



# Attendance Cluster Policy

Attendance is everybody's concern, and the school will expect all stakeholders to play a part in improving attendance.

Date policy created	May 2024
Created by	St Julian's cluster
Date ratified by St Julian's School governors:	23rd October 2024
Date ratified by Glan Usk governors:	27th June 2024
Date ratified by St Julian's Primary governors:	
Next review date	June 2025

St Julian's cluster is a successful cluster and each pupil plays a huge part in making it so. Every child has a fundamental right to be educated, (**UNCRC Article 28 - The Right to an Education**) to flourish personally and to achieve their very best academic results, these are secured with high levels of attendance and punctuality.

**The St Julian's Cluster Attendance Policy has been agreed by all schools and Governing Bodies within the cluster.**

**St Julian's Clusters shared aims:**

- Offer a safe and friendly environment which welcomes children regardless of race, gender or ability
- raise standards and ensure all pupils reach their full potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality
- ensure all stakeholders receive communication about information on the importance of regular school attendance
- identify those pupils with irregular attendance at an early stage and work with partner agencies to try and address any barriers that stop pupils from attending school regularly
- keep accurate and up to date attendance data
- ensure all pupils are safe, and for the school to follow the local authority's 'Children Missing Education' guidance
- reward those pupils who have made significant progress in raising attendance levels

This policy is supported by the All Wales Attendance Framework -Belonging, engaging and participating, Guidance on improving learner engagement and attendance (October 2023)

[https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2023-06/consultation-document-belonging-engaging-and-participating-guidance\\_0.pdf](https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2023-06/consultation-document-belonging-engaging-and-participating-guidance_0.pdf)

It is also supported by the Newport Council Attendance Policy (2020/21)

<https://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Schools-and-Education/School-attendance-and-welfare/Attendance-Policy.pdf>

**St Julian's Clusters shared principles:**

- Every child has a fundamental right to be educated, to flourish personally and to achieve their very best academic results, these are secure with high levels of attendance.
- By law all children of compulsory age must receive a proper full-time education.
- All stakeholders and teachers have a duty to ensure maximum attendance at school.
- Our cluster expects every pupil and Parent/Carer to aim for 100% attendance and excellent levels of punctuality in each academic term and year.
- There is a clear link between academic achievement and excellent attendance and punctuality.

## **St Julian's Clusters shared objectives:**

- To identify and challenge patterns of persistent non-attendance and provide relevant support to make necessary improvement.
- To reduce the percentage of unauthorised absences.
- To provide an effective and sustainable system for the monitoring of attendance.
- To recognise and reward high levels of attendance and punctuality and improvement in attendance every term.

## **Legal Framework**

The law outlining attendance is:

### **The Education Act 1996 which places a legal obligation on:**

- the local authority to provide and enforce attendance;
- school to register attendance and notify the local authority of a child's absence.

### **Section 7 of the above act states that:**

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, 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 or otherwise'.

### **Section 444 further states that:**

'The parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable in law'.

## **The Education (Penalty Notice) Wales Regulations 2013:**

This legislation came into force in September 2014 and has given Local Authorities powers to issue fixed penalty notices (FPN). A code of conduct has been agreed by Newport City Council on the issuing of the FPN which includes the following criteria:

- Minimum of 10 unauthorised absences in a twelve-week rolling term which do not have to be consecutive.
- Attendance below 92%
- Minimum of 10 sessions of lateness after the close of registration. Registration closes half an hour after the start of the school day.
- Parents/carers who choose to take their children out of school to go on holiday during term time without authorisation from the Head teacher, rolling from one school year to the next.

The Head teacher will inform the parent by letter that the school may request a fixed penalty notice for unauthorised absence. If an FPN is requested, the Education Welfare Service Manager (EWS) for the Local Authority will review the case with the school, considering levels of absence, level of parental engagement, any equality implications, history of attendance and also any statement of special educational needs.

A fixed penalty notice warning may be issued and a period of 15 days will be monitored for an immediate improvement. A warning may not be issued in respect of an unauthorised holiday in term time.

