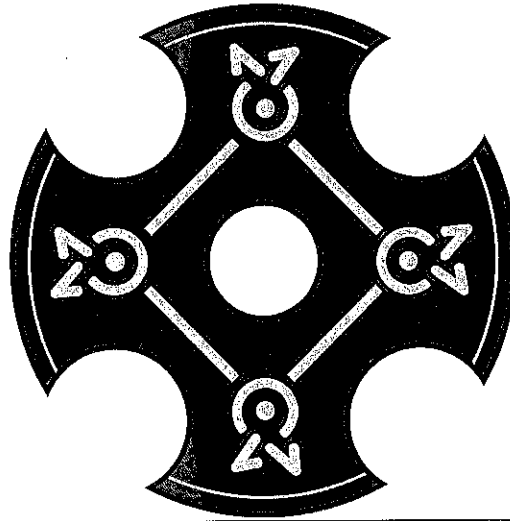




YSGOL UWCHRADD ABERHONDDU BRECON HIGH SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY 2022

Author	TG
Agreed By	Governors on 29 th November 2022
Review Date	November 2024



BRECON HIGH SCHOOL CONTACTS	
Senior Leader with responsibility for strategic approach to attendance	
Name:	Miss Tracey Gibbs
Contact Details:	01874 622361 tgibbs@brecon-hs.powys.sch.uk
Attendance Officer	
Name:	Mrs Joanne Kerr
Contact Details	01874 620353 jkerr@brecon-hs.powys.sch.uk
Nominated member of the Governing Body for monitoring attendance	
Name:	Mrs Eleanor Davies

POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL CONTACTS	
The named officer within Powys County Council is:	
Name:	Clair Miles
Contact Details	01686 614057 clair.miles-owen@powys.gov.uk
Education Welfare Officer with responsibility for Brecon High School	
Name	Mrs Catherine Morgan
Contact Details	catherine.morgan@powys.gov.uk 07831834021



1.0 Rationale

- Brecon High School bases its attendance policy on the guidelines as set out by Powys County Council in their Attendance Policy: Supporting Positive Attendance (Sept 2022) document.
- The school recognises that 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.
- Brecon High 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 has a detrimental effect on educational achievement, undermines the well-being of each pupil and demoralises staff.
- The Local Authority 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. The school will promote good attendance through child centred strategies.
- 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 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that "...the parent of every child of compulsory school age (5-16) shall cause him/her to receive full time education, suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school otherwise..."
- 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..".



Attendance Policy 2022-23

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 16th 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 school 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.

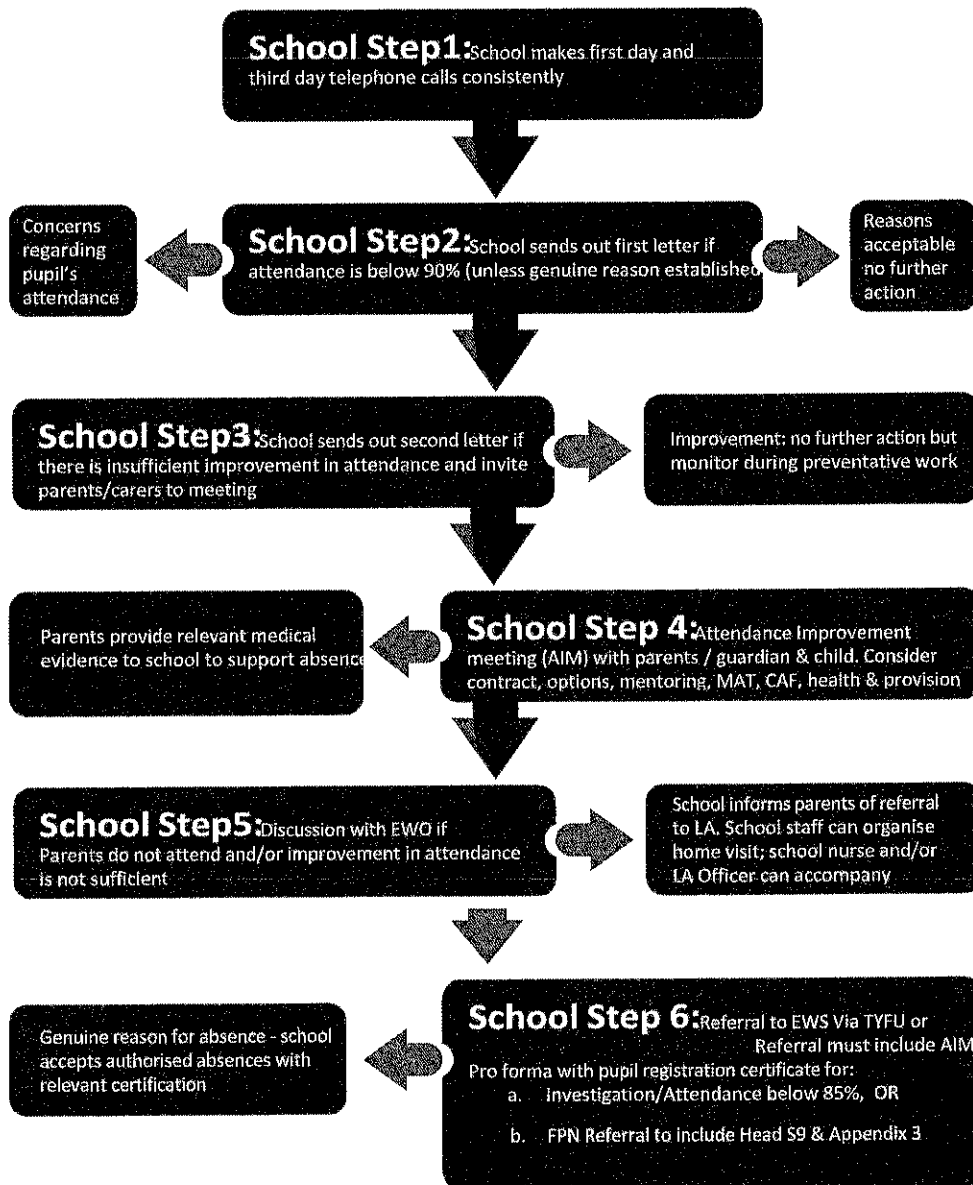
Parents are asked, wherever possible, to make all medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.

