



Ysgol Uwchradd Y Frenhines Elisabeth
Queen Elizabeth High School

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Developing good standards of attendance and punctuality is one of our school priorities. We must constantly strive to improve because poor attendance interrupts education and prevents children reaching their potential. Our aim is to develop a good working partnership between pupils, parents, school staff, governors and the Education Welfare service so that we can achieve the school target of 92%.

This policy applies to all pupils in Queen Elizabeth High School regardless of age, gender or ability. It takes account of teacher workload conditions and good practice in reducing unnecessary bureaucracy. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to read and be aware of the contents of this policy.

THE PART PARENTS PLAY IN ACHIEVING HIGH STANDARDS

Good working relationships with parents are crucial, as their co-operation is probably the most important factor affecting a child's attendance record. The school has a responsibility to make sure that parents are aware of their obligations, to provide information about whole-school and individual attendance and to work with them to meet our expectations. Our policy will be published on our website and a letter about expectations sent out at the start of each academic year. Reports will contain attendance records and parents will be notified promptly of any problems identified by our monitoring.

The Education Act 1996 states that parents must ensure that once registered at the school their children attend regularly and on time. The child should also be properly dressed and in a fit condition to learn. We also expect parents to follow school procedures and to reinforce the message that attendance is important. A specific responsibility is that they provide an explanation for absence **ON THE FIRST DAY**, by phone, letter or an entry in the child's diary. However, it is up to the school to decide whether or not to accept the explanation.

WHAT IS REGULAR ATTENDANCE?

Unless they are ill or there are special circumstances, pupils should attend every day during term-time. Details of dates are given out at the beginning of the school year and written into pupil diaries. Parents are also informed in brochures and newsletters. The Head of Learning 11 will need to remind parents and pupils that the Easter Leaver system has been officially abolished. The legal leaving date is the last Friday in June provided the pupil is 16 during that academic year. Parents, pupils and staff also need to be aware that it is illegal to employ pupils full-time before this date. Information that pupils are working outside the legal limits should be passed on to the EWO.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

- Our standards and expectations are the same as would apply in a workplace. They are there to ensure that we can all do our job - in this case teaching and learning;
- Registering attendance accurately is a legal requirement. Data must be accurate, up-to-date and legible. Inaccuracies lead to problems being missed and embarrassment or complaints if there is unnecessary follow up;
- A team of people use the attendance record for monitoring, so it is important that the symbols and annotations are used consistently and clearly. The computerised register must be kept accurately and up to date. Records form the basis of prosecution, so must be accurate and available at all times. In addition, members of school staff need access to the files. Their work is hindered if the documents are not in the office promptly after registration or if the computer register has not been marked.

THE PART TEACHERS PLAY IN ACHIEVING HIGH STANDARDS

Teachers are responsible for keeping accurate attendance records and passing on any concerns about attendance to the appropriate person. Departments should have procedures for supporting pupils with attendance problems while they are absent and when they return to school. Teachers' should at all times promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality and act as role models.

REGISTRATION

Registration is an important part of the school day as it sets the standard for everything else that follows. The session will start punctually and be treated formally. The register will be taken at the start of each morning and afternoon. All pupils will be marked as present or absent. If a reason for absence is known then the correct code can be entered. If the reason is not known the code [N] is used. No blank spaces must be left.

Registers will also be taken in subject lessons and kept by the subject teacher. This reinforces the importance of attendance and punctuality. Problems identified should be passed on to the Head of Learning. From time to time, teachers will be asked to carry out random attendance checks in lessons. The EWO may carry out random checks on pupils on a target list.

Pupils leaving the school site during the day must sign out at the main office after obtaining permission from a Head of Learning or member of the Leadership Group. They must sign back in if returning.