A penalty notice is £60 if paid within 28 days in receipt of the notice, increasing to £120 if not paid within 28 days. If not received by 42 days then the local authority can prosecute parents for the child's absence.

**Decisions regarding the issuing of FPN's are at the discretion of the headteacher.**

## Definitions

Compulsory school age – under section 8 of the Education Act 1996, children and young people should attend school from the start of the first term commencing after their fifth birthday. The ends of the term dates are 31st March, 31st August and 31st December. A young person ceases to be compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they have their 16th birthday.

Parents' section 576 of the Education Act 1996 includes:

- All-natural parents whether married or not.
- Any person who although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a young person or child, and any person, who although not a natural parent has care of a child or young person.

## Meanings:

**'EWS' – Education Welfare Service Manager 'EWO' – Education Welfare Officer**

**'CME' – Children missing education**

Attendance is everybody's concern, and the school will expect all stakeholders to play a part in improving attendance.

## What Parents/Carers can expect from each school

- All cluster School Attendance Policy which has been approved, is reviewed regularly by the Governing Bodies and is available to parents/carers on the school website (and/or the school)
- A positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils and parents feel safe, secure and valued.
- A graduated response to attendance concerns (See Appendix 1-3)
- A high priority of attendance and punctuality monitoring.
- Regular and efficient recording of attendance; twice daily.
- Early contact with parents/carers when a pupil fails to attend school without good reason.
- Early contact on any notified problems if a child is absent from school.
- Efficient and effective communication between home and school
- Clear advice and guidance relating to the policy and procedures including the use of Fixed Penalty Notices – changed order

## What pupils can expect from school

- A safe learning environment in which pupils feel valued and secure.
- Consistently applied rewards and recognition for excellent and improving attendance.
- Support when experiencing any difficulties in attending school.
- Contact with home when feeling unwell.
- Home visits from the schools' Education Welfare Officer (EWO), School meetings, letters, and telephone calls with Parent/carers regarding attendance issues.
- Each designated leader in each school will have whole school responsibility for the management of attendance. Support will be provided by the School Support/Attendance officer who will act as coordinator of the SIMS system.
- All schools will use the correct authorised and unauthorised codes, set out by the Welsh Government 2010. Authorisation of absence is only at the discretion of the Headteacher.
- The school will contact the parent on the first day of absence if a reason for absence is not provided.

## What the cluster can expect from Newport City Council Education Welfare Service

- Provide support to schools, pupils and parents/carers to ensure regular attendance and address problems relating to absenteeism.
- Support a multi-agency approach to provide important links between home and school. Work in partnership so that pupils will benefit from the educational opportunities available to them.
- Provide statutory support in the form of Fixed Penalty Notices, Cases for Magistrates Court proceedings for Education Supervision Orders.
- Swift follow up on CME (Children Missing Education) referrals.

**Specific responsibilities include:**

Encouraging excellent attendance and punctuality is the shared responsibility of our schools, parents, carers, pupils, cluster staff and our cluster partners.

**Our Cluster can expect all schools to:**

- Use the Cluster Schools Attendance Policy- to guide attendance tracking and monitoring and investigate any problems that may lead to non-attendance including challenging parents about regular or intermittent illness absence.
- Keep parents/carers informed of any attendance related issues.
- Register pupils accurately and keep up to date records.
- Complete accurate and timely CME (Child Missing Education) referrals.
- Use a wide range of attendance support strategies and have a robust system of keeping accurate records of all contacts and actions taken.

**Parent/Carer Responsibilities:**

- To perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age attend regularly.
- Absences should only be for genuine illness or in exceptional circumstances.
- To ensure their children attend school punctually. (See appendix or specific school times)
- To provide the school with their current and at least two emergency telephone number(s), an email address for school records and keep the school updated on any changes.
- To inform schools on the first day of their child's absence and any further absences.
- To take holidays during the school holiday periods; any leave of absence during term time must be applied for in advance.
- A child must be signed out of school or given permission to leave site by a parent/carers in accordance with the individual school's policy.
- To provide medical evidence for extended absence.

