



Ysgol Penglais School

Attendance Policy

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'SUS'.

(Chair of governors on behalf of the Governing Body)

Date: June 2023

To be reviewed: June 2026 (by the full governing body)



DESIGNATED STAFF MEMBER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE

POSITION: Senior Leader with responsibility for Attendance

CONTACT NUMBER: 01970 624811

DEPUTY STAFF MEMBER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE AT THE SCHOOL

POSITION: Attendance Officer

CONTACT NUMBER: 01970 621124

NOMINATED MEMBER OF THE GOVERNING BODY FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE

POSITION: Governor with responsibility for Attendance

Contacts within the Local Authority

The Team Leader Education Inclusion Service is

Miss Catrin Petche

CONTACT NUMBER: 01970 633619



RATIONALE

- The school bases its attendance policy on the guidelines as set out by the ERW Consortium.
- Whilst the legal responsibility for regular school attendance rests with Parent/Guardians, the school shares with them, and the local authority (LA), responsibility for encouraging good attendance and improving poor attendance.
- The school is required by law to maintain specific records and to produce specified information on the attendance of Students.
- Statutory obligation apart, the school is committed to improvements in attendance standards as a direct stimulus to raising Student achievement.
- Poor attendance is destructive of educational achievement, undermines the well-being of each Student and demoralises staff.
- The LA has a statutory duty to ensure that a child for whom they are responsible is receiving suitable education and, if a registered Student at school, this means attending school regularly and on time.

OBJECTIVES

- To promote good attendance as this is vital to educational achievement.
- To convey clearly to Parent/Guardians and Students that:
 - regular attendance is essential;
 - unauthorised absence and persistent lateness is not acceptable;
 - only the headteacher in the context of the law can approve absence;
 - Parental/Guardian condoned, unjustifiable absence will be investigated and will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- To keep records of attendance which:
 - clearly distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence by Students;
 - provide accurate information on actual attendance to enable monitoring and evaluation of school attendance rates through centrally held statistics.
- To build on existing good practice that fosters a positive attitude to good attendance by:
 - responding rapidly to Student absence;
 - recognising Students who maintain 'excellent', 'good' and 'improving' attendance records.
- To be sensitive to situations where regular attendance patterns are disrupted by external factors such as family bereavement.

STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES



The legal framework governing attendance is set by the Education Acts and their associated regulations (which relate to schools and Pupil Referral Units).

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that "...the Parent/Guardian of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/ her to receive full time education suitable to his/ her age, aptitude and ability and to any special education needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise..."

Section 444 further states "...the Parent/Guardian of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable by law..."

Compulsory school age means that children and young people should attend school from the start of the first term commencing after their fifth birthday and are of compulsory school age until after the last Friday in June of the school year in which they have their 16th birthday

An offence is not committed if it can be demonstrated that:

- the Student was absent with leave (authorised absence);
- the Student was ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause;
- the absence occurred on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the Student/ Parent/Guardian belongs;
- the school is not within the prescribed walking distance of the child's home and suitable transport arrangements have not been made by the LA;. The law relating to walking distance effectively is defined as two miles for Students under eight and three miles for all other Students. Distance will be measured by nearest available walking route;

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

- sickness;
- unavoidable medical or dental appointments;
- days of religious observance;
- exceptional family circumstances,

Absence from school will not be authorised for:

- shopping;
- haircuts;



- missed bus;
- overslept;
- no uniform;
- looking after brothers, sisters or unwell Parent/Guardians;
- minding the house;
- birthdays;
- holidays / day trips taken in term time (unless the Headteacher considers that there are exceptional circumstances).

Parent/Guardians are asked to make all medical and dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible.

Schools are required under the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 to take an attendance register twice a day: at the start 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 accurate registers.

The Welsh Government (WG) Education (Penalty Notice)(Wales) Regulations 2013 states that Local Authorities (LAs) are required by law to adhere to the Education Act 1996 section 444 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 way of a penalty notice. A penalty notice is a fine of up to £120 and may be issued to a Parent/Guardian as a result of a child's regular non-attendance at school / education provision.

