



YSGOL BRO GWAUN

ATTENDANCE POLICY POLISI PRESENOLDEB

Adolygiad/Review: Blynnyddol / Annually

Adolygiad nesaf/Next Review: 10/2024

Wedi Cytuno gan Bwyllgor y Llywodraethwyr

Approved by Governors Committee

Arwyddwyd/Signed:

Pennaeth/Headteacher: _____

Llywodraethwr/Governor: _____

Rhiant/Parent: _____

Disgybl/Pupil: _____

Dyddiad/Date: _____

ATTENDANCE POLICY

POLISI PRESENOLDEB

Rheoli Dogfennau / Document Control :

Fersiwn/ Version	Adolygiad/ Reviewed	Crynodeb o Newidiadau / Summary of changes	Wedi cytuno / Approved:
1.0		Original document	02/2021
1.1	07/2022	Changes to Policy Front Covers	
1.2	10/2023	Updates to Attendance Lead Personnel	

Mae copi cyflawn o'r polisi hwn ar gael o swyddfa'r ysgol ar gais, gyda dyddiad cymmeradwyaeth, dyddiad adolygu a llofnod bob rhanddeiliad oedd yn rhan o cymmeradwyaeth polisi.

A complete copy of this policy is available from the school office upon request, they include an approval date, a review date and signatures of all stakeholders involved in the approval of the policy.

Designated staff member with responsibility for monitoring Attendance at the school:

Mr Paul Edwards – Headteacher
Contact number – 01348 872268

Deputy staff member with responsibility for monitoring Attendance at the school:

Miss Alana Finn – Deputy Headteacher
Contact number – 01348 872268

Nominated member of the Governing Body for monitoring Attendance at the school:

Ms Alison Jenkins
Ms Gian Cafolla

Contacts within the Local Authority

The named Officer within Pembrokeshire Local Authority is:

Mrs Kelly Hamid

Contact number – 01437 775022

Email – Kelly.Hamid@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

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 parents, 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 pupils.
- Statutory obligation apart, the school is committed to improvements in attendance standards as a direct stimulus to raising pupil achievement.
- Poor attendance is destructive of educational achievement, undermines the well-being of each pupil, and demoralises staff.
- The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that a child for whom they are responsible is receiving suitable education, and, if a registered pupil 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 parents and pupils 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 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 pupils;
 - 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 pupils' absence;
 - Recognising pupils 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 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 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 pupil was absent with leave (authorised absence);
- The pupil 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 pupil/parent 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 Local Authority. The law relating to walking distance effectively is defined as two miles for pupils under eight, and three miles for all other pupils. 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 – every effort should be made to get to school;

- Overslept – in such occasions;
- No uniform;
- Minding the house;
- Birthdays;
- Holidays/day trips taken in term time – these can be authorised at the Headteacher’s discretion.

Parents 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 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/carer as a result of a child’s regular not-attendance at school/education provision.

Practice and procedures

Clear systems and procedures will govern response to all pupil 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 5½ 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 pupils feel safe and appreciated as young adults;
- Ensuring that attendance and punctuality are recognised within the whole school reward system, attendance levels considered before a pupil is eligible for merit trips and trips abroad;
- Developing positive relationships with parents/carers and external agencies working with the family/pupil;
- 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 parents and pupils through: the initial transition meeting prior to admission, and in all parental meetings;
- The school will also communicate the importance of attendance to parents and pupils through assemblies, the school Prospectus, newsletters, and the School Website / Facebook page / Social media / Parent-Call / Xpressions;
- If no contact is received by the parent/carer of an absent pupil on the first morning of absence, a telephone call is made by the Attendance Clerk 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 ('O'). This will then be followed by a text message from the school to ascertain a reason for absence.
- Details of the absence is recorded, if later received and discussed with SLT attendance responsible, a decision will be made with regards to authorisation as soon as possible.
- If the pupil is registered as a Child in Need, or on the Child Protection Register, and absent from school without reason, then the school should contact Social Services as soon as possible.
- A letter will also be sent out if a pupil is persistently late to school.
- Parents and pupils will be asked to attend a 'B Great' Governor Panel meeting if persistent absenteeism persists.
- 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 Local Authority Service for further investigation.
- A request to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice can be made by the school, Police, or from within the Local authority itself, in relation to poor attendance at school.

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 and carers the importance of contacting the school as early as possible on the first day of absence;
- Promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence;
- Consult with all members of the school's community and Local Authority Service in developing and maintaining the whole school Attendance Policy;
- Ensure regular evaluation of attendance by the Governing Body;
- Work towards ensuring all pupils 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 pupil attendance with this person. The designated member of staff for attendance is Mrs Kathryn Antonen.

- Monitors the school's registers;
- Liaises with teaching staff, in particular Year Progress Managers;
- Meets with the Local Authority Officer on a regular pre-arranged basis;
- Refers to other agencies, if appropriate;
- Refers to the School Nurse, if there are doubts about the validity of an illness;
- Oversees the use of standardised letters to parents, addressing specific aspects of attendance requiring parental response;
- Arranges 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 Local Authority Officer's role is known and understood in school.

Responsibilities of parents

Parents are responsible by 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. Parents are also responsible for ensuring that their children stay at school once they have registered.

