





# Ysgol Uwchradd Crughywel Crickhowell High School

## Attendance Policy 2023-2024

<b>Reviewed by LT (name and date):</b>	CLJ Nov 2022
<b>Date of Issue:</b>	
<b>Reviewed / adopted by Governor Committee:</b>	
<b>Ratified by the full Governing Body:</b>	September 2023

Signed:

<b>MISS C. JONES</b>	<b>ACTING HEADTEACHER</b>		<b>DATE:</b>	<b>Sept 23</b>
<b>MR A. FRYER</b>	<b>CHAIR OF GOVERNORS</b>		<b>DATE:</b>	<b>Sept 23</b>

## Attendance Policy

CRICKHOWELL HIGH SCHOOL CONTACTS	
Designated staff member with responsibility for monitoring attendance:	
Name:	Mrs Hannah Sullivan - Assistant Headteacher
Contact No:	01873 813500
Deputy staff member with responsibility for monitoring attendance at school:	
Name:	Mrs Katherine Myatt - Years 7-11 Mrs Sharon Webb - Years 12-13
Contact No:	01873 813500
Nominated member of the Governing Body for monitoring attendance:	
Name:	Mrs Heidi Waggett and Mr Dave Newberry

POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL CONTACTS	
The named officer within Powys County Council is:	
Name:	Katie Nutter
Contact No:	01597 826422
Email:	<a href="mailto:Kathryn.nutter@powys.gov.uk">Kathryn.nutter@powys.gov.uk</a>

## 1.0 Rationale

- < The school bases its attendance policy on the guidelines as set out by the Local Authority (Powys)
- < Whilst the legal responsibility for regular school attendance rests with parents, the school shares with them, and the Local Authority (LA), responsibility for encouraging good attendance and improving poor attendance.
- < The school is required by law to maintain specific records and to produce specified information on the attendance of pupils.
- < Statutory obligation apart, the school is committed to improvements in attendance standards as a direct stimulus to raising pupil achievement.
- < Poor attendance is destructive of educational achievement, undermines the well-being of each pupil and demoralises staff.
- < The LA has a statutory duty to ensure that a child for whom they are responsible is receiving suitable education and, if a registered pupil at school, this means attending school regularly and on time.

## 2.0 Objectives

- < To promote good attendance as this is vital to educational achievement.
- < To convey clearly to parents and pupils that:
  - regular attendance is essential;
  - unauthorised absence and persistent lateness is not acceptable;
  - only the Headteacher in the context of the law can approve absence;
  - parental condoned, unjustifiable absence will be investigated and will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- < To keep records of attendance which:
  - clearly distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence by pupils;
  - provide accurate information on actual attendance to enable monitoring and evaluation of school attendance rates through centrally held statistics.
- < To build on existing good practice that fosters a positive attitude to good attendance by:
  - responding rapidly to pupil absence;
  - recognising pupils who maintain 'excellent', 'good' and 'improving' attendance records.
- < To be sensitive to situations where regular attendance patterns are disrupted by external factors such as family bereavement.

## 3.0 Statutory Responsibilities

The legal framework governing attendance is set by the Education Acts and their associated regulations (which relate to schools and Pupil Referral Units).

Section 444 further states “..the parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable by law...”.

Compulsory school age means that children and young people should attend school from the start of the first term commencing after their fifth birthday and are of compulsory school age until after the last Friday in June of the school year in which they have their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

An offence is not committed if it can be demonstrated that:

- < the pupil was absent with leave (authorised absence);
- < the pupil was ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause;
- < the absence occurred on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil/ parent belongs;
- < the school is not within the prescribed walking distance of the child's home and suitable transport arrangements have not been made by the LA. The law relating to walking distance effectively is defined as two miles for pupils under eight and three miles for all other pupils. Distance will be measured by nearest available walking route;

Absence from the centres will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- < sickness;
- < unavoidable medical or dental appointments;
- < days of religious observance;
- < exceptional family circumstances,

Absence from school will not be authorised for:

- < shopping;
- < haircuts;
- < missed bus;
- < overslept;
- < no uniform;
- < looking after brothers, sisters or unwell parents;
- < minding the house;
- < birthdays;
- < holidays / day trips taken in term time.

Parents are asked to make all medical and dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible.

