

MOUNTAIN ASH COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL POLICY

Signed _____ *P. J. J. J.* _____ (Chair of Governors)

Date _____ Oct 17 _____

Reviewed: October 2017
Next Review Date: October 2018



Attendance Policy



AIMS

- To maximise attendance through valuing high attendance rates.
- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm.
- To encourage pupils to take full advantage of their educational opportunity by attending regularly.
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school.
- To work in partnership with parents, the Attendance and Wellbeing Service and other agencies to address difficulties that affect children's education.

Attendance at school is an essential pre-requisite to effective learning. If pupils are not in school they are deprived of the educational opportunities which the school has to offer them. Mountain Ash Comprehensive School has developed an ethos which demonstrates to pupils, parents and the wider school community, how much we value good attendance and punctuality. We expect all staff to support and promote excellent school attendance by acting as role models and to work hard to provide a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and enjoy coming to school.

We believe it is essential to regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and its links to pupil attainment. The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the prime responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure that their children attend school regularly. This policy is written with regards to "The Education (pupil registration) (Wales) regulations 2010".

Attendance Target:

2017 /2018 – 93.3%



Attendance Policy



Key staff

Headteacher – Mrs S Evans

SLT Attendance Lead – Mrs H Latham

AWO – Ms R Sutherwood

Pastoral Support / Attendance Officers: Mr G Turner & Miss B Barlow

School Clerk with responsibility for Attendance – Mrs L Morgan

Progress Managers:

- Year 7 – Mrs J Grashoff
- Year 8 – Mrs K Brown
- Year 9 – Mrs N Williams
- Year 10 – Mr P Barry
- Year 11 – Miss R Davies
- Years 12/13 – Mrs S Richards

Child Protection – Mrs C Long & Mrs J Jones

YEPs – Mr L Taylor

Link Governor – Mr G Newton

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- delegate powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel are aware of and comply with this policy.
- nominate a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the Headteacher and to report back to the Governing Body.
- ensure that the attendance policy is carried out.
- ask questions about trends and what is being done to prevent persistent poor attenders.
- monitor termly progress towards the school's attendance targets;
- be responsible for ensuring this policy is maintained and updated regularly.
- be responsible for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.



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The Headteacher will:

- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy.
- undertake the daily monitoring of school attendance via the School's Attendance Administrative Officer by using an appropriate and effective registration system.
- monitor attendance according to gender, age, ethnicity, eligibility for Free School Meals and Additional Learning Needs.
- monitor trends by using data effectively to help strategic planning;
- send regular reports to parents which indicate their child's attendance at school.
- target intervention and support to those children that have been highlighted as poor attenders.
- have in place a system for parents to report a child's absence.
- report to the Governing Body the attendance figures and progress to achieving the set targets.
- remind parents of their commitment to this policy.
- promote the importance of attendance during assemblies.
- publicise attendance and provide a termly report to the Governing Body.
- organise training for school personnel on the use and understanding of attendance codes and authorised and unauthorised attendance;
- work closely with the link governor and School Attendance Lead to ensure good practice.
- provide leadership and vision in respect of ensuring good attendance.
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy.



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The SLT's Attendance Lead will:

- implement the policy with the Headteacher.;
- monitor individual and class attendance on a daily basis, with the aid of the Attendance Officers, Administrative staff, Progress Managers and Mrs J Jones (CP).
- attend meetings with the AWO.
- keep the Headteacher informed of attendance figures and trends.
- ensure parents are contacted regarding concerns about their child's attendance;
- compile attendance data for the Headteacher, the Governing Body and the AWO.
- ensure registers are taken and are kept up to date.
- ensure parents are contacted through Truancy Call if they have not reported their child's absence by 10.15 a.m.
- ensure that the attendance zone system is implemented across the school and that pupils, and parents, are regularly updated on their attendance (appendix 5).
- liaise with outside agencies, including the AWS to ensure children attend school.

The Pastoral Support / Attendance Officers and School Clerk with responsibility for attendance will:

- emphasise the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
- comply with and implement this policy.
- ensure that registers are taken at the appropriate times and are accurate and up to date using the correct absence codes (Appendix 1).
- monitor class and individual attendance patterns of all pupils, but with particular responsibility for those with attendance below 90%, the red zone (appendices 3, 4 & 5).
- inform parents, Progress Managers, the Attendance Lead and the AWO of any concerns about attendance or suspected truancy.
- discuss individual pupil attendance and any further action at meetings with the AWO, Progress Managers, Mrs J Jones and with parents.
- maintain the spreadsheet for monitoring interventions.
- interview pupils who are having difficulties, such as behavioural issues, which may result in absenteeism.