The school adheres to the Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices as agreed and adopted by the local authority, and therefore may request the local authority to issue a penalty notice in certain cases.

PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

Clear systems and procedures will govern response to all Student absence. The school will follow the 'Procedures for Non Attendance' flowchart as agreed by the ERW Consortium.

The school adheres to the descriptors received from ERW.

95-100% attendance	Best chance of success	Your child is taking full advantage of every learning opportunity.
90-95% attendance	At least 2 weeks of learning missed	Satisfactory. Your child may have to spend time catching up with work.
85-90% attendance	At least 4 weeks of learning missed	Your child may be at risk of underachieving and may need extra support from you to catch up with work.
80-85% attendance	At least 5 ½ weeks of learning missed	Your child's poor attendance has a significant impact on learning.
Below 80% attendance	At least 7½ weeks of learning missed	Your child is missing out on a broad and balanced education. You are at risk of prosecution.

The school encourages good attendance and punctuality by;

- creating a caring and nurturing environment whereby Students feel safe and appreciated as young adults;
- ensuring that attendance and punctuality are recognised within the whole school reward system, eg positive behaviour points, and attendance levels considered before a Student is eligible for school trips;
- developing positive relationships with Parent/Guardians and external agencies working with the family/ Student;
- monitoring and evaluating the early intervention strategies adopted by the school;
- working closely with multi agency colleagues and the Education Inclusion Service to improve attendance and punctuality;
- monitoring attendance data and trends and reporting this information termly to the Governing Body.



Specific actions

- The school will make its policy on attendance clear to Parent/Guardians and students through: the initial transition meeting prior to admission and also in regular correspondence.
- The school will also communicate the importance of attendance to Parent/Guardians and Students through assemblies, the school prospectus, newsletters and the school website / Facebook page.
- If no contact is received by the Parent/ Guardian of an absent Student on the first morning of the absence, a telephone call is made by the school's administration staff to investigate the reason for the absence. If the school is not able to contact the family then this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- Details of the absence are recorded, if later received, and discussed with the headteacher and a decision will be made with regards to authorisation as soon as possible. The headteacher may ask the Education Inclusion Service for advice with regards to this but the decision to authorise any absence remains with the school.
- If the Student is registered as a Child in Need or on the Child Protection register and absent from school without reason, then the school will contact Social Services as soon as possible.
- If an absence remains unexplained for 3 consecutive days then arrangements could be made to visit the home.
- When a Student returns to school from an absence, but no explanation is offered, families will be contacted.
- The Family Engagement Officer will work with those whose attendance is a cause for concern and will support in school and with the family.
- A letter will also be sent out if a Student is persistently late to school.
- Ultimately, if an attendance matter cannot be resolved by the school and the appropriate steps have been followed (as outlined in the 'Procedures for Non Attendance document), then a referral will be made to the LA Service for further investigation.



Penglais/LEA Attendance Targets & Protocols

In order to reach the Local Authority target for attendance the following monitoring protocols will apply to students dropping below the required attendance trigger points;

- At 95% Parent/Guardians will be contacted by letter informing them that if there continues to be a downward trend in the students attendance and that further non-attendance will result in a Parent/Guardian meeting.*
- If there is no improvement then a meeting is arranged with the Head of Year, the Inclusion Officer and Parent/Guardians will be required to attend.*
- 3 weeks after the meeting and should there be no further improvement in attendance then an Informal Warning Letter will be issued by the LEA.

Should this intervention be unsuccessful then either a referral or penalty notice will follow.

***Monitoring protocols are at the discretion of the Attendance Officer, Head of Year & Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance. Enforcement of such protocols are dependent upon individual cases.**

The school will also:

- ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures, registration regulations and education law relating to school attendance;;
- complete school registers at the start of the morning session and afternoon session
- stress to parents/guardians the importance of contacting the school as early as possible on the first day of absence;
- promote positive staff attitudes to Students returning after absence;
- consult with all members of the school's community and LA Service in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy;
- ensure regular evaluation of attendance by the Governing Body;
- work towards ensuring all Students are supported and valued and so want to attend school.