CATEGORIES OF ABSENCE

1. Holidays during term-time

Leave of absence for family holidays may be granted by the HEADTEACHER for up to 10 DAYS in any academic year. This is not a right but at the discretion of the school. Requests from parents must be made in writing and will be considered on an individual basis, taking account of the child's record of attendance and progress and any family circumstances involved. Parents should not simply inform the school or ask for permission retrospectively. If this happens, the absence will be unauthorised. The Headteacher will refuse to authorise unreasonable requests.

2. Illness and Appointments

In the case of illness, absence will be treated as authorised provided that the school is satisfied the absence is genuine. Frequent short absences may be evidence of a problem and should be followed up by the Head of Learning, even if the child's overall attendance record seems satisfactory. The full team of Head of Learning, Assistant Headteacher and the EWO will become involved if the situation persists. Parents will be expected to provide a medical certificate on request. Leave for medical, dental and related appointments may be granted where requests are made in advance by letter, phone, in person or on production of an appointment card. It is not enough to take the child's word that he/she has an appointment. Where possible appointments should be made out of school hours. Even if parents provide notes, this should not mean automatic authorisation. Frequent absence should be referred on to the Head of Learning.

3. Family Bereavement

Requests for leave of absence will be considered sympathetically and on an individual basis.

4. Special Occasions

Absence for these will be considered on an individual basis, bearing in mind the reason and the child's overall attendance record. Shopping, looking after the house or minding younger brothers and sisters are not acceptable reasons for a child to miss school.

5. Interviews

Pupils may need to take time off for interviews with employers or for FE courses. They should give advance notice and proof of the appointment. If the interview does not take all day, the pupil is expected to attend school for the remainder of the day.

6. Work Experience

Pupils on work experience are counted as PRESENT on a school activity supervised by an employer. Teachers will monitor their attendance and punctuality, following guidelines in the Work Experience pack.

7. Off-site Activities

Pupils involved in these are counted PRESENT using the special code. Teachers accompanying groups on visits etc. will leave a copy of their visit register in the school office for the Attendance Officer and also leave a copy on the notice board in the staff-room.

8. Exclusion

Pupils may be excluded from school for exceptional discipline problems. They are marked ABSENT with the school's approval. Exclusion will not be used as a punishment for problem attendance.

9. Educated Elsewhere

Pupils officially 'educated elsewhere' are still on our roll but marked PRESENT with the symbol D.

10. Travellers

Children whose families are categorised as travellers may be marked as 'Authorised absence, symbol C when they are attending another school at which they are registered. This is to take account of their lifestyle.

REWARDS FOR GOOD ATTENDANCE

Pupils with 100% attendance will receive certificates in assembly. Pupils with 98% attendance will also receive certificates which they can keep for their Progress File.

On Prize Evening, pupils with excellent records will receive certificates for Best Attendance in each year group.

Commendations should be given for 100%, 95% and improvements in relation to individual targets agreed by the Head of Learning.

Positive comments will be put on school Reports where attendance is good.

DEALING WITH PROBLEMS

Parentally condoned absence is the main obstacle in the way of excellent levels of attendance. It is as damaging as truancy, so we treat unreasonable levels of absence seriously. We expect high standards and will not authorise absences for reasons judged to be unjustified.

The EWO and Head of Learning will make the decision to refuse to authorise an absence, taking into account the pupils' general record. The most serious cases will be dealt with by the EWO. In 2007-2008 we are targeting those pupils below 90% attendance and the following steps will be taken:

- The pupil's name is put on the Target List
- One-day follow-up (first day absence call), carried out by the Attendance Officer
- Home Visit by the EWO if there is no reply from home after 3 days' absence.
- Information about the attendance record to the parent
- Warning letter to the parent
- Attendance at a Planning Meeting between child, Assistant Headteacher or Head of Learning, parent and EWO
- Final warning, if there is no improvement
- Prosecution

The Governors' Disciplinary Panel could be involved in the most serious cases.

KEY STAGE 2/3 TRANSITION

Attendance records will be provided on pupils in Year 6, so that potential problems can be identified in advance. Data will be collected by the Head of Learning for Year 7, Assistant Head of Learning for Year 7 and the Assistant Head during KS2 -3 visits. The EWO will make home visits where appropriate to follow up attendance problems.