**Pupil Responsibilities:**

- To aim each year for 100% attendance and to attend school regularly.
- To arrive at school on time and follow school procedures for registration.
- To arrive at school in the correct uniform and equipped for learning.
- To seek support in school regarding any barriers to attendance, attainment and achievement.

### **Our primary class teachers and secondary form tutors will:**

- Raise the profile and importance of excellent attendance.
- Collect information from pupils regarding any absence.
- Meet with Parents/Carers as appropriate.
- Support pupils in achieving attendance targets.
- Follow up attendance and punctuality concerns, robustly.
- Refer attendance and punctuality concerns to the attendance officer/Lead (and/or) Pastoral lead/SLT.

### **Our School Pastoral Support /Attendance Officers will:**

- Monitor the SIMS system, and report concerns to the relevant class teachers and school leaders.
- Contact all pupils on the first day of absence by telephone/text message or letter.
- Refer pupils who have been absent for 5 days with no response to the designated school lead.
- Update attendance data as necessary with parental returns/holiday forms/manual registers.
- Produce registers and statistics when required for the school lead and Pastoral team.
- Address punctuality of persistent lateness concerns where needed.

### **The Designated Senior Lead/ Attendance Lead will:**

- Ensure that all key staff are aware of whole school and year group attendance targets and progress on achieving these.
- Produce summary documents for Governors and the Headteacher.
- Ensure parents, staff and pupils are made aware of changes to attendance recording or reporting.
- Monitor attendance weekly.
- Negotiate annual/ termly attendance targets based on previous attendance figures.
- Liaise with Progress Leaders/ class teachers and the Educational Welfare Officer to ensure resources are used effectively and pupils are monitored appropriately
- Meet with parents as appropriate.
- Ensure attendance is discussed in fortnightly meetings between all Progress Coordinators and line managers.
- Raise the profile of, and reward, good attendance on a regular basis.
- Review persistent unauthorised absences, issue warning letters and liaise with the Local Authority over the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices.
- Identify the barriers to attendance and support parents/pupils to overcome absenteeism

### **Our Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) will:**

- Respond to urgent welfare concerns and carry out a home visit when required
- Meet with school attendance lead regularly to discuss attendance issues.
- To follow the legal process for parents where all other avenues have failed.
- The EWO will recommend school actions which may result in visiting parents of pupils who have unsatisfactory attendance and devising suitable home-school agreements for their reintegration to school.
- Visit parents as requested by the designated school leader.

## Authorised and unauthorised absence

Where a pupil is of compulsory school age, the register must show whether any absence was authorised by the school or unauthorised.

### Authorised absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for the pupil to be absent from school, or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted by the school as satisfactory justification for absence. Only schools, and not parents or carers, can authorise an absence, and schools must consider whether the reason for absence is reasonable.

### Unauthorised absence

An absence is deemed authorised when the school accepts that there is good reason for the absence and communication from the parent or carer has been received. In line with absence codes below.

### Absent Codes

B - Educated off-site	Approved Educational Activity
C - Other authorised circumstance	Authorised Absence
D - Dual-registered	Approved Educational Activity
E - Excluded	Authorised Absence
F - Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
G - Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence
H - Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
I - Illness	Authorised Absence
J - Interview	Approved Educational Activity
L - Late (before registers close)	Present
M - Medical appointment	Authorised absence
N - No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence
O - Unauthorised absence	Unauthorised Absence
P - Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity
R - Religious observance	Authorised Absence
S - Study Leave	Authorised Absence
T - Traveller absence	Authorised Absence
U - Late after registers close	Unauthorised Absence
V - Educational Visit or Trip	Approved Educational Activity
W - Work Experience	Approved Educational Activity
Y - Partial or enforced closure	Attendance not required
X - Non-compulsory school age abs	Attendance not required
# - School closed to all students	Attendance
Z - Students not on role	Attendance not required

## **Procedure for Absence Concerns:**

- Mark register with the appropriate code.
- School to initiate first day response to Parent/carer via text, email or phone.
- If the absence remains a concern, school will make further contact with home via phone and email - Please visit your child's school website for contact details.
- Each school will follow a graduated response to monitor attendance for each pupil and communicate with families via letters and meetings with parents. See appendix 1,2,3
- All on-going absence concerns, must be reported to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- Action a referral to EWS for the following reasons:
  - On-going concerns.
  - No response or poor response from the parent.
  - Parent fails to fully engage.
  - School must continue to keep the EWO regularly update with all absence concerns.

