



Ysgol Gyfun

PENYRHEOL
Comprehensive School

Attendance Policy

Date of Policy:	June 2024
Adopted:	
Last Review:	
Member of Staff Responsible:	Ms Emma Rees
Governor Sub-Committee Responsible:	Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion

BELONG
PARCHU

THRIVE
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RESPECT
PERTHYN

Attendance Policy

The importance of good school attendance for all learners

Regular school attendance has a positive effect on children and young people and a strong impact on learner outcomes, standards and progression. Within this, regular attendance supports the development of literacy and numeracy skills, and on the conceptual understanding needed for further study and success in the workplace. Analysis shows that examination outcomes link strongly to attendance rates, for example, where a modest increase in absence can lower outcomes. Lessons missed can mean missing key information, skills and ideas.

Good attendance also has a positive effect on emotional and physical wellbeing. Establishing good attendance patterns from an early age is vital for social development. For example, the more time a child spends with other children in the classroom and as part of broader school-organised activities, the more chance they have of making friends, of feeling included, and of developing social skills, confidence and self-esteem. Conversely, extended absence from school is linked with behavioural and social problems. These effects can be long lasting and can affect a young person's mental health and their long-term life chances. Absences can start a negative cycle, where learners start to be absent for reasons such as bullying or not coping with school work, with prolonged absence only likely to make the situation harder to resolve. The inter-relationship between attendance and wellbeing is considered so strong that attendance is often considered a proxy measure for learner wellbeing.

Attending school also supports learners' wider development as full and rounded members of society. The Curriculum for Wales is based on four purposes that demonstrate the breadth of the academic, wellbeing and social benefits that learners gain by attending school. Because of the well-established links between attendance and attainment, wellbeing and citizenship, improving attendance has long been an important policy aim for governments, local authorities and individual schools. Internationally, the advantages of education are such that the right to a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities is one of the seven core aims of the Welsh Government based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

[\(Belonging, engaging and participating Guidance on improving learner engagement and attendance – Welsh Government 2023\)](#)

Penyrheol Comprehensive School fully endorses this belief. The raising of attendance is given priority in the School Development Plan and it anticipates all staff complying with the clear and detailed guidelines for register keeping, the effective working procedures for detecting and dealing with non-attendance and its closely associated problem of lateness. In Penyrheol we work hard to adopt a positive and proactive approach towards attendance matters and encourage parents to take an active role in the schooling of their children, as this can play a major role in improving levels of attendance and punctuality and in reducing absenteeism.



Some key actions which can support positive attendance include the following:

- Building positive relationships when children first start school.
- Providing clear guidance and information on attendance and the school's expectations.
- Allowing parents to feedback their views on attendance and to be involved in co-constructing the policy and approaches that the school adopt.

Along with all other secondary schools in the City and County of Swansea, Penyrheol operates a computerised attendance recording system. This enables attendance records to be processed on computer, allowing immediate access to individual pupil data and whole school attendance data.

As with any form of registration process however, the computerised attendance data will only be of value to the school as long as individual class registers are scrupulously kept, according to agreed procedures, by all participating staff and as long as careful housekeeping are maintained by the Attendance team. It is a combination of these methods, supported by close working relationships with parents/carers and pupils which has secured significant improvement in pupil attendance.

Staff Guidelines for Marking Computerised Registers

All staff have access to registers using Class Charts. Accessing the register is done via the homepage which is unique to every member of staff. Teachers will see their timetable for the day displayed on the homepage.

It is important to note that absence codes are issued by WAG and it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the most current codes are in use and that staff are aware of any changes.

Lateness Procedures

Pupils arriving late, after the registration period, MUST report to the Attendance Officer in PAWB and sign in. A late mark will be assigned thereby recording the pupil present on school premises. Any pupil found disregarding this Health and Safety requirement, should be reported to their Head of Year for a warning and for monitoring procedures to be implemented.

Similarly, pupils who are required to leave the school premises MUST report to the Attendance Officer in PAWB.

a) their leaving of school premises to be noted for Health and Safety procedures



b) to show appointment cards / letters if appropriate

c) an orange card will be issued to pupils so this can be shown to reception – this will allow pupils to be allowed to leave the school premises.

Punctuality to lessons

Regular incidents of lateness as well as being unsatisfactory, may, if not discouraged, lead eventually to absenteeism. Head of Year track and monitor the punctuality of pupils in their Year group.

If a pupil is late on three occasions within a week a detention will be issued by the Head of Year. Pupils can place on a punctuality report and parents are informed of punctuality issues by receiving a letter home.

Parental Responsibilities and School Procedures following pupil absences

It is believed that early intervention following an absence will prevent pupils drifting into more frequent or prolonged absences. The fact that the pupil knows their absence will be noted, and that there will be a prompt following up, may in itself be a sufficient deterrent for many having unnecessary absences. Parents/carers are required to contact the school on the first day of absence, if no contact is made the Attendance Officer makes a 'first day' call. The parents are required to contact the school on the third day of absence to clarify the situation. If no contact is made the Attendance Officer will again contact the parents/guardians on the third day of absence. The relevant Head of Year will routinely contact the parents of pupils who systematically lose time from school and record the reason given for the absence.

The appropriate code will then be assigned to the absence, where it is deemed appropriate, thereby authorising it.

Where an absence occurs and phone contact has not been established between the parent and the Attendance Officer or the relevant Head of Year, an explanation for the absence can be provided via a message to the attendance officer on Class Charts.