TRUANCY

If children are identified as missing during the day, the teacher or other adult should inform the office where Admin staff will check if the pupil has registered.

If the pupil cannot be traced, the Head of Learning should be notified. Admin staff will inform the parent and maintain contact until the pupils' whereabouts can be ascertained. Truancy is punished by after school detention and the pupil may be put 'On Report'. If there are serious concerns, the EWO or even the Police should be notified.

PUNCTUALITY

Pupils are expected to be on time for all sessions, at registration and lessons. This means being present while the register is called.

Persistent breaches of punctuality will be dealt with by detention and meetings with the Head of Learning and Education Welfare Officer.

DEALING WITH LATENESS

Any child arriving after the roll is being called should be marked late and persistent lateness punished by detention. It is the teacher's responsibility to decide whether the lateness is justified. Pupils arriving after registration must sign in at the main office. Pupils arriving later than 10:40am without an acceptable reason will be recorded as Unauthorised absence, symbol O.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the staff share the responsibility of promoting high standards of attendance and punctuality. The following chart shows the specific areas of responsibility held by various members of staff:

Job title	Responsibilities for attendance/punctuality
Line Manager / Assistant Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall responsibility for Attendance issues • Manage school policy, including monitoring and annual review • Make available half-termly, termly and annual reports for school staff and governors • Provide staff development on attendance issues • Provide school data for Welsh Office statistics • Liaise with EWO, including weekly meetings • Liaise with Heads of Learning
Data Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist Line Manager in monitoring school policy • Produce attendance data as requested • Assist Line Manager in improving attendance systems • Oversee the work of the Attendance Officers
Assistant Headteachers / Key Stage Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer pupils to outside agencies, where appropriate • Monitor pupils needing support from outside agencies • Table attendance issues at Heads of Learning meetings
Heads of Learning / Assistant Heads of Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote high standards of attendance in the year group • Ensure that registers are kept to expected standards • Monitor attendance levels of classes and individual pupils • Contact parents where there are attendance concerns (standard letter available) • Attend regular meetings with the EWO • Attend meetings with parents (possibly including the EWO) • Inform Key Stage Leader of concerns and make referrals to EWO • Monitor the Late Book and deal with possible offenders appropriately • Liaise with the Data Manager and prepare the Attendance certificates for termly assemblies. • Update the Target List for the attention of the Attendance Officers • Put pupils 'On Report' and monitor as necessary • Follow school procedures for dealing with problems/rewards • Review attendance and punctuality in Pastoral meetings, Key Stage meetings and Year meetings • Assist in preparation of reports on individual pupils
Education Welfare Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up problems, including home visits where pupils have serious attendance patterns / problems or where attendance is likely to become an issue • Hold/attend planning meetings • Meet with the Assistant Headteacher and / or Head of Learning, as per agreed timetable • Prepare letters and documents, including prosecution proceedings • Assist in monitoring and review of the school policy • Attend Head of Learning meetings (by invitation) • Attend Year meetings (by invitation) • Visit primary schools and liaise on issues of attendance and welfare

