



Attendance Policy

Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf

Reviewed: Autumn 2023

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Basic Principles

In order to realise our vision and aims and objectives, the school should be an institution where pupils are keen to attend. Good attendance and punctuality are essential if learners are to benefit fully from the opportunities offered by a school, and is key to the academic and social development of our learners.

- The school bases its attendance policy on the guidelines as set out by Cardiff County and City Council.
- Parents and guardians have a responsibility to ensure that regular attendance is essential. Unauthorized absence and constant lateness are not acceptable; only the Headteacher by law can approve an absence; If there is an absence that cannot be justified, it will be recorded as absence without permission.
- Although the legal responsibility for regular school attendance rests with parents, the school and LA shares with them the responsibility for encouraging and improving good attendance.
- The school is required by law to keep certain records and produce specified information about pupil attendance.
- Apart from the statutory obligation, the school is committed to improvements in attendance standards as an immediate stimulus to improve pupil achievement.
- Poor attendance is detrimental to educational achievement, undermines the wellbeing of all pupils and demoralises staff.
- The LA has a statutory duty to ensure that a child for whom they are responsible receives a proper education and, if they are a registered pupil at school, this means going to school regularly and on time.

AIMS

- Promote good attendance as this is essential to educational achievement.
- The need to have a high attendance should be constantly emphasised. This should be done with learners and with parents.
- Keep records of attendance that:
 - a) clearly distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absences.
 - b) provides accurate information on actual attendance so that school attendance rates can be monitored and evaluated through centrally kept statistics.
- Develop on the good practice that fosters a positive attitude of good attendance by:
 - a) responding quickly to pupil absence;
 - b) being sensitive to situations where regular attendance patterns are disrupted by external factors such as family bereavement.

The school encourages good attendance and punctuality by:

- Creating a caring environment where pupils feel safe and that they are valued as young adults
- developing positive relationships with parents / carers and external agencies working with the family / pupil;
- daily and effective use of Classcharts

- monitoring and evaluating early intervention strategies adopted by the school;
- working closely with colleagues from multiple agencies and the Education Inclusion Service to improve attendance and punctuality;
- monitor attendance data and trends and report this information to the Governing Body.

The school will make its attendance policy clear to parents and pupils by:

- the initial transition meeting prior to admission,
- newsletters
- assemblies
- X
- occasional meetings

The school will:

- ensure that all staff are aware of registration procedures, registration regulations and education law relating to school attendance;
- ensure proper training for all staff about the importance of using Classcharts
- complete school registers at the start of the morning session and in all lessons on Classcharts
- emphasise to parents and carers the importance of contacting the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- promote positive attitudes by staff towards pupils returning after absence;
- consult with all members of the school community and the LA to develop and maintain a school-wide attendance policy;
- ensure that attendance is regularly evaluated by the Governing Body;
- work towards ensuring that all pupils are supported and valued and therefore eager to attend school.

Overview of staff responsibilities as regards attendance:

- All staff are responsible for attendance

OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ATTENDANCE: Matthew H T Evans

DESIGNATED STAFF MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE: Lisa Harrison

ASSISTANT HEAD / MEMBER WITH OVERVIEW OF ATTENDANCE: Meleri Jones

PROGRESS AND WELLBEING LEADS: see website for designated leads

ASSISTANT HEAD / DESIGNATED LEAD ON SAFEGUARDING: Beca Newis

MEMBER OF CANOLFAN GLANTAF (SRB): Bethan Davies

ASSISTANT HEAD / ALNCO (involvement with reduced PSP/tiemtables): Catrin Arnopp

MEMBER OF THE GOVERNING BODY WHO HAS OVERSIGHT OVER ATTENDANCE -

MEMBER OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ASSOCIATED WITH ATTENDANCE: Bridget Thwaites