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Progress Managers will:

- monitor class and individual attendance patterns of all pupils in their year group, but with particular responsibility for those with attendance of between 90 - 94%, the blue and bronze zones (appendix 5).
- contact parents and if necessary, arrange a meeting if no explanation has been received after an absence.
- meet formally with the AWO and Pastoral Support Officers on a weekly basis to discuss attendance and welfare issues and to determine appropriate courses of action.
- meet formally once a fortnight with the SLT Attendance Lead to discuss attendance issues in their year group.
- work closely with their team of Form Tutors to identify pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern.
- ensure that Form Tutors are supplied with relevant attendance information of pupils in their forms. e.g. holidays or sickness
- support Form Tutors in discussing attendance and talking to selected individuals and taking appropriate action e.g. contact parents when condoned absence is suspected, referral to the Educational Psychologist or CAMHS, discussions with Heads of Department, placing pupils on report.
- support pupils to reintegrate quickly after a long-term absence. They will ensure that this is tailored to the needs of the individual child.
- arrange for vulnerable pupils to use the 'Cwtch' to overcome difficulties in school which may lead to absence.
- notify staff of pupils who have difficulties, with a view to avoiding further problems.
- acknowledge, praise and reward high levels of attendance.
- (Year 7 PM only) liaise with partner primary schools to ensure that we are aware of potential attendance problems.



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Form tutors will:

- ensure that their register is taken by 8.50 a.m. and is accurate.
- regularly discuss the importance of good attendance and punctuality with their form and display attendance data.
- monitor class and individual attendance patterns, but with particular responsibility for those with attendance of 95% or above, the silver and gold zones (appendix 5).
- ensure that the Progress Manager is informed of any difficulties that may affect children in their form and lead to attendance issues.
- signal any attendance trends they spot and any issues with lateness.

A member of The Youth Engagement and Participation Service will:

- attend fortnightly attendance meetings with the SLT lead and the Attendance Officers.
- work with KS4 pupils with attendance between 86 and 90% who have been referred by the Attendance Officers.

Parents are responsible for:

- ensuring that their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance.
- informing the school on the first day of absence, giving the reason for the absence and its anticipated duration.
- informing the school of any changes to their contact details.
- following the school's holiday in term time protocol and procedures.

Pupils are responsible for:

- arriving at school on time.
- understanding the importance of good attendance.
- knowing the seriousness of truancy.
- informing staff if there are difficulties in school that may affect their enjoyment of lessons.



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- participating in the pupil voice activities to help improve attendance at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School.

Holidays in term time

Holidays during term time are discouraged. Having time off will have a detrimental effect on a child's education, as assessments, exams, coursework and controlled assessments are timetabled throughout the academic year. The school will therefore refuse to authorise the absence.

Parents and carers are advised that a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) may be issued by the Local Authority when permission for a holiday or leave of absence has not been authorised by the school.

FPNs can also be issued when a pupil has a minimum of 10 unauthorised sessions recorded during a term, or in response to persistent late arrival at school.



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Appendix 1

CODE	DESCRIPTION	STATISTICAL MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
A	Truancy	Unauthorised absence
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Ed Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (attending other establishment)	Attendance not required
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed/days in excess)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. app)	Authorised absence
J	Interview in school	Approved Ed Activity
K	In school but in exam or test	Present
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised abs (not covered by other code)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Ed Activity
Q	In school but in support centre	Present
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Ed Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Ed Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance not required



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Appendix 2: Legislation and guidance

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) to any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent means natural parents and includes any person who has parental responsibility or has day to day care of the child. Section 444 1, 1(a) and (ZA) contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school or alternative provision arranged by the Local Authority.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013 set out the framework for the operation of the Fixed Penalty Notice scheme.

The Equalities Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

Registers and admission

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010
- The Education (School Day and School Year) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006

Attendance targets

- The Education (School Performance and Unauthorised Absence Targets) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006.

Guidance documents relating to attendance

- All Wales Child Protection Procedures
- Keeping Learners safe
- The All Wales Attendance Framework
- The National Assembly for Wales Circular 47/2006 Inclusion and Pupil Support.
- South East Wales Consortium's Attendance Strategy
- Local Code of Conduct relating to the Fixed Penalty Notice scheme
- Welsh Government Guidance on penalty notices for regular non-attendance at school
- Welsh Government Guidance on attendance codes



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Appendix 3: An example of 'Letter 1'

R.E. School Attendance of
<Forname> <Surname> : <Date of Birth>

As part of my responsibilities for pupil wellbeing I regularly monitor school attendance to identify any absences that cause me concern. I have noticed that <pupil's name> overall attendance is <percentage attendance>% which is lower than I would expect.

I am writing to advise that frequent absences will have a serious effect on your child's progress e.g. *"if a child misses one day a week, over their whole school career, it will mean that they will miss over two years education"*. This is very likely to mean that they will not do as well in school as they are capable of.

I am sure you are aware of the seriousness of this matter and I hope that you will take all possible steps to improve <pupil's name> attendance.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on **01443 479199**. If you are having any difficulties regarding attendance, the school will be happy to offer you support in this matter.

