

Dear Parent/Carer

At Blackwood Comprehensive School our vision is that we are an inclusive school community where we use the power of learning and teaching to develop confident, happy, resilient and independent learners. In our safe, secure and nurturing learning environment everyone is valued equally, regardless of difference and disadvantage. Positive relationships ensure that, by working together, we raise aspirations, realise our potential and secure our future.

In order to take full advantage of the opportunities on offer and ensure pupils are successful, they should attend school regularly, at least 95% of the time, and be on time every day unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

The Welsh Government has reintroduced Fixed Penalty Notices. Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has the power to issue parents/carers with a Fixed Penalty Notice for each of their child/children, who fail to attend school regularly.

Working within a code of Conduct the Local authority can issue Fixed Penalty Notices to parents/carers if their child/children misses a number of sessions without permission. The criteria are:

- At least 10 sessions (5 school days) are lost due to unauthorised absence during a rolling 12 week period. These do not need to be consecutive;
- Unauthorised absences that include 10 consecutive sessions (5 school days) due to leave of absence/holiday taken in term time or delayed return from an agreed holiday without a reasonable explanation;
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed, during a rolling 12 week period. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of late arrival (absence code U);
- Circumstances where the parent or carer is judged capable of securing their child's regular attendance or whereabouts but is not willing to take responsibility to do so, e.g. parent/carers is unwilling to sign a support plan or contract with the school and attendance is below an acceptable level (as set by the school) over an agreed period of time, without reasonable justification;
- Truancy, where the child has come to the attention of the Police or public during school hours for being absent from school without an acceptable reason.

You could receive a FPN of £60, if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days of receipt of the notice.

We aim to promote, encourage and instil good habits of punctuality and attendance in all our pupils. Whole week attendance benefits from our class charts rewards system, attendance target weeks and half termly rewards will be given as an incentive to encourage these

positive habits and ensure greater value is placed on attendance being the key factor to pupils achieving their full potential and success.

The most convenient way to track your child's attendance is through their planner, as this is recorded on a weekly basis. You can report any absence from school using the class charts app and also by contacting the school using the number

If you would like to discuss issues relating to your child's attendance please contact our attendance and wellbeing team in the first instance.

Ms K Hornyak - BLKCA@caerphilly.gov.uk

Mrs A. Ridout - BLKCA@caerphilly.gov.uk

Yours Sincerely

Mrs N Griffiths

Assistant Headteacher Wellbeing and Equity