Schools are required under the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 to take an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The accuracy of the register is important to support any statutory interventions that may be required. It should be noted that it is an offence not to maintain accurate registers.

The Welsh Government (WG) Education (Penalty Notice)(Wales) Regulations 2013 states that Local Authorities (LAs) are required by law to adhere to the Education Act 1996 section 444 to include Penalty Charge Notices as one of the interventions to promote better school attendance.

For further information on Penalty Charge Notices please refer to the Code of Conduct which can be found on: [School attendance and welfare - Powys County Council](#)

#### 4.0 Practices

Clear systems and procedures will govern response to all pupil absence. The school will follow the Powys Attendance Pathway.

#### 5.0 Crickhowell High School

Crickhowell High School is a very successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

#### 6.0 Why Regular Attendance Is So Important

**Learning:-** Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. The school will collaborate with you to reduce and remove barriers to learning.

**Safeguarding:-** Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:-

- < Attendance
- < Behaviour for Learning
- < Health and Safety
- < Access to the Curriculum
- < Anti- Bullying

Failing to attend school on a regular basis and/or failing to follow the absence reporting protocols will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

#### 7.0 Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, students and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- < Give you live attendance records for your child via Go4Schools;
- < Report to you regularly 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 by displaying individual and class achievements;

- < Reward good or improving attendance through competitions, certificates and outings/events.
- < Create a caring and nurturing environment whereby pupils' feels safe and appreciated as young adults;
- < Ensure that attendance and punctuality are recognised within the whole school reward system, e.g. lunch passes and tokens, attendance levels considered before a pupil is eligible for merit trips and trips abroad;
- < Develop and strengthen positive relationships with parents / carers and external agencies working with the family/ pupil;
- < Monitoring and evaluating the early intervention strategies adopted by the school;
- < Working closely with multi agency colleagues and the Powys Education Welfare Service (Educational Welfare Officer) to improve attendance and punctuality;
- < Monitoring attendance data and trends
- < Reporting this information termly to the Governing Body.

## 8.0 The Law Relating To Attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:-

*'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-*

- (a) *to age, ability and aptitude and*
- (b) *to any special educational needs he / she may have*

*Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise*

## 9.0 The Law Relating To Safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on Local Authorities and Governing Bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Since March 2001, there has been an aggravated offence, where a parent of a child of compulsory school age, who, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause their children to attend.

## 10.0 Understanding Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like 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 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
- < Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- < Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can 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 make things worse. Communication is key and the school will always respond to any requests for support meetings and discussions.

### 11.0 Attendance and Punctuality In A Nutshell

If attendance is 80%, this means your child will have missed:

- < 1 day EVERY week
- < 6 days EVERY half term
- < 12 days EVERY term
- < 36 days EVERY year
- < 180 days in five years...

...that's nearly **ONE WHOLE SCHOOL YEAR!**

100% attendance	0 days of learning missed	Best chance of success!
95% attendance	2 weeks of learning missed	Poor attendance will impact on learning.
90% attendance	4 weeks of learning missed	
85% attendance	5.5 weeks of learning missed	Very poor attendance. At risk of prosecution!
80% attendance	7.5 weeks of learning missed	

### 12.0 Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will have a considerable impact on any child's educational prospects and we need parent's/carer's fullest support and co-operation to address this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment. PA students may require closer monitoring in collaboration with the Powys Educational Welfare Officer.



## 13.0 Absence Procedures

If your child is absent you must:

- < Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence. If you need to report your child as absent, then please let us know by **8:40** each morning by ringing 01873 813500 and following the instructions to go through to the attendance line. Please indicate clearly your child's name, year group, form and the reason for absence. This allows us to properly record all absences and notify parents of any students who are not in school and for whom we have not received an absence notification for. The attendance line is designated specifically for this purpose and enables the rest of the school Administration Team to deal with other urgent business of the day.

If your child is absent we will:

- < Telephone or email you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- < Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer, relevant Progress Leader or Assistant Headteacher if absences persist;
- < Refer the matter to the Powys County Council Educational Welfare Officer if attendance moves below 85%.
- < Record the details of the absence and the Headteacher or Senior Leadership Team will make a decision as to whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Headteacher may ask the Local Authority for advice with regards to this but the decision to authorise any absence remains with the school.
- < If the pupil is registered as a Child in Need or on the Child Protection register and absent from school without reason, then the school should contact Children's Services as soon as possible.
- < Refer to the Powys Educational Welfare Service for further investigation if the attendance matter cannot be resolved after the school has followed the appropriate steps (as outlined in the Powys "Attendance Pathway").
- < Consider a request to the Local Authority for a Penalty Charge Notice. These can be submitted by the school, police or professionals from within the Local Authority itself in relation to poor attendance at school.