APPENDIX 1 – ABSENTEE RESPONSE PROCEDURES

Daily

- As pupils arrive at school, teachers are there to greet them. Gates close at 8.35 along with the reception door. Any pupils who are late, SLT in reception to record the lack of punctuality and send a message home on Classcharts and take the pupil's phone for the day.
- Late arrivals noted and recorded
- Form teachers take a register on Classcharts between 8.30-8.50am. When there is an assembly, registration is either done on the teacher's mobile device or on paper which is transferred to Attendance Officer.
- Every lesson - subject teacher is responsible for taking a register on Classcharts – Yr. 7-11 class routine– pupils to be quiet while the teacher calls their names. If a pupil is late, note L and how many minutes late. If a pupil is absent in the lesson and has been present in a previous lesson(s), the subject teacher should call 'Cymorth'. Support Teacher investigates the absence to get the pupil back into the lesson.
- Attendance Officer phones the home of all pupils who are absent on the first day of absence (if there is no explanation) during the day and sends a message to parents on Classcharts.
- The hourly registration informs parents if their child is not in a lesson.
- If a teacher has not completed the register correctly or hasn't done within a certain time (registration period or lesson), Attendance Officer contacts the teacher.
- Learners to sign out in reception if leaving early, receptionist checks with parent, and pupils who are late and sign in at reception when they arrive at school. This information is relayed to Heads of Year.
- Record any attendance / late arrivals concerns on My Concern

Weekly

- Attendance Officer meets with all HOY, goes through the list of all pupils with -90%/-85% attendance in the previous week. Also looks and discusses absence patterns e.g. pupils missing specific days. Wednesday, missing a certain lesson. Attendance Officer/HOY contacts these homes to understand the situation/offer support
- Every Monday, form teachers receive a copy of their registration class absences' (N,L,U)
- Record any attendance / late concerns on My Concern
- Monitor pupils' attendance on the Child Protection Register – calls and visits

Less than 90%/85% attendance

- Following each meeting with the HOY, HOY/AO contacts these households to understand the situation/offer support if needed. Arrange a meeting at school / at home if necessary – set targets / provide support.
- Note any attendance concerns on My Concern
- Contact Support agencies if needed - Nurse, Counsellor, County, Pastoral Administrative Officer
- If needed, complete a 'referral' and contact the attendance officer contact in the LA
- A record is kept of every contact whether it's a phone call/My Concern/Meeting/email

Graded response (depending on situation)

- The Attendance Officer works closely with the HOY and the Designated Child Protection Officer and external agencies.
- The school (AO + HOY) track attendance for FSM pupils
- BroPlasTaf professional meetings will be held with the county's Educational Psychology and Wellbeing team (who co-created the School avoidance pupil support strategy 2022)
- The Attendance officer and the DCPO attend attendance enhancement training e.g. 2022.
- Phone conversations / attendance discussion emails should be logged on My Concern
- In-person meetings are held with parents when absence patterns arise or when there are concerns about attendance (HOY / Attendance Officer/SLT)
- Household visits are arranged when the need arises (AO/HOY/DCPO)
- Timetables of pupils who are on PSP are reduced when necessary (in consultation with the ALNCO)
- Meetings are held at the hub when there is school attendance anxiety
- The Welfare and Inclusion Officer works with vulnerable pupils – school avoiders
- The Pastoral Administrative Officer visits the homes of vulnerable pupils and families to offer support e.g paying for transport
- County Attendance Posters are displayed throughout the school and classrooms and the importance of attendance is discussed with pupils

Support for families and learners

- Pupils/families are referred to Family Support
- Mental health services are promoted e.g The Hangout
- Educational Psychologist Consultation / In-Support Service for school are used
- TAC meetings are held
- Home Visits are arranged
- The Welfare and Inclusion Officer helps with individuals
- Awareness of ABSA children (following county guidelines)