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.



4.0 Practices and Procedures

Clear systems and procedures will govern our response to all pupil absence. The school will follow the 'Powys School's Attendance Pathway as set out below, which details the steps that will be taken for reducing persistent and severe absence.



5.0 Brecon High School

Brecon High School is an ambitious and forward-looking school and your child has a role in making it so. We aim to develop an inclusive ethos which encourages and enables all members of the school community to strive for excellence. In order to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that our pupils attend regularly and therefore your child should be at school, on time, every day



Attendance Policy 2022-23

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 endeavour to achieve this.

The minimum level of attendance a pupil should aim to achieve is 96%. Being punctual is also an important personal quality to possess. Pupils should always arrive at registration and lessons no later than the times shown below:

8.50 a.m. - 9.00 a.m.	Morning Registration
9.00 a.m. - 9.15 a.m.	Assembly/Tutor time
9.15 a.m. - 10.15 a.m.	Lesson 1
10.15 a.m. - 11.15 a.m.	Lesson 2
11.15 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.	Breaktime
11.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	Lesson 3
12.30 p.m. - 1.30 p.m.	Lesson 4
1.30 p.m. - 2.20 p.m.	Lunchtime
2.20 p.m. - 2.30 p.m.	Afternoon Registration
2.30 p.m. - 3.30 p.m.	Lesson 5

6.0 Why regular attendance is important

Poor attendance is destructive to educational achievement, learning and progress. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning as shown below.

95-100% attendance	Best chance of success	Your child is taking full advantage of every learning opportunity.
90-95% attendance	At least 2 weeks of learning missed	Satisfactory. Your child may have to spend time catching up with work.
85-90% attendance	At least 4 weeks of learning missed	Your child may be at risk of underachieving and may need extra support from you to catch up with work.
80-85% attendance	At least 5 ½ weeks of learning missed	Your child's poor attendance has a significant impact on learning.
Below 80% attendance	At least 7½ weeks of learning missed	Your child is missing out on a broad and balanced education. You are at risk of prosecution.



Attendance Policy 2022-23

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parent/guardian's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

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 Brecon High School, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses: -

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti- Bullying

Failing to attend school on a regular basis 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, pupil's and all members of school staff. In order to achieve this the school will:

- Give you details regarding your child(ren)s attendance via Classcharts;
- Include details of your child(ren)'s attendance and punctuality rate in all Summary and Full Reports issued to parents;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements on the Attendance Noticeboard and Display screen;
- Reward good or improving attendance through the whole school praise system using 100% Attendance Challenges, Attendance Boost days, class competitions, 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, using pupil voice to determine the rewards offered e.g praise points, lunch passes and cakes at break, attendance levels considered before a pupil is eligible for incentive trips and trips abroad;
- Develop positive relationships with parents / carers and external agencies working with the family/ pupil;
- Monitor and evaluate the early intervention strategies adopted by the school;
- Work closely with multi agency colleagues and the Education Inclusion Service to improve attendance and punctuality;
- Monitor attendance data and trends and report this information termly to the Governing Body.