The school will also:

- < ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures, registration regulations and education law relating to school attendance;
- < complete school registers at the start of the morning session and afternoon session
- < stress to parents and carers the importance of contacting the school as early as possible on the first day of absence;
- < promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence;
- < consult with all members of the school's community and Local Authority Service in developing and maintaining the whole school Attendance Policy;
- < ensure regular evaluation of attendance by the Governing Body;
- < work towards ensuring all pupils are supported and valued and so want to attend school.



## 14.0 Attendance / Signing Out

All students **MUST** stay in school during morning break time.

- < If your child needs to leave school to attend a medical appointment please contact their Progress Leader or phone the attendance line in advance of the day.
- < Your child must sign out at the Student Reception (and 'sign in' on return) with you collecting them in person. If you wish for another adult to collect them, please ensure that you let the school know that you provide permission for this to happen.
- < Wherever possible routine appointments like a dental check-up should not be scheduled for school time.
- < No student will be permitted to leave school site without permission from their parent/guardian.

### Years 7 - 10

- < Your child cannot go offsite at lunchtime, unless you have arranged with the school for them to go home for lunch on a regular basis.
- < If you wish for your child to go home for lunch then you must please write to your child's Progress Leader to provide them with your consent. The letter needs to include your child's name, form group and the period over which you wish for the consent to continue.
- < If your child is granted this permission between home and school, they must sign-out at Student Reception when they leave and sign-in when they arrive back in school.

### Years 11 – 13

- < Students in Years 11 may go offsite at lunch time if parental consent is provided.
- < All students must remember that this privilege is conditional upon continued good behaviour and completion of school work. The school may reverse the decision for any student at any time.
- < Students in Years 12 & 13 may go off site for lunch

## 15.0 Telephone Numbers

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. Please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

## 16.0 The School Attendance Officer & Leadership Team Attendance Lead

Attendance is the responsibility of all staff. There is, however, a designated member of the Leadership Team that oversees attendance matters. All staff are able to discuss individual pupil attendance with this person, in addition to the designated Progress Leader. Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful.

If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service. The Education Welfare Officer will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from <https://gov.wales/school-attendance-and-absence>.

The Leadership Team Attendance Lead:

- < liaises with teaching staff, in particular Progress Leaders;
- < meets with the LA Education Welfare Officer on a regular pre-arranged basis;
- < refers to other agencies if appropriate;
- < refers to the school nurse if there are doubts about the validity of an illness;
- < oversees the use of standardised letters to parents addressing specific aspects of attendance and requiring parental response,
- < arranges for an attendance meeting in the case of repeated, unexplained absences (school will consider inviting the named governor for attendance to such a meeting);
- < ensures that the LA Education Welfare Officer's role is known and understood in school.

The School Attendance Officer :

- < monitors the school's registers;
- < helps to reduce/remove attendance barriers by communicating with key staff
- < communicates with some families in consultation with the Leadership Team Attendance Lead and the Wellbeing Team of Progress Leaders
- < sends attendance letters to parents/carers upon the request of the Leadership Team Attendance Lead

## 17.0 Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and time with their Form Tutor or class teacher. They will not get vital information and news for the day/week ahead. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons, it can be unsettling for the child and their peers, and can also encourage absence.

### LATENESS ADDS UP!

Being 15 minutes late every day will add up to TWO WEEKS of school missed every year

## 18.0 How We Manage Lateness

The school day starts at **8:40 am** and we expect your child to be in class at that time. We advise that they arrive by 8:30 a.m.

Registers are marked by **8:50 am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At **9.30am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count

as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if lateness persists.

If your child has a persistent late record following intervention and support from the Progress Leader, you will be asked to meet with them and/or the Assistant Headteacher or Headteacher to resolve the problem. You can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time.