APPENDIX 2 – REGISTRATION

- The register is a legal document and must be filled correctly. The register may be requested in a court of law as evidence in a prosecution for non-attendance. It will also be used for end of term reports, attainment records and references requests, and information to other schools, LEAs and external agencies.
- Glantaf uses Classcharts to register attendance in all lessons / registration sessions
- No pupil should be marked as present unless they are actually present at school or other educational activity.
- The register should not have any gaps in it.
- When a pupil arrives late, but the register is still open, the pupil should be marked late but counted as present for the session.
- When a pupil misses registration, he/she/they should be marked as unauthorised leave, unless a medical letter/phone call deemed valid is received by a parent/guardian.
- Pupils should not have access to the register.
- The headteacher is the only person who can authorise the removal of a pupil from the register – this can only be done with the agreement of the LA.
- In addition to registering once a day in a registration group, the class register is taken for each lesson. These are checked by the HOY to indicate the possibility of truancy and any pupil found to have missed a lesson.
- Being late – punctuality is a legal requirement and the parent of a pupil who is consistently late is guilty of an offence. The law treats persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents could be prosecuted if continued late arrivals are not resolved.
- Holidays - Headteachers have the discretion to grant leave for the purpose of holidays or trips with family. It is strongly advised that no holidays or day trips during term time should be authorised, but sometimes there are exceptions e.g. in a vulnerable or emergency family situation.

Registration Codes

/		Present
L	Late (Before registers close)	Present
B	Off-Site Education	Approved educational activity
D	Dual Registration i.e. currently in another school or other UCD	Approved educational activity
P	Approved Sports Activities	Approved educational activity
V	Educational Visit or Tour	Approved educational activity
J	Interview	Approved educational activity
W	Work Experience	Approved educational activity
C	Other authorised absences (not under another code)	Authorised absence
F	Approved extended family leave/holiday	Authorised absence
H	Approved family holiday	Authorised absence
I	Illness	Authorised absence
M	Medical / Dental appointment	Authorised absence
S	Study Leave	Authorised absence

E	E Exempt (No alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
R	Religious Ritual Authorized Absence	Authorised absence
T	Travellers' absence	Authorised absence
N	No reason given for the absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not included under any other code)	Unauthorised absence
G	Family Holiday (not approved or longer than what was agreed)	Unauthorised absence
U	Late (after register closes)	Unauthorised absence
X		Unauthorised absence
Y	Partial or forced closure	Unauthorised absence
Z	Pupils not yet on register	Unauthorised absence
#	School closed to every pupil	Unauthorised absence

APPENDIX 3 – PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents are responsible under the law for ensuring that their children attend the school where they are enrolled, regularly, on time, appropriately dressed and ready to learn (parents are also responsible for ensuring that their children remain in school once they are enrolled). Parents could go a long way in supporting their children's regular and punctual attendance. Parents should:

- a) take an active interest in the life and work of their child in the school
- b) attend parents' evenings and other school events, if possible;
- c) ensure their child completes their homework and goes to bed at an appropriate time;
- d) be aware of the school's communications on Classcharts;
- e) ensure their child gets to school on time every day;
- f) ensure that their child misses' school for reasons that are inevitable or justifiable only, such as illness or religious ritual days;
- g) always notify the school as soon as possible - ideally on the first morning - of any absence;
- h) confirm this in writing when the child returns to school;
- i) avoid booking family holidays during term time;
- j) speak to the school if they are concerned that their child may be reluctant to attend.

APPENDIX 4: STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

The legal framework guiding attendance is set out by the Education Acts and their associated regulations (relating to schools and Pupil Referral Units). Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states *"... the parent of each child of compulsory school age shall ensure that him/her receives a suitable full-time education for his/her age, aptitude and ability and any special educational needs he/she may have, either by attending school regularly or otherwise ... "* Section 444 further states *"Compulsory school age means children and young people should attend school from the start of the first term after their fifth birthday and are of compulsory school age until after the last Friday in June of the school year on which they have their 16th birthday"*.

No offence is committed if it can be shown that:

- the pupil has been absent with permission (authorised absence);
- that the pupil had been ill or prevented from attending by an inevitable cause;
- that the absence occurred on a day set aside for religious rituals by the religious body to which the pupil / parent belongs;
- that the school is not within the prescribed walking distance from the child's home and suitable transport arrangements were not made by the LA ; The law relating to walking distance is defined as two miles for pupils under eight and three miles for all other pupils. Distance will be measured by the nearest available walking route;

Absence from the centre **will be** authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- illness;
- medical or dental appointments that cannot be avoided
- days of religious rituals/festivals;
- exceptional family circumstances,

