sustain finances for a system of rewards
- Actively promote attendance and associated rewards and effective sanctions
- Ensure fair and consistent implementation
- Utilise immediate sanctions where appropriate
- Take action which supports objectives agreed between school and others, e.g. EWS, Social Workers, parents, Behaviour Support Service etc.

AIM No 7

To promote effective partnerships with the Inclusion Service and with other services and agencies:

- Identify key staff for liaison with Inclusion Welfare Service and other agencies
- Give priority to meetings with ESW
- Carry out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral
- Gather and record relevant information to assist completion of Inclusion Welfare Service
- Hold attendance reviews with key school staff and ESW
- Arrange regular multi agency meetings and refer when appropriate
- Establish and maintain list of named contacts within the local community e.g. School Liaison Officer
- Encourage active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the school
- Develop understanding of agency constraints and operating environments

AIM No 8

To recognise the needs of the individual pupils when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence:

- Be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning pupils
 - Involve/inform all staff about reintegration process
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- Provide opportunities for counselling and feedback
- Consider peer support and mentoring
- Involve parents where possible
- Agree timescale for review of reintegration plan
- Include ESW, parents and pupil in reintegration plan, Attendance Strategy Meetings and reviews.

The Crucial Role of the Tutor and the Class Teacher

Tutors are the largest group of people who can have a positive impact on a student's punctuality and attendance and therefore their attainment every day.

Every Tutor time and every lesson is an opportunity to set high standards for punctuality and attendance; to make students feel welcome and to show how much their learning is valued.

Research suggests that an average of 17 days missed from school each year equates to a dip equal to a whole GCSE grade across the range of subject taken by pupils.

Taking the Register

Taking the register is a legal requirement and this needs to be done in all lessons.

At Hawarden High School the morning session attendance mark recorded during tutor time at 8.45 – 9.05 a.m. and the afternoon session is recorded during period 4 in the afternoon. Care must be taken in completing the register and ensuring that it is absolutely correct.

Support for Identified Groups of Pupils

It is recognised that certain groups of pupils are likely to display poorer attendance figures than others.

A key group that statistics show to be at a disadvantage across Wales are pupils who receive Free School Meals (FSM).

In order to reduce the potential impact for these pupils Mrs J Vasey, Pastoral Support Assistant, has been appointed to oversee and support this group and plays a key role in addressing any attendance issues that may arise.

Rewarding Positive Attendance at School

In order to recognise and encourage the highest attendance levels by pupils, all pupils with the highest attendance will be recognised and rewarded each term and at the end of the full academic year.

Pupils achieving 100% attendance will be recognised at year end.

Rewards will be issued for pupils in each tutor group and year group who are maintaining attendance figures above 97%.

Termly achievement will be recognised by awarding an attendance certificate at the end of each term in house assemblies.

The best overall attendance for the academic year will be recognised in the reward trips and visits held in the summer term each year.

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ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

CONCERN	ACTION	OUTCOME
<p>Attendance rate falls below 97% <u>without clear cause.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Tutor ensures appropriate contact is made with parents. 	<p>Attendance improves. Group Tutor continues to monitor.</p>
<p>Attendance rate falls below 95% <u>without clear cause.</u></p> <p>5% = 2 weeks absence over year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HOH/AHOH initiates standard letter to parents. <p>No Improvement noted –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HOH meets with parents to discuss. Record of meeting and agreed outcomes in pupil file. 	<p>Attendance improves. Continue to monitor and hold review meeting at appropriate time.</p>
<p>Attendance falls to 90% <u>without clear cause.</u></p> <p>10% = 4 weeks absence over year = 20 weeks/5 months absence over 5 years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HOH discusses with ESW. HOH and ESW work in partnership with student and family to implement suitable strategies to improve attendance rate. HOH ensures PSP/IEP is implemented for student. Records of meetings and agreed outcomes in pupil file. 	<p>Attendance improves. Continue to monitor and hold review meeting at appropriate time.</p>
<p>Attendance falls to 85% without clear cause.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case referred to ESW. ESW acts in accordance with 'Flintshire Behaviour and Attendance Policy 2010' appendix 'D'. 	<p>Attendance improves. Continue to monitor and hold review meeting at appropriate time.</p>