Name/job title	Responsibilities for attendance/punctuality
School Youth Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend meetings with other members of the team, as appropriate • Provide support and counselling to pupils and parents
Attendance Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add pupils in choir or workshops etc to SIMS • Ensure that all registers have been taken and returned from am and pm registration and to chase up where necessary • Input messages left on the answer phone relating to attendance into SIMS • Input all data into SIMS (including pupils on visits, work experience, exclusions, college courses, SMART, dual registered etc) • Make first Home contact [telephone] for all absent pupils marked [N] and keep records/update SIMS (make pupils on the Target list or other pupils requested by staff a priority) • Arrange for the standard letters to be sent where contact cannot be made by telephone • Assist in monitoring and review of the school policy • Meet with EWO and Assistant Headteacher when necessary • Produce reports for Heads/Assistant Heads of Learning when requested
Form Tutors	<p>It is not expected that Form Tutors chase up absences. However, we all have a duty of care to pupils, and appropriate staff must be notified of any concerns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote high standards of attendance and punctuality • Manage registration and form periods to high standards • Follow school procedures for completing registers including absent reporting (pages 8-10) • Keep accurate and up-to-date registers • Ensure that Register files are in the office promptly after registration • Form Tutors may give Commendations when appropriate [Data to be provided by the Data Manager / Attendance Officers.
Heads of Faculty, leading subject teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop faculty procedures which promote good attendance and punctuality, e.g. classroom rules, class registers • Provide support for pupils with long-term absence and develop ways to integrate the child into school on his/her return • Monitor attendance and punctuality [deal with them in the first instance] and refer persistent problems to Head of Learning. • Ensure that all staff in your Faculty / subject area accompanying groups on visits etc. leave a copy of their visit register in the school office for the Attendance Officer and also leave a copy on the notice board in the staff-room.

ENTERING REGISTRATION MARKS

Staff are required to enter Registration Marks on SIMS when it is available. If there are problems then a paper copy of AM and PM sessions are available in the Registration Files which should always be collected from the Main Office at the start of each session (they may include letters, notes or messages to give to pupils).

A full **Help** dialogue box is available in SIMS to enable Staff to become familiar with the different routines in SIMS.

Staff should log on to SIMS by clicking on the SIMS icon and using their User Names and Passwords.

If you are a teacher and the system recognised you as such when you logged into SIMS .net, your timetable for today is displayed in the **My Classes Today** panel on the **Home Page**. The current lesson or session on the timeline is highlighted by default.

1. Double-click the required lesson session to display the **Take Register** page.
2. The **Select Class** browser, which displays the timeline, is hidden but can be displayed by clicking the **Browse** button.

If the system recognised you as a teacher when logging into SIMS.net, your name will be displayed in the **Teacher** field on the **Select Class** browser and the current lesson or session will be highlighted on the timeline.

Today's date is displayed by default but can be changed, if required, by entering the required **Date** or by clicking the associated **Calendar** button and selecting the required date.

Double-click the required lesson or session on the timetable to display the associated register.

Alternatively, highlight the lesson or session and click the **Open** button.

3. Click the first cell in which you wish to enter a mark. The orange highlight indicates the name of the pupil/student and the period for which the mark will be entered.
4. Enter a mark for each pupil/student using one of the following methods:

i) Enter a mark using the keyboard.

As each mark is entered, the highlight moves down to the next pupil/student in the class automatically, ready for their mark to be entered.

ii) Select the required code from a list of codes.

The list is accessed in one of two ways, either right-click the register cell in which you wish to enter a mark and select **Display Codes** from the pop-up list or click the **Codes** button to open the **Codes** dialog.

The **Codes** dialog lists all codes and their descriptions.

Double-click the required code to populate the current cell. The highlight moves down to the next pupil/student ready for the next code to be entered. Continue entering marks, for example by repeatedly double-clicking / **Present (AM)** interspersed with other marks. When all marks have been entered, click the **Close** button to close the **Codes** dialog.

iii) Enter the same code for several pupil/students in the class.

- a. Click in the first cell in which you wish to enter the mark.

b. Hold down the **Shift** key and click the last cell in which you wish to enter the same mark. The background colour of the selected cells changes to cyan.

c. Enter a mark using the keyboard or **Codes** dialog as described previously.

iv) Enter the same code for ALL of the pupil/students in the class.

a. Click the column heading for the current period or session. The column is selected and the background changes colour.

b. Enter / or \ as appropriate to flood fill the entire column.

c. Where the present mark is not applicable, individual marks can be edited by clicking in the appropriate cell and entering the correct mark using the keyboard or **Codes** dialog.

d. If you wish to edit marks after saving, ensure that the **Preserve/Overwrite** toggle button is displaying **Overwrite**.

