

Ysgol Pentrehafod

Pentrehafod School



Attendance Policy

Polisi Presenoldeb

Reviewed November 2021

Adolygwyd Tachwedd 2021

Next Review November 2022

Adolygiad Nesaf Tachwedd 2022

Reviewed by

Mr Evans, Assistant Head Teacher

Article 17

"You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being"





Attendance Policy

General principles

The All Wales Attendance Framework (2011) states that:

“The Welsh Assembly Government’s policies for children and young people have their basis in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We believe it is vital that children and young people have access to appropriate and effective learning opportunities and provision.”

The framework also states that:

“A child’s success at school is likely to be affected negatively by poor attendance. Those who do not attend regularly may not be able to keep up with their work and in a busy school day it can sometimes be difficult for schools to find the extra time needed to help a child catch up. In addition, research shows that children who are not in school are more vulnerable and can be easily drawn into crime and anti-social behaviour and are more likely to be unemployed after leaving school.”

The school fully endorses these principles which underpin the school’s attendance policy. The school’s code of conduct (Ready, Respectful, Safe) is also at the heart of the attendance policy. The raising of attendance is given priority in the School Development Plan and it is anticipated that all staff will comply with the guidelines for accurate record keeping for attendance and punctuality.

Procedures for recording and monitoring attendance

Along with other secondary schools in Swansea, Pentrehafod School operates an electronic attendance recording system. This enables attendance records to be processed electronically, allowing immediate access to individual pupil data and whole school data. Since 2018, the school has adopted the use of PARS to record attendance. This package is integrated with SIMS and exchanges data seamlessly. All staff have access to SIMS and PARS in classrooms, staff bases and in external teaching areas, e.g. Sports Hall.

The codes used to indicate pupil attendance statuses are found in Appendix A of this policy. It is important to note that absence codes are issued by Welsh Government 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. Codes that are prepopulated or inputted by the PAWB Attendance Team should not be overwritten by the class teacher. Any anomalies or queries should be raised by the class teacher via email or phone call to the PAWB Attendance Team; this step acts as an additional step to ensure that records are accurate.



Form tutors are expected to take the register and mark any absent pupils with an N code (unless a code has already been inputted by the PAWB Attendance Team). When pupils move to lesson one, it is required that class teachers mark the register within the first ten minutes of the lesson, again using an N code for absent pupils (unless a code has already been inputted). The PAWB Attendance team will then scrutinise registers for registration and lesson one to identify pupils marked absent with an N code. The PAWB Attendance Team check the school's attendance email account and voicemails for any parent/carer messages explaining any absenteeism; the team also receive messages from reception about absenteeism from parents/carers. The PAWB Attendance Team update registers with appropriate codes in light of any new attendance information they've received and will then proceed to contact home for pupil who have unexplained absences. This is done in the main via text messaging but is also done via phone call. Our most vulnerable pupils are targeted first as part of our unexplained absence response as a matter of safeguarding and child protection.

If pupils fail to attend class but are recorded as being present in school, the class teacher will alert the PAWB Attendance Team via email or phone call who will then follow up with the appropriate actions. This is particularly important for pupils who are on safety plans in order to safeguard these pupils. All classrooms are now equipped with phones which supports effective communication between the PAWB Attendance Team and class teachers.

Procedures for pupils arriving late to school and to lessons

Pupils arriving late, after the registration period, must report to reception and sign in using the computerised Inventory system. They then must attend class immediately. Any pupil found disregarding this health and safety requirement should be reported to the relevant Learning Leader for a warning and for monitoring procedures to be implemented. Similarly, pupils who are required to leave the school premises must report to the relevant Learning Leader in the first place and then to Reception to sign out before leaving. These pupils must present a permission slip to reception upon leaving as proof of reasons.

Daily data sheets for lateness are scrutinised by the PAWB Attendance Team, Learning Leaders, Raising Standards Leaders and Assistant Headteacher. When initially recognised by the number of late codes (L), the pupil should be warned by the Form Tutor and referred to the Learning Leader if the situation persists. Learning Leaders will contact parents and carers to discuss poor punctuality and issue an after school detention which will reflect the amount of time lost through lateness. Any after school detentions require twenty four hour notice to parents and carers unless agreed otherwise with parents and carers.



Detentions for persistent lateness will be routinely imposed by the Learning Leaders for those who continue to incur late marks. These detentions are logged and monitored by Learning Leaders.

All teaching staff are required to use PARS in order to take registers for the classes they teach. The register should be taken in a formal manner and pupils encouraged to respond in Welsh. Pupil attendance should be recorded in the first ten minutes of a lesson. Pupils arriving late should be marked as with a late code and the number of minutes late recorded on PARS.

Parent/carer responsibilities and school procedures following pupil absence

It is believed that early intervention following an absence will prevent pupils drifting into more frequent or prolonged absences. A member of the PAWB Attendance Team will routinely contact parents and carers of pupils who systematically lose time from school to determine reasons for absence and update school records. The appropriate code will then be assigned to the absence including any unauthorised absence. If the school fails to make contact with parents and carers to determine reasons for absence then a member of the PAWB Team will conduct a house visit. Cases of continued failure to make contact with parents and carers over attendance or persistent unauthorised absence will be escalated to the Education Welfare Service.

