



The Rainbow Federation

Attendance Policy 2025-2026

Cardiff East Cluster Schools' Framework Attendance Policy

1. Introduction and aims

1.1 A child's success at school is likely to be affected negatively if their attendance is poor. Those who do not attend regularly may fall behind in their learning leading to feelings of frustration and unhappiness. It is our goal that each of our pupils attend school regularly and on time, making the most of the opportunities available to them.

1.2 Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, every case is different and we will always try to support families to improve the situation. Cardiff East Cluster Schools' Framework is designed to help teachers, parents/carers and pupils understand their rights, responsibilities and roles when it comes to school attendance. By working in partnership, it is our hope that every pupil achieves over 95% attendance. The Cardiff East Cluster Schools' comprises of Eastern High School, Bryn Hafod Primary School, Glan Yr Afon Primary School, Greenway Primary School, Meadowlane Primary School, Oakfield Primary School, Pen Y Bryn Primary School, Rumney Primary School, Trowbridge Primary School and Willowbrook Primary School.

1.3 The Cardiff East Cluster Schools aim to:

- Give attendance and punctuality a high priority;
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities to ensure consistency and rigour;
- Provide support, advice and guidance to families;
- Use attendance data systematically to evaluate success;
- Use rewards to celebrate good attendance;
- Use sanctions sensitively and only when necessary;
- Work in partnership with the Education Welfare Service and other agencies to improve attendance; and
- Support pupils returning to school after significant periods of absence.

2. Rights, responsibilities and roles

2.1 The Cardiff East Cluster Schools' Attendance Framework has its basis in Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We believe that all young people have the right to education, based on equality of opportunity, and that the school, in partnership

with parents and other parties, must take measures to encourage regular school attendance and reduce rates of absenteeism.

2.2 Cardiff East Cluster Schools are required under The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010, to take attendance registers twice a day; at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

2.3 Parents/carers are required under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that their child receives effective full-time education.

2.4 Cardiff Local Authority is required under section 437 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that a child for whom they are responsible is receiving suitable education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

2.5 The Cardiff East Cluster Schools' Attendance Framework is written to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

2.6 The Cardiff East Cluster Schools aim to work in partnership with young people, parents/carers and families so that pupils can benefit from the educational opportunities provided to them at school.

2.7 This framework operates in conjunction with Cardiff Local Authority's 'Five Step System of Attendance Management' (please see appendix).

3. Procedures

Registration procedures

3.1 To ensure accuracy and consistency, all pupils are registered electronically via the schools' own information management system. This data is routinely shared with the Local Authority. All Schools ensure that data is inputted daily.

3.2 Pupils are registered within the first ten minutes of each AM/PM session in primary schools and in each lesson in the high school.

3.3 Teachers, Cover Supervisors and Supply Teachers, where applicable, are each provided with login credentials for the system and are required to record present (/) or absent (N) against each pupil's name. No pupil may be left with a 'missing' mark.

3.4 In instances of lateness, members of staff are required to alter the absent (N) mark to the late (L) mark. The degree of lateness may be recorded.

Categorisation of absence

3.5 Teachers, Cover Supervisors and Supply Teachers where applicable are permitted to use the following registration codes only: Present (/), absent (N) and late (L).

3.6 The Attendance Officers, Administrative Officers and Senior Leadership Team may, upon investigating incidents of absence, use the following codes as set out by the Welsh Government 2010:

B	Educated off-site
D	Dual-registered
P	Approved sporting activity
V	Educational visit
J	Interview
W	Work experience
C	Other authorised circumstance
H	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Illness
M	Medical appointment
S	Study leave
E	Excluded
R	Religious observance
T	Traveller absence
O	Other unauthorised circumstance
G	Family holiday (not agreed)
U	Late (after registration closed)
X	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils
Y	Partial and forced closure
Z	Pupil not on roll yet

Procedures for absence and lateness

3.7 Parents/carers are asked to contact the school by telephone on the first day of their child's absence.

3.8 Should a pupil be absent from school without explanation, contact will be made by text or phone call asking parents/carers to make contact with the school. Further contact will be made if absence continues longer than one day if no response is received from the parents/carers.

3.9 Should the school be unable to ascertain the reason for absence, a letter will be sent to parents/carers seeking explanation (See section 4, 'Hierarchy of Sanctions').

Authorisation of absence

3.10 Absences may only be approved by authorized representatives of the school. Cardiff East Cluster Schools exercise caution in the authorization of absence and parents/carers must provide the school with a full picture of the reasons leading to their child's absence. If this is a planned absence, e.g. for an operation, please complete a leave of absence form.

Holidays

3.11 Cardiff East Cluster Schools understand the difficulties faced both economically and work-based with regards to booking holidays. However, our priority is to the education of our students and as a result the |Cluster Schools will NOT authorise holidays.