## **Medical Appointments:**

All schools will code absences 'M' as medical if sufficient evidence has been provided by the parent/carer. Our cluster reserves the right to trust what our parent/carers tell us, but for extended medical absence or if there is any doubt about absence then an appointment card or letter will be requested

## **Entertainment Licences:**

Schools will only consider granting leave of absence for pupils who are in possession of an up to date Entertainment / Performance License.

## **Religious Celebrations:**

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from school in order for them to take part in acts of religious worship. The days when this occurs are known to the school and pupils will not be disadvantaged in their education by attendance at such worship.

## **Transition Process**

As we are all aware it is difficult at times to deal with change. We as a cluster appreciate that pupils find it hard to cope with the transition from year groups and also from primary to secondary school. Our schools ensure that we have all staff involved in this process and taster days for all pupils are set. The schools will work closely with our cluster to identify pupils who have attendance issues so we can put strategies in place before they arrive at St Julian's. This cluster approach to attendance will help improve attendance and transition for both pupils and parents/carers.

## **Leave of absence in term time**

The Education (pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations, make clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. If the leave is granted, Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school.

Leave of absence will be considered by the Headteacher/attendance lead and the Governing Body. For the leave of absence to be authorised, all of the following criteria must be met:

- The child is of statutory school age (5 years and above)
- The child's average level of attendance across the rolling 12 months prior to the date of requested leave is 96% or above
- The child is always punctual to school
- The child's attendance record for the current academic year shows no



- unexplained or unauthorised absences
- The requested leave does not fall within the assessment/examination period for
- the year group

### **Holiday requests**

The St Julian's Cluster takes a consistent and standard response and does not authorise any holiday in term-time; indeed, FPNs may be/are issued if a highly significant number of days are taken for holiday.

In accordance with Newport local authority guidance, absence due to family holidays will be considered by each school in the cluster on an individual basis.

### **Extended holidays**

Any pupil, whose family decides to take them away from school over a 20 day period, will be eligible to be taken off role and will need to reapply for their place within the cluster through Newport's admission process and will not be automatically given a place at the school.

### **Child Missing Education (CME)**

- If the child fails to return to school on the agreed date, the school must act and consider following the Child Missing in Education process.
- When a child's absence is unexplained, schools will contact the parents on the first day of absence and endeavour to continue to make contact throughout the day until they can speak with the parent/carer.
- If the absence remains unexplained, the school must take steps to establish the child's safety and whereabouts.
- All reasonable enquires with emergency contacts, friends in school and neighbours should be made before a CME referral to the Local Authority is completed.
- The CME referral should be made to the Local Authority after enquiries have proved unsuccessful.
- If a child moves out of the Newport City Council Authority, not attending school and school are unable to locate the child / family, a CME referral to the Local Authority must be actioned.

### **Admissions and deletions from school roll:**

- Schools are required to inform the Local Authority in every circumstance when they are about to delete a pupil's name from the admissions register.
- This would include informing the Local Authority of the pupil's name, address, parents' name(s), parents' email address and contact telephone numbers, expected new destination and proposed new school name / Local Authority, within 5 days of the pupils leaving their school.
- Elective Home education (more information can be located via this NCC Website link. [Elective home education | Newport City Council](#))

### **Re-integration**

The school has arrangements to reintegrate pupils who have been absent for extended periods. In such cases, each pupil will be treated individually, and arrangements will be made that are most appropriate to the individual's circumstances. All reintegration plans are formalised by the designated school leader for attendance and welfare in conjunction with supporting staff.

## Persistent Absenteeism

Welsh Government have amended the statistical definition of persistent absence to over 10% of sessions.

