

Attendance & Punctuality

Attendance is Key!

The Welsh Government tracks attendance carefully and our attendance figures at Eastern High have improved considerably, and we would like to thank you for your support with this. We still have some way to go to achieve our Government target of at least 95%, however, we feel confident that with your continued support, Eastern High will achieve this target in due course.

The attendance team and the Coleg Achievement Managers are always on hand to support you with improving your child's attendance. This year, we are endeavouring to keep you informed about your child's attendance as often as possible. We are sending out text messages for absences and lateness on a daily basis, writing to you when attendance starts to fall and using tutor reports to support students to improving their own attendance. We are also holding Parental Meetings which aim to support you and your children with their education and attendance.

When should students be at school?

- Students are required to be in school early enough to attend their first lesson which starts at 8.40 am. Encourage your child to arrive before 8:30am so they are ready for their first lesson.
- We want well prepared students with all the right equipment required to begin learning. Please support us and your child by helping them to be organised and ready for learning.
- **Lateness** to school has a significant impact on your child's achievement at school and may also result in a **Fixed Penalty Fine**. Please support us and your child by ensuring they arrive to school on time.

When is it right for your child to stay away from school?

- If your child is genuinely ill and cannot physically get to school due to illness then, of course, they will need to remain at home. Please contact us to let us know. However young people sometimes mask underlying issues such as bullying or problems with learning or friendship groups by telling parents that they don't feel well enough to go to school, as a way of avoiding the underlying issue. Please contact your child's CAM as soon as possible if

you have any concerns, it is far better that we work together as soon as you or ourselves feel concerned rather than letting an attendance issue become a bigger problem.

- Please try, wherever possible, to avoid medical appointments during school time or make them as close as possible to the end of the school day to avoid disruption to your child's learning. Also medical appointments will not be authorised unless you provide an appointment card or letter.

When is it not right for your child to stay away from school?

- **Holidays** – The Local Authority do not promote the taking of holidays in term time. **Fixed Penalty Fines** may be issued when a holiday is taken during term time and not authorised by the head teacher.
- **Birthdays** – Your child should attend school on their birthday, celebrate at the end of the school day!
- **Shopping** – or any other activity for which there is no serious reason for your child to be away from school. Schools are open to pupils 190 days of the year which leaves 175 days for holidays, shopping and visiting family.

We want the best for your young person and we know you do too. Attendance is a key factor in your child's education. Research shows that just 17 days missed from school can mean a drop of a GCSE grade across ALL subjects if your child is in Year 10 or Year 11.

90% attendance may sound good, but over a school year it actually adds up to half a day missed each week, or nearly four weeks in total! All pupils should be aiming for an attendance figure of 95% - 100%.