The Designated Member of Staff



Attendance is the responsibility of all staff. There is, however, a designated member of staff for attendance matters and all staff are able to discuss individual Student attendance with this person. The Designated Member of Staff for Attendance:

- monitors the school's registers;
- liaises with teaching staff, in particular Heads of Year;
- meets with the LA Officer on a regular pre-arranged basis, along with the family Engagement Officer;
- refers to other agencies if appropriate;
- refers to the school nurse if there is support needed regarding medical issues;
- oversees the use of standardised letters to Parent/Guardians addressing specific aspects of attendance and requiring Parent/Guardian response,
- arranges for an attendance meeting in the case of repeated, unexplained absences (school will consider inviting the named governor for attendance to such a meeting);
- ensures that the LA Officer's role is known and understood in school.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

Parent/Guardians are responsible in law for ensuring that their children attend the school at which they are registered, regularly, on time, properly dressed and in a fit condition to learn (Parent/Guardians are also responsible for ensuring that their children stay at school once they have registered).

Parent/Guardians can do a great deal to support the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parent/Guardians should:

- a) take an active interest in their child's school life and work;
- b) attend Parent/Guardians' evenings and other school events, if possible;
- c) ensure that their child completes his/her homework and goes to bed at an appropriate time;
- d) be aware of letters from school which their child brings home; logs into ParentMail and Classcharts to ensure that they are fully informed;
- e) ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day;
- f) ensure that their child only misses school for reasons which are unavoidable or justified, such as illness or days of religious observance;
- g) always notify the school on the first morning of any absence;



- h) avoid booking family holidays during term-time;
- i) talk to the school if they are concerned that their child may be reluctant to attend.

REGISTRATION

Keeping the registers

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. 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, records of achievement and reference requests, and information for other schools, LAs and external agencies.

- No Student should be marked present unless actually in attendance at school or other agreed educational activity.
- The register should not have missing marks.
- When a Student arrives late but the register is still open, the Students should be marked as late but counted as present for the session.
- When a Student misses registration, she/ he should be marked as an unauthorised absence, unless a medical letter/ phone call by Parent/Guardian is received and deemed to be genuine.
- Students should not have access to the register.
- The headteacher is the only person who can authorise that a Student be removed from the register – this can only be done with the agreement of the LA.
- In addition to daily morning registration in form groups, a class register is taken for every lesson throughout the day and the one for Lesson 4 is the afternoon's register. These are checked by the Head of Year to identify possible truancy and any Student found to have missed a lesson.

Lateness

A Student's punctuality is a legal requirement and the Parent/Guardian of a Student who is persistently late is guilty of an offence. The law treats persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and Parent/Guardians can be prosecuted if persistent late arrival is not resolved.

Holidays

The Headteacher has the discretionary power to grant leave for the purpose of a family holiday and will consider every case on an individual basis. However, family



holidays during term time will not normally be authorised and the school will only agree to absence for a family holiday if they believe there are special circumstances which warrant it. The school will only agree to absence of more than 10 school days in a school year if they believe there are exceptional circumstances.

Registration Codes

/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Off Site Education
C	Other Authorised Circumstances
D	Dual Registered i.e Present at another school or PRU
E	Excluded (No alternative provision made)
G	Family holiday (Not agreed)
H	Family holiday (Agreed)
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (Before the registers closed)
M	Medical / Dental Appointment
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised Absence (Not covered by other code)
P	Approved Sporting Activity
R	Religious Observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller Absence
U	Late (after registers closed)



V	Educational Visit or Trip
W	Work experience
Y	Partial or Enforced closure
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
#	School closed to all Students
Z	Students not on roll yet

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if changes are made.