**WG, Belonging, engaging and participating guidance, October 2023.**

Percentage Attendance	Days Missed (Termly)	Days Missed (Yearly)
90%	7 days	20 days (4 weeks)
80%	14 days	40 days
70%	21 days	60 days
60%	28 days	80 days
50%	35 days	100 days
40%	42 days	120 days
30%	49 days	140 days

## Appendix 1- St Julian's

Continual monitoring of attendance is essential, as are clear processes that are consistently followed by all. Below is an overview of the stages of intervention for pupils where attendance is falling and is a cause for concern. The below policy is linked to NCC new attendance procedures outlined in the linked [flow chart](#).

	Action	By who	Timescale/R eview
<b>UNIVERSAL PROVISION</b>			
All student awareness of % attendance	Termly review of registration certificate <a href="#">Attendance Review Form</a> (Initial form including codes- Terms 1 ) <a href="#">Every Day Counts</a> <a href="#">Attendance quiz and review</a> <a href="#">Termly Attendance Review Form</a> (Form for terms 3-5) <a href="#">End of year attendance review</a>	PLs and Tutors	Week 1/2 of every term
Praise letters for positive attendance	100% attendance letters sent out termly 97+ letters sent Rewards assembly linked to these	Attendance Officer	Term 2 and 4
<b>LEVEL 1- TARGETED</b>			
Attendance falls below 95% (Term 1 only these are sent at below 90%)	Early warning/ concern letter sent. Generalised letter (Letter 1)  <a href="#">letter 1</a>	PL/Attendance Officer	On-going throughout year
<b>LEVEL 2- TARGETED</b>			
2 week review of above. Continued absence.	Formal attendance letter and registration certificate sent <a href="#">(Letter 2)</a>	PL/Attendance Officer	Fortnightly review meetings On-going throughout the year
<b>LEVEL 3- SPECIFIC</b>			
Attendance falls below 90%	SAM letter/Meeting arranged <a href="#">(Appointment Letter)</a>	Attendance Officer/PL	On-going throughout the year
	School Attendance Meeting  <a href="#">New SAM template</a>  Check list → No meds letter issued at meeting → Engagement work → Additional referrals- ◆ SPACE (Single Point of Access for Children's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health.) ◆ Youthworker ◆ Councillor	PL/ Attendance Officer	2-3 week review

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Young Carers</li> <li>◆ Ngage (Young persons drug and alcohol service)</li> <li>◆ MARF (Multi-agency Referral Form)</li> <li>◆ Careers Wales</li> <li>◆ Well being officer (LP)</li> </ul>		
<b>LEVEL 4- SPECIFIC</b>			
Continued absences	1. Referral to EWS via sims <a href="#">Referral system process</a>	Attendance Officer /PL/Via SSG	On-going
	2. FPN Notice letter sent 3. FPN letter sent	Attendance Officer	On-going
<b>EBSNA - Targeted and Specific</b>			
Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● EBSNA identified at SAM- OPP /OPP with targets completed</li> <li>● Clear plan for support and reintegration established with the focus of understanding and alleviating where possible barriers to attendance</li> <li>● IDP process to begin where appropriate</li> </ul>	Attendance Officer/ PL  Attendance Officer/PL  AENCO	2-3 weekly review   35 day process

### **Punctuality - How do we manage Lateness?**

The school day starts at **8.30 am** and we expect your child to be in and on site at 8.25 am at the latest. This allows them to be in class on time and ready to learn.

#### **AM**

Registers are marked by **8.35am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At **9:00am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if a student arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will count as an unauthorised absence

#### **PM**

Period 4 is the afternoon registration and this and the am tutorial are the marks that count towards the student's late record