8.0 Information sharing

- The school will make its policy on attendance clear to parents and pupils through: the initial transition meeting prior to admission and also in Year 9 option choice meetings. This will be done by sending out the school's 'Attendance Matters 'Leaflet (Appendix 1) to all parents via Classcharts



- The school will also communicate the importance of attendance to parents and pupils through assemblies, the school prospectus, Classcharts and the school website.

9.0 Absence procedures

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence. You can inform the school by ringing 01874 622361 and following the verbal instructions to be put through to the attendance line. Alternatively, you could contact the Attendance Officer, Mrs Kerr, on her direct line (01874 620353) or use the Classcharts / email (jkerr@brecon-hs.powys.sch.uk) to message Mrs Kerr. Contacting Mrs Kerr directly frees up our office team to deal with other urgent business
- When reporting an absence, please indicate clearly your child's name, year group, form and the specific reason for absence rather than just reporting that they are ill. This allows us to properly record all absences.

If your child is absent the school will:

- Contact you by telephone, text, Classcharts or email on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you. If the school is not able to contact you that day, your child(ren)'s absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence (N – no reason yet provided for absence)
- If an absence remains unexplained for 3 consecutive days then arrangements will be made to visit the home.
- When a pupil returns to school from an absence, but no explanation is offered, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian.
- Invite you to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer, relevant Progress and Guidance Manager or Deputy Headteacher if absence persists
- Refer the matter to the Powys County Council Educational Welfare Service if attendance falls below 85%
- Details of the absence are recorded, if later received, and discussed with the Headteacher and a decision will be made with regards to authorisation as soon as possible. The Headteacher may ask the Education Inclusion Service for advice with regards to this but the decision whether to authorise any absence remains with the school.
- Ultimately, if an attendance matter cannot be resolved by the school and the appropriate steps have been followed (as outlined in the 'Attendance Pathway'), a referral will be made to the LA service for further investigation
- A request to the Local Authority for a legal action can be made by the school, police or from within the Local Authority itself in relation to poor attendance at school.



Attendance Policy 2022-23

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 – the register is open for **10** minutes and closes at **9.00** a.m. and **2:30**.pm respectively;
- 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 LA 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.

10.0 Authorised or Unauthorised 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.

11.0 Persistent Absenteeism

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% 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 the school needs parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

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



Attendance Policy 2022-23

Pupils who are persistently absent are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

12.0 Signing out

All pupils, with the exception of Sixth Form pupils, **must** remain on school site for the duration of the school day. However, if your child needs to leave school to attend a medical appointment, please inform the school in writing by sending in a note or contacting the Attendance Officer. Your child must then sign out at Main Reception, and sign back in, on their return.

Wherever possible routine appointments like a dental check-up should not be scheduled for school time

Sixth Form pupils are allowed to leave premises during the school day to carry out errands or go to the Gym. In the event of this happening, Sixth Form pupils are expected to sign out at Main Reception and sign back in when the return.

13.0 Punctuality

A pupil's punctuality is a legal requirement and the parent of a pupil who is persistently late is guilty of an offence. The law treats persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents can be prosecuted if persistent late arrival is not resolved.

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their Form Tutor, Progress and Guidance Manager or class teacher, getting vital information and news for the day. Pupils arriving late also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the pupil but can also encourage absence.

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

14.0 How we manage lateness

The school day starts at **8:50 am** and we expect your child to be in their Registration base at that time. The pupil entrance is closed at 8.50 am and pupils arriving after this time **must** sign in via the Main reception, where their name and reason for absence will be recorded.

Registers are marked by **8:50 am** and your child will receive a late (L code) mark if they are not their Registration base by that time. Where a pupil is late to school, Classcharts will be used to notify parents of their lateness.

If a pupil is late to school on 2 occasions or more in any one week, or they are late for 30+ minutes in a week, parent/guardians will be notified by letter and the pupil will be referred to a 30 min after school detention.

