

# Llwydcoed Primary School

## Attendance Policy March 2024



Growing, Striving,  
Achieving and Believing

# Llwydcoed Primary Policy on Attendance

## Introduction

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

## Definitions

### Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

### Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

## If a child is late/absent

When a child is absent unexpectedly or late, the class teacher will undertake the following procedure

- Pupils arriving late for registration i.e. up to 9.30am will be entered using the appropriate code L = late for registration
- If a pupil has not arrived by 9.30am (close of registration) they will be entered as late -U
- Inform the school clerk, who will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian for a reason (First response).
- Children/parents arriving late should let the School Secretary (in the office) know they have arrived in school in order that they are recorded on the late register

- Record the absence on the electronic register as an N if no reason is given

When the child returns to school, an explanation should be given for the absence.

A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child. Any safeguarding concerns need to be reported to the Safeguarding Lead (Headteacher).

### **Repeated unauthorised absences/lateness**

The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child is repeatedly late or unauthorised, the parents or guardians will be sent a letter and eventually asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services (AWO), who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

*To comply with The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013, the school will operate in accordance with the local authority's Code of Conduct for fixed penalty notices for regular non-attendance at school. It remains the discretion of the head teacher to authorise absences in line with The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 attendance codes and supplementary guidance provided by the local authority.*

The criteria for issuing fixed penalty notices:

- Where a pupil has accrued 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absences in the current term;
- Where a pupil has been persistently late on 10 or more occasions in the current term, arriving more than 30 minutes after the registration period;
- Where a parent refuses to engage with a school in the interest of improving their child's school attendance levels;
- Where a pupil is repeatedly caught truanting in public places during school hours;
- Where a holiday in term time has been requested but has been unauthorised. Given the need to ensure high attendance, the LA have reviewed the impact of holidays taken in term-time. They are now asking headteachers not to authorise requests for a holiday in term-time. There is no right that enables parents and carers to take a child out of school for a term-time holiday. We realise that there will be certain exceptional circumstances when it would not be appropriate to unauthorise a holiday absence, and therefore, the following reasons have been agreed that a headteacher may approve such a request:
  - Families of serving armed forces personnel;

- Parent or child experiencing a life limiting illness;
  - Families that have suffered an acute trauma.
- **Holiday requests will not be authorised** where a pupil's attendance is **already below 95%, during the Easter-Whitsun half term, and during September**. This is because of disruption to important assessments, and settling in to new classes
  - Parents should complete a holiday notification form, no later than four weeks in advance, available from the office.
  - When calculating pupil absence for holiday requests, we consider all absences during the previous calendar year. For example, if we receive a holiday request for a week in October, we calculate the attendance percentage from October the previous year. NB. 365 days before the last school day prior to the start of the holiday.

*(Eg. Attendance from October 3rd 2022 - October 3rd 2023 = 92.7%. Therefore, the holiday will not be authorised)*

Fixed penalty notices will offer a means of intervention to prevent individual cases becoming persistent non-attendance cases and progressing to the local magistrates' court. Only one notice will be issued to a parent/carer (who has parental responsibility) in any one academic year but notices can be issued for more than one child in that family. A fixed penalty notice is a £60 fine if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days of receipt. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 42 days, the local authority must either prosecute parents/carers for the offence or withdraw the notice.

### **Long-term absence**

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

### **Rewards for good attendance**

All the children who have Over 95 and 100 percent attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the last assembly of the term. There are special certificates for any child who has over 95 and 100 percent attendance for a whole year.

Each child has an attendance sticker card throughout the school. Each child receives a sticker for each full week in school. After 10 full weeks they will be given a special attendance sticker. After 20 full weeks they will be given a special attendance pencil from the headteacher. After

30 full weeks they will get a chance to celebrate with the headteacher and be given a special treat.

### **Attendance targets**

The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years and related to the FSM index. These targets are made known to the children and during the weekly Celebration Assembly each class' attendance is announced.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will be given termly reports from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

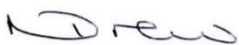
The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus, and in the annual governors' report.

Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body annually, or earlier if considered necessary.

**Natalie Drew (Head Teacher)**



**Signed Chair of Governors:**



**Rhian Grundy**

**Date: March 2024**

**Review: March 2025**