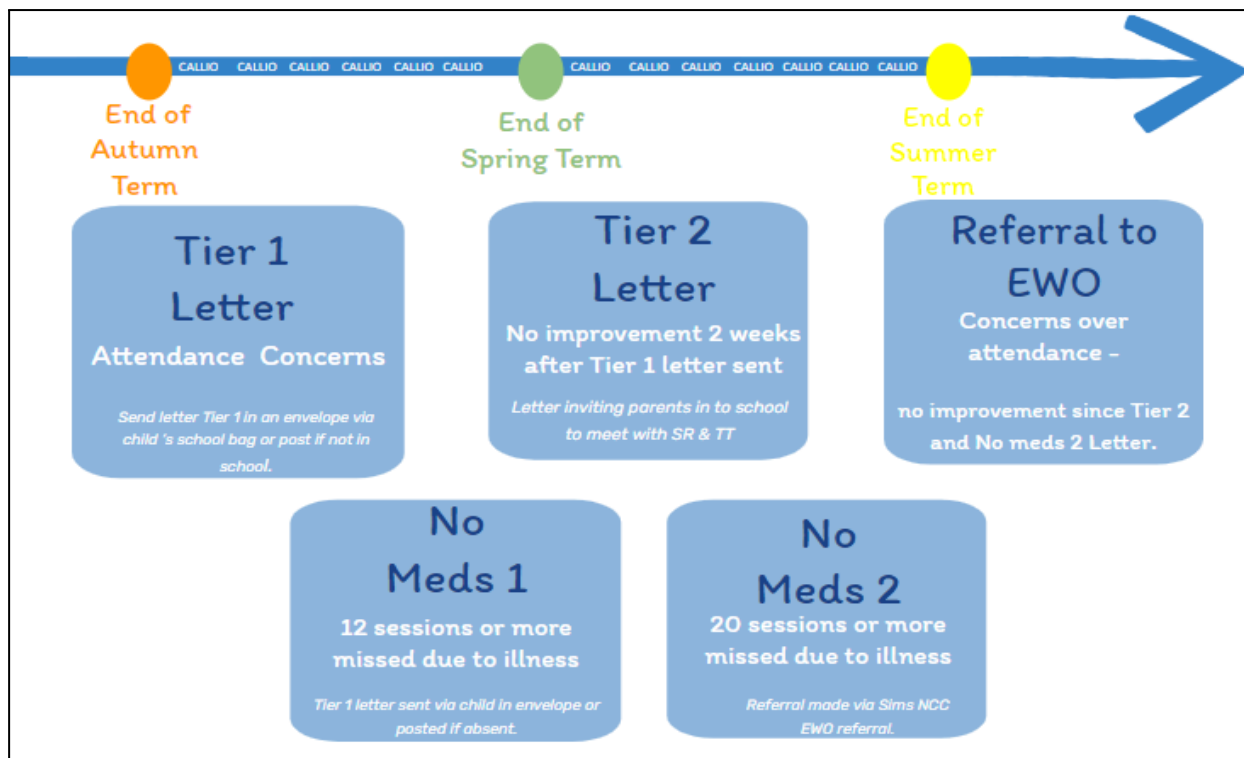
A persistent late record will result in a meeting to outline a plan of action to resolve the issue, but you can approach the school at any time if you are experiencing problems getting your child to school on time.

Those parents of pupils who are persistently late will be contacted by the class teacher/form tutor/Head of Department/Progress Leader/Senior Management team.

All pupils who are late will be set a yellow card detention automatically. This is a 20 minute after school detention. Persistent lateness will be followed up by the form tutor/Progress Leader/attendance officer.

## Appendix 2

### Attendance process - Glan Usk and St Julian's Primary



- [Tier 1 Letter](#)
- [Tier 2 Letter](#)
- [No Meds 1 Letter](#)
- [No Meds 2 Letter](#)
- [Punctuality Letter](#)

### Punctuality

The school recognises the importance of a prompt start to each day so that children are in school ready to begin their lessons at the start of each day. See start times for each school.

Parents are asked to bring children to the school office when they arrive late and are verbally asked for an explanation of the lateness. If children arrive after the register closes at 9.30am this is recorded as a 'late absence'.

Parents of children who are late arriving at school on a regular basis will be contacted by letter and informed that the situation is being closely monitored. Continued lateness is then dealt with in the same way as absence.

**St Julian's Primary School - Reception to Year 2 - 08:45 am to 15:10 pm**

**Year 3 to Year 6 - 08:55 am to 15:20 pm**

**Glan Usk Primary School - Reception to Year 2 - 08:55 am to 15:15 pm**

**Year 3 to Year 6 - 08:55 am to 15:20 pm**