At **9.30am**, the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after this time they will receive a mark (U code) 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 the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record, following intervention and support from the Progress and Guidance Manager/ Attendance Officer, you will be asked to meet with the Deputy Headteacher



and/or Attendance Officer to resolve the problem. However, you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

15.0 Term time holidays

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 by the discretion of the Headteacher. However, Powys EWS strongly advises that any holidays or day trips in term time should be unauthorised, and that there should be no exceptions to this policy. The school has a very clear protocol to follow and applications (Request for Leave of Absence Form) must be submitted at least 28 days prior to the date(s) of the requested holiday. The **Request for Leave of Absence Form** provides further details and this is available from Mrs Kerr, Attendance Officer. Leave of Absence criteria, which is data driven and ensures consistency with respect to whether leave of absence is authorised or not, will be applied before any decision is made. Once the Headteacher/ Deputy Headteacher have decided, Attendance Officer will update you.

16.0 The Designated Member of Staff

Attendance is the responsibility of all staff. There is, however, a designated member of staff, Miss T Gibbs, for attendance matters and all staff are able to discuss individual pupil attendance with this person. The Designated Member of Staff for Attendance, assisted by the Attendance Officer:

- monitors the school's registers;
- liaises with teaching staff, and in particular Progress and Guidance Managers;
- meets with the LA 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 improvement meeting (AIM) in the case of repeated, unexplained absences (school will consider inviting the named governor for attendance to such a meeting);
- ensures that the LA Officer's role is known and understood in school.

17.0 Responsibilities of parents/guardians

Parents/guardians are responsible by law for ensuring that their children attend the school at which they are registered, regularly, on time, properly dressed and in a fit condition to learn (parents are also responsible for ensuring that their children stay at school once they have registered).

Parents/guardians can do a great deal to support the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents/guardians should:

- take an active interest in their child's school life and work
- attend parents' evenings and other school events, if possible;



Attendance Policy 2022-23

- ensure that their child completes his/her homework and goes to bed at an appropriate time;
- be aware of Classcharts announcements or letters from school which their child brings home
- ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day;
- ensure that their child only misses school for reasons which are unavoidable or justified, such as illness or days of religious observance;
- always notify the school as soon as possible - preferably on the first morning - of any absence; confirm this in writing when the child returns to school;
- avoid booking family holidays during term-time;
- talk to the school if they are concerned that their child may be reluctant to attend.

18.0 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.

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.

If 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);

OR

- 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);

OR

- persistent late arrival at school i.e. after the register has closed at least 10 sessions of late arrival (U code) within a term; these do not need to be consecutive but should bring a pupil's overall school attendance to under 90% in the school year to date.

- A penalty notice is £60 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice;
- This rises to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days of receipt;
- If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 42 days the local authority must either prosecute for the offence or withdraw the notice.

The prosecution proceedings will be for the offence of failing to secure the child's regular attendance at school and not for non-payment of the penalty fine. The prosecution will be brought under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Withdrawal of the notice can only take place in limited circumstances as set out in the Code of Conduct.



Attendance Policy 2022-23

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.

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

<http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/schools-students/school-attendance-welfare/>

<http://www.powys.gov.uk/cy/ysgolion-a-myfyrwyr/school-attendance-welfare/>

It is important to note that if there are no valid reasons for non - attendance then there are a range of legal measures that may be implemented by the LA; these can include the issue of FPN's, Education Prosecutions, Education Supervision Orders and School Attendance orders.

The Local Authority can apply for an Education Supervision Order under section 36 Children's Act 1989 if it believes a child of compulsory school age is not being properly educated. This can include irregular attendance at school



19.0 Registration

Keeping the registers

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. The register may be requested in a court of law as evidence in a prosecution for non- attendance. It will also be used for end of term reports, records of achievement and reference requests, and information for other schools, LAs and external agencies.

- No pupil should be marked present unless actually in attendance at school or other agreed educational activity.
- The register should not have missing marks.
- When a pupil arrives late but the register is still open, the pupils should be marked as late but counted as present for the session.
- When a pupil misses registration, she/ he should be marked as an unauthorised absence, unless a medical letter/ phone call by parent is received and deemed to be genuine.
- Pupils should not have access to the register.
- The headteacher is the only person who can authorise that a pupil be removed from the register – this can only be done with the agreement of the LA..
- In addition to twice daily registration in form groups, a class register is taken for every lesson throughout the day. These are checked by Attendance Officer to identify possible truancy and any pupil found to have missed a lesson.