## 19.0 Holidays In Term Time

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not booking holidays during term time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

On rare occasions, holidays and associated absences may be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher. There is a very clear protocol to follow and applications (Holiday Request Form) must be submitted at least 28 days prior to the date(s) of the requested holiday. The **Holiday Request Form** provides further details and this is accessible on the school website: <https://www.crickhowell-hs.powys.sch.uk/about/attendance-and-absence/>

Once the Headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher) has made a decision as to whether to authorise the Holiday, the Progress Leader or Attendance Officer will update you.

## 20.0 School Targets, Projects and Special Initiatives

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The preferred level of attendance for this school is **96 % +** attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.

We know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our students are amongst the best in Wales.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made and we focus on self-improvement cycles. Our collaboration with families and multi-agencies strengthens our outcomes year-on-year.

## 21.0 Penalty Charge Notices

Regular and punctual attendance of pupils at school and alternative provisions is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. In law, an offence occurs if a parent / carer fails to secure their child's regular attendance at school / alternative provision and that absence is not authorised by the school.

Powys Local Authority is committed to the continual raising of achievement of all their pupils. There is an expectation that all its pupils, regardless of their individual circumstances or needs, are able to secure their entitlement to high quality teaching and learning. Regular attendance is therefore critical if all our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities

presented to them. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to allow children to achieve their full potential during term time at school. Regular attendance also ensures that children are safe and lessens the opportunities to become involved in truanting and associated anti-social activities.

Parents / carers and pupils are supported at a school / alternative education provision level to overcome barriers to regular attendance and through a wide range of assessment and intervention strategies. Sanctions of any nature are for use only where parental cooperation in this process is either absent or deemed insufficient to resolve the presenting problem. This additional sanction is a means of enforcing attendance where there is a reasonable expectation that its use will secure an improvement.

The key criteria for issuing Penalty Charge Notices are as follows:

- < when a pupil has a minimum of 10 sessions (five school days) that have been lost due to unauthorised absences during the current term and this brings the overall pupil's attendance to below 90% in the school year (these absences do not have to be consecutive);
- < unauthorised absences of at least 10 sessions (5 school days) due to holidays in term-time if the absences take the overall pupil's attendance to below 90% in the school year to date (these absences do not have to be consecutive);
- < persistent late arrival at school i.e. after the register has closed ( 'U' code as in the Codes Guidance Document 2010). Persistent for the purpose of this document means at least 10 sessions of late arrival within a term; these do not need to be consecutive but should bring the overall pupil's attendance to under 90% in the school year to date.

## **22.0 Penalty Notices – For Inclusion in All School Attendance Policies From Academic Year 2016 / 2017**

It is only schools who can decide whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. The code 'H' is for where a school has agreed to the absence for a child within term time due to a holiday, a 'G' code for when a school decides they are not prepared to authorise a holiday in term time or it is in excess of the agreed time away from school, and 'F' for an agreed Extended family holiday. The All Wales Attendance Framework (2011) with regard to exceptional circumstances where a period of absence is requested over two weeks in a year that each request should be considered individually and the criteria for consideration are listed on p.74.

Advice from the Local Authority is that schools should not authorise absences during term time due to holidays, but it is understood that each application will be judged on an individual basis.

Penalty Charge Notices are an early intervention tool and contribute drive towards improving school attendance and related outcomes for our children and young people in terms of attainment.

For further information on Penalty Charge Notices please refer to the Code of Conduct which can be found on:

[School attendance and welfare - Powys County Council](https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/1352/School-attendance-and-welfare)  
<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/1352/School-attendance-and-welfare>

### 23.0 The People Responsible For Attendance Matters in This School

NAME	JOB TITLE
Mrs K Myatt	Attendance Administrator
Ms P Lord	Progress Leader Year 7
Mr J Mulholland	Progress Leader Year 8
Ms A Griffiths	Progress Leader Year 9
Mr M Godfrey	Progress Leader Year 10
Mrs K Jones	Progress Leader Year 11
Mr R Jeremiah	Pre-16 Director (Line Manager for Years 7 – 11)
Mrs C Greenway	Progress Leader Years 12 and 13
Mrs K Thomas	Post-16 Director (Line Manager for Years 12-13)
Mrs H Sullivan	Assistant Headteacher
Ms C Jones	Headteacher

### 24.0 Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish the whole school absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and students as the best way to ensure attendance is as high as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.