Truancy

If, by following procedures outlined above, it is established that the pupil was in fact sent to school and that the parent was unaware of the absence(s), the period(s) of absence will be coded by the Attendance Officer working with the Head of Year as a truancy.

Attendance Procedures for Staff.

1. When a pupil is marked N in a lesson, MP Gary Lloyd will email teaching staff to check if pupil is late to the lesson.



2. If register hasn't been changed after 10 mins, GL will check classroom to see if pupil is present.
3. If pupil isn't in lesson, SDR will be notified to see if they can locate pupil.
4. If pupil is still absent, truancy calls will be sent out to parents.
5. Period 5 lessons - parents will need to be contacted by 2.20pm if pupil is not on school site.

This is a vital part of our Safeguarding Procedures and we staff must ensure that registers are completed promptly and accurate.

Internal Truancy

Truancy lessons after registration can have the same adverse effect on a pupil's progress as other forms of absence. All teaching staff are therefore required to use the electronic attendance register, lesson monitor, for each group they teach. This registration of attendance is to precede the lesson and should always be carried out in a formal manner in order that pupils become accustomed to the fact that an attendance check will always be made by the teacher. Furthermore, recording pupil attendance at the very beginning of each lesson, ideally within the first 10 minutes, may also deter lateness, especially if staff routinely discipline those who incur an unacceptable number of 'lates' on their class registers with a detention.

Regular truancy spot checks will be carried out by the Attendance Officer using the extensive reports available within Class Charts. Staff will monitor attendance when they register their classes and they can raise concerns with the Attendance Officer if they note any irregularities i.e pupil missing from registration, missing from previous lesson etc. This can be done without disruption to lessons and the Attendance Officer will be able to note absences from the class register and compare these with the official daily register.

Any pupil found to be truanting from a lesson may be checked against registers in previous lessons for that day. If additional absences have taken place the pupil's official attendance mark will be cancelled and coded as truancy for that specific morning or afternoon session.



Sanctions imposed for truancy

In all cases of truancy, the Attendance Officer will notify will inform parents/carers that truancy has taken place. This can be done either by telephoning, or sending a message via Class Charts.

Persistent Truancy

In cases of persistent truancy, the pupil should be placed on a daily report and his/her attendance monitored. Following identification of repeated truancy, the pupil is referred to the Head of Year. The sanction can be repeated if truancy occurs again. The pupil will be monitored on a lesson by lesson basis by the class teachers and the Attendance Officer. If there are concerns relevant Head of Year will contact parents/carers.

Term-time Holidays

The Headteacher will consider every application individually. Policy is NOT to grant leave of absence for a holiday other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Time off school for family holidays is not a right. An application must be made in writing, with appropriate evidence, in advance of the intended holiday. Please address all correspondence to Ms Emma Rees, Assistant Headteacher.

The Headteacher will consider authorising holidays for:

- service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during term-time;
- when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis;
- parents who are subject to a strict and non-negotiable holiday rota and evidence is provided to this effect.

Expected Long Term Absence

In the event of expected long-term absence (more than 4 weeks), due to injury or other health

reasons, Head of Year and the Team Around the Child should make the necessary referral to initiate Home Tuition provided by the Authority.

Irregular Attendance

Where concern regarding irregular attendance exists at a subject level, a lesson attendance/behavioural referral should be completed and passed on to the Head of Year for further enquiries to be made.



Where infrequent attendance exists and intervention by the Head of Year and the EWO fail to make a significant improvement, a formal written warning from the EWO should be sent

to the pupil's parent or guardian, giving details of attendance over a specified period of time.

This particular document:

- Provides the parent with an accurate record of their child's attendance.
- Invites them to attend a meeting with the EWO and Head of Year to discuss the situation.

These may bring to light changes in family circumstances which could be making regular attendance very difficult. Should this be the case, then the school would be in a better position to understand the events surrounding the absences and therefore be able to advise or even initiate assistance which may prevent further absenteeism and to authorise the current absence.

Where such circumstances do not exist, these documents serve as a clear warning of further action being taken that could well lead to a prosecution for non-attendance. This procedure will be carried out by the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Penalty notice statement for school to include in their attendance policies

Education Welfare Officer

The school currently has the benefit of a shared Education Welfare Officer who is able to provide intensive input to help address issues relating to attendance, attitude and behaviour.

Through specific interventions she is able to support children who would otherwise be persistent non-attenders.

The EWO works in conjunction with the Attendance Officer, Head of Year, CFLOW and Assistant Headteacher.

Dissemination of the Attendance Policy

Copies of the Attendance policy will be reviewed annually and copies given to all teaching Staff and Governors. A suitable summary of the document will be placed in pupil planners.

Review Procedure for the Attendance Policy

The Attendance Policy will be reviewed annually. Any updates / changes will be made and communicated to staff, governors and parents & pupils.



Penalty notice statement for school to include in their attendance policies and websites.

The Welsh Government (WG) Education (Penalty Notice)(Wales) Regulations 2013 states that Local Authorities (LA's) 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 absences 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 / carer as a result of a child's regular non-attendance at school / educational provision.

The school adheres to the code of conduct for penalty notices as issued by ERW and agreed by the Local Authority, and therefore may request the local authority to issue a penalty notice in certain cases.

Fixed Penalty Notices

If a fixed penalty notice is issued to parents, these will only be sent out when authorised by the Assistant Headteacher, Ms. E. Rees. All families will be supported to try and engage their child back into education. A fixed penalty will only be issued in extreme circumstances.