4. Intervention

4.1 Cardiff East Cluster Schools recognise the important role that parents/carers play in promoting good school attendance. The school therefore seeks to provide professional, quality information and advice, communicated frequently by a variety of means.

4.2 Cardiff East Cluster Primary Schools operate a 'late at the gates' scheme in an attempt to discourage lateness and identify pupils who are persistently late for school.

4.3 In the high school, staff closely monitor post-registration attendance lists in an attempt to identify instances of truancy. In such cases, Attendance Officers alert the House Teams and telephone parents/carers so that action can be taken to locate missing pupils and return them to safety.

4.4 Where concerns are raised by parents/carers or staff about a pupil's school attendance, an Attendance Officer may make a planned or unplanned home visit to discuss the matter. During the home visit the Attendance Officer provides information and advice and seeks to support the pupil in returning to school.

4.5 When a pupil has been absent for an extended period, they are welcomed positively on their return. The leadership team is responsible for ensuring that extended support is made available to the pupil, helping them to 'catch up'. In some cases, the leadership team may choose to re-examine the pupil's curriculum offer to encourage better attendance.

4.6 The Attendance Officers work closely with the Cardiff East Cluster Schools to ensure good school attendance is maintained at all times. The Attendance Officers also ensure that attendance and punctuality is given a high priority throughout the duration of pupils' compulsory education.

4.7 Good attendance is celebrated and a range of incentives are used across the cluster to promote good attendance

Hierarchy of sanctions

4.8 Cardiff East Cluster Schools are caring schools and always seek to resolve matters of poor attendance through effective partnership working with parents/carers. In circumstances where schools are not able to get the support of parents/carers, sanctions may be used. In the first instance, parents/carers may receive letters which:

- Request reasons for their child's absence;
- Request medical evidence for their child's absence;
- Express concern about their child's absence and offer advice and support;
- Advise them about their child's lateness and ask for their help in getting their child to school on time;
- Advise them that they must provide proof of appointments to be able to pick their child up early from school.
- Advise them that the school has taken the decision not to authorise an absence;
- Advise them that an Attendance Officer intends to visit their home;
- Advise them of their legal responsibilities to ensure their child attends school regularly;
- Advise them that they are at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice (see 4.11);
- Advise them that a referral has been made to the Education Welfare Service (see 4.12).

4.9 In some circumstances, the school may request that the Education Welfare Service issue parents/carers with a Fixed Penalty Notice under The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales)

Regulations 2013. The child's attendance will be below 92%. A warning letter will be sent first. The circumstances could be, but are not limited to:

- There have been 10 unauthorised sessions within one academic year
- A child has been late (after registration has closed) on 10 occasions within one academic year
- Parents/carers have failed to engage in attempts to improve and sustain attendance;
- The police have regularly found a pupil to be absent from school without an acceptable reason.

4.10 One a warning letter has been sent a Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued if a child's attendance is below 92% for that academic year and

- There is one further unauthorised absence within 15 school days of a warning letter having been issued. School have the right to request medical evidence to ensure absences are only authorised, where appropriate, in cases where attendance is a concern.
- An unauthorised holiday of 5 days (10 sessions) and over is taken during term time (*note that no warning letter will be issued*).

4.11 When the school feels that, despite its best efforts to support the family, attendance is not improving, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service. A referral might be made when, for example:

- A pattern of irregular attendance has developed;
- A period of entrenched non-attendance has become established;
- There is a lack of parental cooperation in ensuring a child's regular attendance; or
- A pattern of truancy is persisting.

4.12 Cardiff East Cluster Schools will liaise with the Education Welfare Service to provide the evidence required to prosecute parents/carers who fail, without reasonable justification, to cause their child to attend school regularly, under sections 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

5.1 The Attendance Officers, administrative officers and leadership teams are responsible for maintaining accurate attendance records for each pupil. Registration data is recorded using SIMS and details of interventions and strategies are recorded by the School Attendance Officer (SAO).

5.2 Attendance Officers are required by the SLT to produce detailed accounts pertaining to the attendance of pupils upon request. This is achieved by publishing reports from SIMS.

5.3 Attendance Officers meet fortnightly with the designated person at the cluster schools to discuss individual cases of absenteeism, truancy or lateness across the cluster and reflect upon the effectiveness of interventions to date. Decisions are taken at this time as to whether individual cases meet the criteria for referral to the Education Welfare Service.

5.4 Attendance Officers can and will seek advice from the cluster allocated Education Welfare Officer.

5.5 Attendance data is reviewed regularly by the Senior Leadership Teams of the Cardiff East Cluster Schools and is used to populate the Self-Evaluation document and inform the School Improvement Plan.