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ABSENCE PROCEDURE

ADMIN SUPPORT	GROUP TUTOR	EXCEPTIONS
<p>1ST Day of Absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent informs school of absence and expected date of return. • Admin support informs group tutor. <p>No contact or explanation has been received for absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When alerted by group tutor admin support makes contact with parents. • Admin support informs group tutor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Tutor records reason for absence and expected date of return. • Note made on SIMS and flagged. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group tutor ensures absence is recorded and immediately informs admin support. • Admin support endeavors to make contact with parents. 	<p><u>Vulnerable Pupils</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils subject to safeguarding issues, looked after child or any with a known record of truancy should have absences alerted immediately. • Group tutor to alert admin support and HOH. • Admin support contacts parents/carers at first opportunity. <p>If no contact can be made HOH should be informed who will discuss situation with GH/ESW.</p>
<p>RETURN TO SCHOOL</p> <p>No written confirmation of absence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student brings written confirmation of reason for absence. • Group tutor informs admin support who endeavours to make contact with parents. 	<p>No contact or response can be made or reason given is unacceptable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HOH/AHOH to discuss with GH/ESW and arrange to meet with parents to discuss situation.

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RECORDING ATTENDANCE

It is the legal and professional responsibility for teaching staff to accurately record the attendance and absence of pupils who are in their care during the school day.

This responsibility includes the role of the Group Tutor in recording attendance at morning registration and the class teacher during timetabled lesson times throughout the rest of the day, particularly period 4 which provides the p.m. attendance mark for pupils.

All staff must use the following codes when recording attendance and absence for pupils.

DESCRIPTION	CODE USED	WILL BE RECORDED AS
Present in AM.	/	Present for morning session.
Present in PM.	\	Present for afternoon session.
Educated off site.	B	Present.
Other authorised absence (from school).	C	Authorised absence.
Dual registered at other school or PRU.	D	Present.
Excluded from school.	E	Authorised absence.
Family holiday agreed.	H	Authorised absence.
Absent due to illness.	I	Authorised absence.
Attending interview.	J	Authorised absence.
Arriving in school before 9.30 am.	L	Present.
Medical/dental appointment.	M	Authorised absence.
No reason given for absence.	N	Unauthorised absence.
Other unauthorised absence	O	Unauthorised absence.
Approved sporting activity.	P	Present.
Religious observance	R	Authorised absence.
Study leave.	S	Authorised absence.
Traveller absence.	T	Authorised absence.
Late to school after 9.30 am.	U	Unauthorised absence.
Educational visit or trip.	V	Present.
Work experience.	W	Present.

Clearly the reason for an absence and consequently the code used to record the absence, will have a bearing on whether the absence is recorded as present, authorised absence or unauthorised absence, which in turn, has a direct outcome on the whole school attendance figures.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that staff ensure registers are completed accurately and the correct codes used.

Particular attention should be made to ensure that missing marks are addressed as they are automatically recorded as an unauthorised absence until completed.

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RECORDING LATE ARRIVAL

When a pupils arrives to school late they should be recorded as ...

L	... if they arrive between 8.45 am and the end of period 1.	This will register as a late arrival but be recorded as present for the morning session.
U	... if they arrive after the end of period 1.	This will register as a late arrival but be recorded as an absent for the morning session.

LATES

- All pupils should be encouraged and supported to be punctual for school.
- If a pupil is late the group tutor should confirm the reason.
- If the group tutor feels the reason is beyond the pupil's control, the late should be recorded (on SIMS and pupil's planner) and support offered to the pupil to avoid future repetition.
- If the late arrival is due to poor organisation or other reason within the pupil's control, the late should be recorded (on SIMS and pupil's planner) and the pupil is warned about arriving late for school.
- If a pupil arrives late for school 3 times within a single term (within their control), they should receive a HOH detention and a letter used to inform parents and record the concern.
- If a pupil arrives late for school 6 times within a single term (within their control), they should receive an SLT detention. HOH should arrange to meet with parents to discuss concerns and support.
- A **FPN** can be issued for persistent late arrival at school (10 late arrivals within one term).

FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

In line with Flintshire County Council (FCC) protocols and procedures in relation to Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)

Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate when:

- At least 20 sessions (AM/PM) are lost due to unauthorized absence during the current term. These do not need to be consecutive;
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed (9.30am for morning session, 1.30pm for the afternoon session) in the current term. 'Persistent' means at least 10 sessions of late arrival;
- Truancy; defined as 'The action of staying away from school without good reason'. (Oxford English Dictionary).
- A Penalty Notice will not be issued in respect of any child in LA care.

