



## Education and Inclusion Services Directorate

### Agenda Item No. 8.2

## Attendance and Exclusions

### Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on attendance and exclusions across the academic year 2021/22. Improving school attendance is a key priority for the local authority and schools alike. Research has shown that good school attendance and the avoidance of exclusions through effective school-based behaviour management approaches contributes to improved educational attainment and as such, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council is committed to supporting schools, pupils, and parents to raise and maintain attendance rates.

### Attendance Data

There was no statutory data collection for attendance at primary or secondary level for the 2021/22 academic year. Welsh Government suspended the attendance data collection following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and this included the 2021/22 academic year.

The figures provided in the report are collated averages from across RCT that have been sourced from school SIMS data. The data presented is in line with the date of previous years Welsh Government data collection. Therefore, this is presented as the full academic year for primary phase and a cut-off point of 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022 for secondary data collection. Primary and secondary data includes special schools.

Phase:	Attendance:
Primary	89.8%
Secondary	85.2%

The Local Authority continue to issue half-termly attendance reports to all schools to support in their self-evaluation as well as hopefully opening avenues for schools to explore good practice examples from like schools in terms of demographics and/or geography.

Governing Bodies and particularly Link Governors are encouraged to discuss these reports with school leaders to determine areas which may need further support and focus of resources. The Attendance and Wellbeing Service are also able to provide data reports on attendance throughout the academic year when requested where these will support school self-evaluation processes.

Fixed Penalty Notices for School Non-Attendance were reintroduced in the summer term. Schools who use these must ensure this is communicated with parents/carers in the School Attendance Policy. The Code of Conduct, which outlines the circumstances in which Fixed Penalty Notices for non-attendance can be requested, can be found on the council website and any queries directed to the Attendance and Wellbeing Service.

## Exclusion Data

Reducing the number of exclusions issued by schools continues to be a main priority for RCT. During academic year 2018/19, the last full academic year prior to the Covid -19 pandemic, exclusions for both permanent and fixed term exclusions were at their highest level compared to the previous 5 academic years, with fixed term exclusions showing a continuous year on year increase over this period.

During 2019/20 and 2021/22 academic years, there was a notable decrease in the number of exclusions issued by schools, and this is attributed in the main to the impact of the pandemic, that resulted in significant periods of school closure and lower attendance. However, although RCT exclusion data for the full academic year 2021/22 is still being verified, the data indicates that incidents of exclusion have risen significantly to pre-Covid levels. Data also indicates that there is significant variability in the number of exclusions issued by schools, with some schools issuing a far higher number of exclusions than others

Schools are required by law to have regard to the Welsh Government guidance 'Exclusion from schools and pupil referral units' in terms of the use of exclusion, exclusion procedures and reporting incidents of exclusion to the Local Authority.

The Local Authority continues to issue termly exclusion reports to schools. These include an individual school report together with summary reports for mainstream primary and secondary phases, through schools and special schools / PRUs.

### **What Governors need to do:**

Receive the feedback during the meeting and work collectively to support school attendance.

Scrutinise the individual school exclusion data report and the relevant termly comparison exclusion data report and work collectively with the head teacher and other key members of staff to support school to implement effective behaviour management approaches and develop approaches to reduce the number of exclusions.

### **Further Information**

For further information please contact Daniel Williams (Head of the Attendance and Wellbeing Service) or Ceri Jones (Head of Inclusion Services) at:

Attendance and Wellbeing Service, / Access and Inclusion  
Education and Inclusion Services,  
Ty Trevithick,  
Mountain Ash  
CF45 4UQ

Tel: 01443 744298

Email: [daniel.williams@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.williams@rctcbc.gov.uk)

Tel: 01443 744008

Email: [Ceri.L.Jones@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Ceri.L.Jones@rctcbc.gov.uk)