If, by following the procedures outlined above, it is established that the pupil was in fact sent to school and that the parent or carer was unaware of the absence(s), the period(s) of absence will be marked by the PAWB Attendance Team as truancy.

Internal Truancy

If pupils fail to attend class but are recorded as being present in school, the class teacher will alert the PAWB Attendance Team via email or phone call who will then follow up with the appropriate actions. This is particularly important for pupils who are on safety plans in order to safeguard these pupils.

Internal truancy checks are also carried out by the PAWB Attendance Team who will use PARS and SIMS to spot any patterns or identify individual truancy incidents.

In all cases of truancy the PAWB Attendance team will notify the Learning Leader, who in turn will inform parents and carers. The pupil will then be issued with a Learning Leader detention.



In cases of persistent truancy, the pupil should be placed on a daily report to closely monitor attendance and punctuality. The pupils then reports to the relevant Learning Leader at break and lunch to show teacher signatures as proof of attendance. The report card should also be signed by parents and carers.

Irregular attendance

Where concern regarding irregular attendance exists at a subject level, the subject leader should inform the Learning Leader and the PAWB Attendance Team for further enquiries to be made.

Where infrequent attendance exists and intervention by the learning Leader, PAWB Attendance Team and EWO fail to make significant improvement, a formal written warning from the school should be sent to the pupil's parent/carer giving details of attendance over a specified period of time. Any actions and interventions should be logged by Learning Leaders and PAWB Attendance Team.

Expected long-term absence

In the event of expected long-term (more than four weeks), due to injury or other health reasons, the Learning Leader should make the necessary referral to initiate Home Tuition provided by the Local Authority.

Parent/carer request for term time absence for holidays

The Local Authority is fully supportive of the national drive to raise school attendance, recognising the crucial link between attendance and attainment. Whilst considering each holiday request on its merits, head teachers play an important role in scrutinising term time absence and should properly apply any discretion based upon their knowledge of the pupils and their families. Where possible and appropriate, requests for absence during term time should be discouraged, especially during periods when external examinations are taking place. Parents and carers should be advised to avoid term-time disruption and reminded of the link between attendance and attainment.

The following factors are considered before granting leave of absence:

- Age of the child
- Time of year of the proposed trip
- Length and purpose of the holiday
- Impact on continuity of learning



- Circumstances in the family
- Wishes of the parents/carers
- Overall attendance patterns
- The stage of education
- The child's progress in school
- Any cultural issues
- Benefits to the child's wellbeing or educational development
- Any child protection or safeguarding concerns
- Any guidance or clarifications issued by Welsh Government

The Welsh Government advises the following when schools receive requests for absence to observe religious festivals:

- Any application made by a parent for their child to receive an authorised absence for religious observance is treated with sensitivity and considered carefully and fairly
- Absence should only be authorised for a date 'exclusively set apart by the religious body' as detailed above
- If a date has not been 'exclusively set apart' by the relevant religious body, it is suggested that the head teacher enquires whether the learner/s can fulfil their religious observance outside of school hours
- If a festival falls on a weekend or during a school holiday, absence taken on a school day for that festival would not be authorised
- Similarly, absence taken on a school day either side of a festival that has been 'exclusively set apart' by the relevant religious body would not be authorise

Dates for religious festivals are identified in the 'School attendance and religious festivals guidance 2021' (Welsh Government, 2021).

For term-time holidays, approval must be sought in advance with a request submitted, ideally, two school weeks in advance to enable sufficient time for consideration. Head teachers cannot by law authorise a term-time holiday after the event and in such cases the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

The school has a discretionary power to authorise up to ten days absence during a school year for family holidays during term time.



Appendix A –

Attendance Codes (Guidance on school attendance codes – Welsh Government, 2016)

Code	Description
Λ	Present at registration
L	Late but arrived before the register closed
B	Educated off-site (not dual registration)
D	Dual registered (i.e. present at another school or at a PRU)
P	Approved sporting activity
V	Educational visit or trip
J	Interview
W	Work experience (not work based training)
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)
F	Agreed extended family holiday
H	Agreed family holiday
I	Illness
M	Medical or dental appointment
S	Study leave
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance
T	Traveller absence
N	No reason for the absence provided yet
O	Other unauthorised (not covered by other codes or descriptions)
G	Family holiday (not agreed or in excess of agreement)
U	Late and arrived after the register closed
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils
Y	Partial and forced closure
Z	Pupil not on roll yet
#	School closed to all pupils



Appendix B –

Codes for use during the Coronavirus Pandemic (School Attendance Guidance: Coronavirus – Welsh Government, 2021)

Code	Meaning	Statistical category
/	Attending school in the am	Present
\	Attending school in the pm	Present
[Remote learning due to COVID-19 (where a learner is shielding or self-isolating)	Not required to attend
;	Illness due to COVID-19	Authorised absence
Y	School-directed absence due to COVID-19 (to include remote learning)	Not required to attend

Document Ratification

This Policy was presented to Governors on **24th November 2021**.

It will be reviewed in **November 2022** or if National and Local Policy or Guideline is updated.

Signed.....

Mrs M Hughes
Chair of Governors