Registration Codes

/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Off Site Education
C	Other Authorised Circumstances
D	Dual Registered i.e. Present at another school or PRU
E	Excluded (No alternative provision made)
G	Family holiday (Not agreed)
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (Before the registers closed)
M	Medical / Dental Appointment
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised Absence (Not covered by other code)
P	Approved Sporting Activity
R	Religious Observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller Absence
U	Late (after registers closed)
V	Educational Visit or Trip
W	Work experience
Y	Partial or Enforced closure
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
#	School closed to all pupils
Z	Pupils not on roll yet



MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed annually.

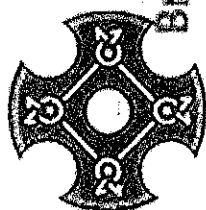
Date passed by Governing Body: 29th November 2023

Chairperson: Mrs Rhiannon Evans

Designated Governor for school attendance: Mrs Eleanor Davies



Appendix 1



Brecon High School

Aberhonddu

Brecon High School's target for attendance is **96%**. In helping achieve that target you are helping

Your Child

To achieve their full potential.

Please help your child have the best possible chances at school. Pupils should be in school for registration by

8:50am

Arrival after 8:50am will result in a Late Mark. This in turn could result in a detention, this detention will be AFTER school.

If your child/children have 10 days absence from school (either authorised or unauthorised) in a school year their attendance will **ONLY** be

94.7%

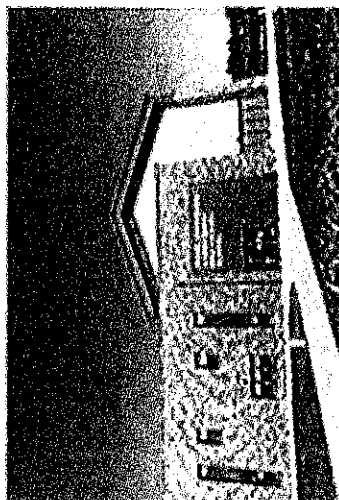
If your child/children are going to be absent please contact our Attendance Officer, Mrs. Joanne Kerr as soon as possible.

Tel 01874 620353

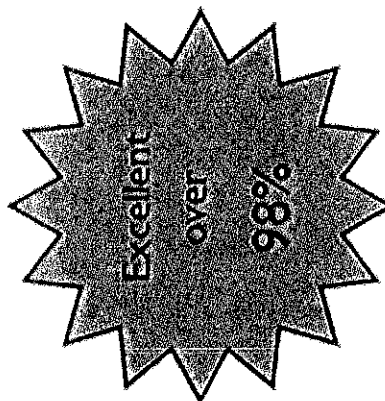
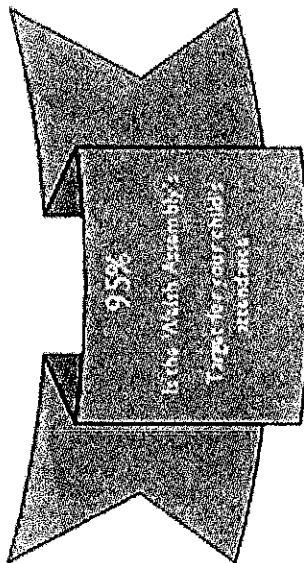
Email: jkerr@brecon-hs.powys.sch.uk

Any queries please also call.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS



WHAT DOES HAVING GOOD ATTENDANCE MEAN?



Attendance Matters: Miss School, Miss Out

<p>175 NON SCHOOL DAYS A YEAR</p> <p>— 175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household and other appointments</p>	
<p>0 days absence 0 hours of learning lost</p> <p>190 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR</p>	<p>Research suggests that:</p> <p>17 missed school days a year = A GCSE GRADE DROP in achievement.</p>
<p>10 days absence 50 hours of learning lost</p> <p>180 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR</p>	<p>19 days absence 95 hours of learning lost</p> <p>171 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR</p>
<p>190 days absence 950 hours of learning lost</p> <p>161 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR</p>	<p>29 days absence 145 hours of learning lost</p> <p>152 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR</p>
<p>38 days absence 190 hours of learning lost</p> <p>152 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR</p>	<p>47 days absence 235 hours of learning lost</p>
<p>100%</p> <p>VERY GOOD</p> <p>Best chance of success. Gets you off to a flying start.</p>	<p>95%</p> <p>WORRYING</p> <p>Less chance of success. Will make progress difficult and reduce levels of success</p>
<p>80%</p> <p>SERIOUS CONCERN</p> <p>Your learning progress will be severely hindered. Court action is highly likely</p>	<p>75%</p>
<p>YOUR EDUCATION IS YOUR FUTURE. DON'T WASTE IT!</p>	