Absence from school **will not** be authorised for:

- shopping;
- haircut;
- missing the bus
- sleeping late;
- no school uniform;
- caring for sick brothers, sisters or parents;
- looking after the house;
- birthdays;
- holidays / day trips taken during term time

Parents are asked to make all medical and dental appointments outside of school hours where possible. Schools are required under the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 to take an attendance register twice a day: at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The accuracy of the register is important to support any statutory interventions that may be required. It should be noted that it is an offence not to maintain correct registers. The Welsh Government Education (Penalty Notice) (WG) Regulations 2013 state that Local Authorities (LA) are required by law to abide by section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to include penalty notices as one of the interventions to promote better school attendance. Sections 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996 provide that certain cases of unauthorised absence can be dealt with by penalty notice. A penalty notice is a fine of up to £120 and can be issued to a parent / carer as a result of a deficiency

APPENDIX 5 - Attendance percentage guide:

95-100% attendance	Best chance of success	Your child takes full advantage of every learning opportunity.
90-95% attendance	At least 2 weeks of learning was lost.	Your child may have to spend time catching up with work.
85-90% attendance	Missed at least 4 weeks of learning	Your child may be at risk of underachievement and may need extra support from you to keep up with work.
80-85% attendance	Missed at least 5½ weeks of learning	Your child's poor attendance has a significant impact on learning
Under 80% attendance	Missed at least 7½ weeks of learning	Your child is missing out on a broad and balanced education. You are at risk of prosecution.

APPENDIX 6 – PENALTY NOTICE

Pupils' regular and prompt school attendance and alternative provisions are a legal requirement and it is essential for pupils to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. By law, an offence occurs if a parent / carer fails to ensure their child's regular attendance at school / in other provision, and that absence is not authorised by the school.

The Local Authority is committed to continuously improving pupil achievement. There is an expectation that all pupils, whatever their circumstances or individual needs, can secure their right to high quality teaching and learning.

- Regular attendance is therefore essential if all our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.
- Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to allow children to reach their full potential during term time at school.
- Regular attendance also ensures children are safe and reduces opportunities for truancy and associated anti-social activities.

Parents / carers and pupils are supported at school level/alternative education provision to overcome barriers to regular attendance and through a wide range of assessment and intervention strategies. Sanctions of any kind should be applied only where parental cooperation in this process is either absent or considered insufficient to solve the problem observed. This additional penalty is a method of enforcing attendance where there is a reasonable expectation that its use will ensure improvement.

The key criteria for issuing penalty notices are as follows:

- a) when a pupil has missed at least 10 sessions (five school days) due to absence without permission during the term and this brings the pupil's overall attendance to under 90% in the school year (these absences do not have to be consecutive);
- b) Unauthorised absences over at least 10 sessions (5 school days) due to term-time holidays if absences take the pupil's overall attendance to under 90% in the school year to date (these absences do not have to be consecutive);
- c) consistently arriving at school late i.e. after the register closes (code 'U' as in the 2010 Code Guidance Document). 'Consistent' for the purpose of this document means at least 10 sessions in one term; these do not have to be consecutive, but should bring overall pupil attendance to under 90% in the school year to date;
- d) where parents/carers have failed to engage with the school/a or LA in efforts to improve attendance.

It should be noted that penalty notices will be sent by post only and never as a sudden action, e.g. Campaign Against Truancy.

Only schools can decide whether absence is authorised or unauthorised. The 'H' code is for where a school has agreed absence for a child within the term due to holidays, the 'G' code is for when a school decides they are not prepared to authorise a term-time holiday or exceeds the agreed time away from the school and 'F' is for agreed extended family holidays.

The All Wales Attendance Framework (2011) in relation to exceptional circumstances where a period of absence over two weeks in a year is requested states that each application should be considered individually and the criteria to be considered are listed on page 74. The Local Authority's advice is that schools should continue to be advised not to authorise absences during term time due to holidays, but that each application will be judged on an individual basis. Penalty Notices are an early intervention tool and contribute to the drive to improve school attendance and associated outcomes for our children and young people in terms of attainment.