5. If you wish to delete or edit a mark before it is saved, ensure that the highlight is on the cell displaying the mark to be deleted/edited. Press the **Delete** key or enter the correct code using the keyboard or **Codes** dialog as described previously. A dash (-) is displayed in the cell where a mark has been deleted.

6. Enter all the marks and then click the **Save** button.

7. If there are any missing marks on saving, the following message is displayed:

“Students with missing marks will be marked absent. Do you wish to proceed with the save?”

Click **Yes** to save. The missing marks are then replaced with code **N** (no reason yet provided for absence).

Click **No** to return to the **Take Register** page without saving. The missing marks can then be edited on the register manually.

8. If you wish to edit a *saved* mark, for example where the reason for absence is now known, ensure that the **Preserve/Overwrite** toggle button is displaying **Overwrite**.

Edit the mark(s) and click the **Save** button to save the changes.

ENTERING COMMENTS RELATING TO A PUPIL/STUDENT

1. Locate the pupil/student’s name for whom you want to enter a comment.

2. Right-click in the appropriate cell and select **Enter Comments** from the pop-up menu. Alternatively, click the **Comments** button to open the **Comments** dialog.

The pupil/student’s name is displayed in the read-only **Student** field.

4. Enter any comments and click the **OK** button to return to the **Take Register** page.

Where comments have been added, a red triangle is displayed in the top right-hand corner of the cell. Minutes late can be recorded simply by clicking the **Minutes Late** button.

5. Click the **Save** button to save the information.

NOTE: Cells with a cyan coloured background indicate that minutes late have been recorded.

Comments can be edited by opening the **Comments** dialog again, amending the text and clicking **OK** to return to the **Take Register** page. Click the **Save** button again to save your changes. Hovering over a cell displays the teacher’s name and class. Any minutes late and comments are also displayed, where they have been entered.

ENTERING/EDITING HISTORICAL MARKS

The historical view option enables the user to view, edit and enter historical marks for up to 10 instances of the selected session or lesson.

The historical view can be used to:

- a) view a pupil/student's pattern of attendance for this class or registration group
- b) correct any errors with previous marks
- c) enter codes to replace missing marks.

To view previous lessons or sessions for the current class, select the **History** radio button.

The current session or lesson is displayed in the right-hand column.

To return to the register for the selected date and period, select the **Today** radio button.

ENTERING/EDITING FUTURE MARKS

The future view option enables the user to view, enter and edit future marks for up to 10 instances of the selected lesson or session. For example, if a family holiday has been approved or a doctor or dental appointment is known, marks can be entered so that interested staff have visibility of these codes.

To view the next 10 instances of the selected lessons or session, select the **Future** radio button.

The current lesson or session is displayed in the left-hand column.

To return to the register for the selected date and period, select the **Today** radio button.

Alternatively, select the **History** radio button if you want to view the previous 10 instances of the selected lesson or session.

STAFF COVERING CLASSES

If you are covering for another teacher:

1. If necessary click on the **Take Register** icon on the toolbar (it has a symbol of a clock).
2. Today's date is displayed by default but can be changed, if required, by entering the required **Date** or by clicking the associated **Calendar** button and selecting the required date.
3. Click the **Search** button adjacent to the **Teacher** field to open the **Browse for Lesson** dialog.

The specified date is displayed as part of the browser title.

A combination of the **Surname** and **Forename** fields and the **Period** drop-down list can be used to refine the search for a class, depending on the information available to you. Alternatively, the fields can be left blank to list all the classes on the date specified.

4. Click the **Search** button to display a list of teachers who meet the search criteria.

The **Class**, the **Room** in which the class will be held and the timetable **Period** for the date specified are displayed for each teacher.

5. Highlight the required teacher and click the **OK** button. Alternatively, double-click the teacher to display the register for the selected class.

6. If you want to view the timeline, to check the teacher's other lessons and sessions for the day, for example, return to the **Select Class** browser by clicking the **Browse** button.

Date established by governing body: 13th November 2007

Review date: 13th November 2008