The following must be considered by schools when determining whether a FPN should be issued:

- Level of absence;
 - Regard to Equality and Diversity Legislation;
 - Statement of Additional Learning Need;
 - Previous history and actions taken;
 - Defences which may be available;
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- WG/LA guidelines;
- Likely effectiveness;
- Level of parental engagement/cooperation.

Only designated officers within the Inclusion Welfare Service (IWS) can issue FPN within the county of Flintshire. The IWS will establish whether an offence under Section 444(1) or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 or Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006; The Education (Penalty Notices) Wales Regulations 2013 has been committed.

Procedure for request for issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

1. If it is felt by school that issuing a FPN is appropriate the referral should be made to the Inclusion service using the correct request form (Appendix 1).
 2. Officers at the school should also ensure the 'Checklist' (Appendix 1) should also be completed and submitted with the FPN request form.
 3. The IWS will respond to all requests within 10 school days of receipt, and where satisfied that all of the relevant criteria are met, will issue a formal written warning to the parent of the possibility of a FPN being issued.
 4. A period of 15 school days will be set within which the pupil must have no unauthorised absence. This also allows parents the opportunity to respond.
 5. At the end of the 15 day period and following due consideration of the facts of the case, a FPN will be issued if the required level of improved attendance has not been achieved.
- Process for referral to IWS regarding Issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice

1. School records 20 sessions of unauthorised absence within a term.	Referral is made to IWS using correct referral form.
2. IWS issues a letter warning of risk of issuing FPN and sets target of attendance as zero unauthorised absences within the next 15 school days.	
3.1 Pupil has no unauthorised absences within next 15 school days.	Process put on hold.
3.2 Pupil has further unauthorised absence within 15 school days.	FPN is issued.
4 Pupil has further unauthorised absences within same term.	Return to stage 2 and process repeated.

NOTE

The above procedure 'resets' at the beginning of each term.

However, the IWS have the option to carry over absence data in extreme cases.

A fixed penalty notice can be issued only ONCE per pupil per academic year.

Repeat offences are likely to be dealt with via legal proceedings which will include additional legal and recovery

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costs.

Payment of FPN	Payments made within 28 days of issue - £60 Payment made after 28 days but within 42 days - £120 Payments will not be accepted after 42 days have elapsed and cannot be paid by instalments. FCC retains revenue from FPN.
Non Payment of FPN	Non-payment may result in prosecution for the period covered by the FPN under section 44 of the Education Act 1996.

Application for leave of absence for annual holiday.

The Education Act 1996, section 7, states that parents or carers of children of compulsory school age (ages 5 years to 16 years) must ensure that they receive full time education.

The Welsh Assembly Government advice to local authorities states, "Parents should not normally take pupils on holiday in term time." Holidays taken in term time are NOT a parental right.

Under normal circumstances the school will NOT authorise any term time holiday requests.

The School does have the discretion to allow up to 10 days authorised absence for the purpose of an annual family holiday in exceptional circumstances. An annual family holiday is a single period of absence that takes place once over the course of one academic year.

The School does not have to agree to absences for holidays; however it has the power to do so. Any more than ten school days holiday in any academic year cannot legally be authorised unless in exceptional circumstances. An exceptional circumstance is likely to be seen as a one-off situation e.g. a close relative is seriously ill, a significant trauma in the family or the holiday may be a "once in a lifetime" unique never-to-be-repeated occasion.

The School will consider every request for leave individually.

The School will consider requests for a term time holiday very carefully, taking into account the pupil's age, timing of the proposed holiday, its nature, the pupil's overall attendance and their stage of education and progress. Parents are requested to complete an Application for Leave of Absence for Annual Holiday, which is available from school and this should be presented to the school at least 2 weeks prior to the dates requested. The School has the discretion to allow work to be provided for your child while they are away.

If the School agrees to a holiday in term-time, the pupil concerned must return to school promptly. In line with the All Wales Attendance Framework 2011, if parents keep a pupil away for longer than was agreed, the additional time is left as 'unauthorised' and a child who fails to return to school within ten

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days of the agreed date may be removed from the school register unless an acceptable reason is given for the absence.

Holidays taken without the consent of the school will be recorded as unauthorised and will contribute to overall unauthorised absence figures when considering whether to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.