Yours faithfully



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Appendix 4: An example of 'Letter 2'

Dear Parent/Guardian,

R.E. School Attendance of
«forename» «surname» : «date of birth»

As part of my responsibilities for pupil wellbeing I regularly monitor school attendance to identify any absences that cause me concern. I wrote to you some time ago to raise my concern about «forename»'s attendance. Since I wrote to you I have been monitoring «his_her» attendance and «percentage_attendance»% is still lower than I would expect.

Please contact me at the school on **01443 479199** as a matter of urgency, in order to make an appointment to meet and discuss my concerns with you.

The purpose of this discussion is for us to agree on how best I can support you to improve «forename»'s attendance before it impacts on his/her progress.

I look forward to seeing you.

Yours faithfully

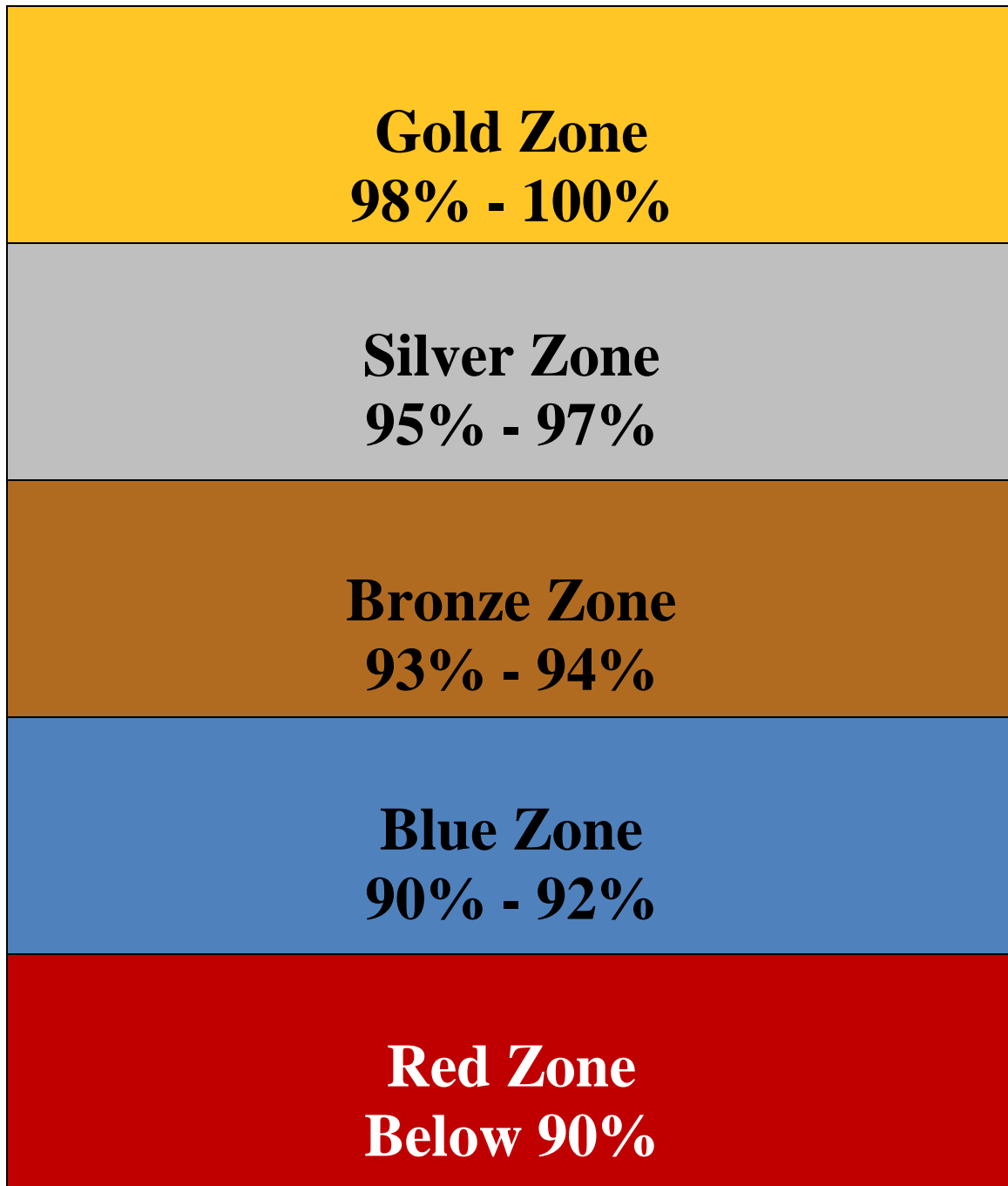


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Appendix 5: Attendance Zone system

Which attendance zone are you in?



Good attendance = good academic progress