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

- Take an active interest in their child's school life and work;
- Attend Parents' Evenings and other school events, if possible;
- Ensure that their child completes his/her homework, and goes to bed at an appropriate time;
- Be aware of letters from school which their child brings home;
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day;

- Ensure that their child only misses school for reasons which are unavoidable or justified, such as illness or days of religious observance;
- Always notify the school as soon as possible of any absence, preferably on the first morning;
- Confirm this in writing when the child returns to school;
- Avoid booking family holidays during term time;
- Talk to the school if they are concerned that their child may be reluctant to attend.

Penalty Notices

Regular and punctual attendance of pupils at school and alternative provisions is both a legal requirement, and essential for pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. In law, an offence occurs if a parent/carer fails to secure their child's regular attendance at school/alternative provision, and that absence is not authorised by the school.

The Local Authority within ERW are committed to the continual raising of achievement of all their pupils. There is an expectation that all its pupils, regardless of their individual circumstances or needs, are able to secure their entitlement to high quality teaching and learning. Regular attendance is therefore critical 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 achieve their full potential during term time at school. Regular attendance also ensures that children are safe, and lessens the opportunities to become involved in truanting and associated anti-social activities.

Parents/carers and pupils are supported at a school/alternative education provision level to overcome barriers to regular attendance, and through a wide range of assessment and intervention strategies. Sanctions of any nature are for use, only where parental cooperation in this process is either absent or deemed insufficient to resolve the presenting problem. This additional sanction is a means of enforcing attendance where there is a reasonable expectation that its use will secure an improvement.

The key criteria for issuing Penalty Notices are as follows:

- When a pupil has a minimum of 10 sessions (five school days) that have been lost due to unauthorised absences during the current term, and this brings the overall pupil's attendance to below 90% in the school year (these absences do not have to be consecutive);
- Unauthorised absences of at least 10 sessions (five school days) due to holidays in term time if the absences take the overall pupil's attendance to below 90% in the school year to date (these absences do not have to be consecutive);
- Persistent late arrival at school i.e. after the register has closed ('U' code as in the Codes Guidance Document 2010). Persistent for the purpose of this document means at least 10 sessions of late arrival within a term; these do not need to be consecutive, but should bring the overall pupil's attendance to under 90% in the school year to date;
- Where parents/carers have failed to engage with the school/and or Local Authority in attempts to improve attendance.

It should be noted that Penalty Notices will only be issued by post, and never as an instant action, e.g. during a Truancy Sweep.

It is only schools who can decide whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. The code 'H' is for where a school has agreed to the absence for a child within term time due to a holiday, a 'G' code for when a school decides they are not prepared to authorise a holiday in term time, or it is in excess of the agreed time away from school, and, 'F' for an agreed Extended family holiday. The All Wales Attendance Framework (2011) with regard to exceptional circumstances where a period of absence is requested over two weeks in a year, that each request should be considered individually, and the criteria for consideration is listed on p74.

Advice from the Local Authority and from ERW is to continue to advise schools 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 drive towards improving school attendance and related outcomes for our children and young people in terms of attainment.

For further information on Penalty Notices, please refer to the Code of Conduct, which can be found on the e-portal, and also at:

www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/schoolattendance

<http://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=647,736&parentdirectoryid=646>

For enquiries, please email: educationpn@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

ERW will be reviewing the policy (Code) in 12 months.

Registration

Keeping the register:

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, reference requests, and information for other schools, Local Authorities and external agencies.

- No pupil should be marked present unless actually in attendance at school or other agreed educational activity.
- The register should not have missing marks.
- When a pupil arrives late, but the register is still open, the pupil should be marked as late but counted as present for the session.
- When a pupil misses registration, she/he should be marked as an unauthorised absence, unless a medical letter/phone call by parent is received and deemed to be genuine.

- Pupils should not have access to the register.
- The Headteacher is the only person who can authorise that a pupil be removed from the register – this can only be done with the agreement of the Local Authority.
- In addition to the legal twice daily registration requirement, a class register is taken for every lesson throughout the day. These are checked by the Attendance Clerk/YPM to identify possible truancy, and any pupil found to have missed a lesson.

Lateness

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

Holidays

Headteachers do have the discretionary power to grant leave for the purpose of a family holiday or trips. However, the ERW Consortium is strongly advising that any holidays or day trips in term time should be unauthorised, and that there should be no exceptions to this policy. The school adheres to this, and family holidays during term time will not be authorised.

Registration Codes

/	Present (am)
\	Present (pm)
B	Off Site education
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual Registered i.e. present at another school or PLC/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
Z	Pupils not on roll yet
#	School closed to all pupils

Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy This Policy will be reviewed annually.

The cost of a Penalty Notice

If a notice is required the parent will be given a 15 day warning. During this period they will have the opportunity to provide evidence which demonstrates why a notice should not be issued. It will be for the school to determine if the evidence is accepted.

There are no limits to the number of formal warnings for a penalty notice that can be issued.

Legal Practicalities.

If the school attendance does not improve the penalty notice is

£60 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice;

this rises to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days of receipt;

if the penalty notice is not paid in full by the end of the 42 days the Local Authority must either prosecute for the offence or withdraw the notice*.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid in full then the Local Authority (LA) will consider prosecution for the original offence, which is **'failing to secure the child's regular attendance at school'** under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

** only in exceptional circumstances see Code of Conduct.*

Support with School Attendance

Please remember that if there are reasons why your child is missing school then keep the school informed.

If your child is off school then speak to the school as early as possible on the first day of their absence.

Your child is expected to be in school for 190 days an academic year with 175 days off due to weekends and school holidays.

Further information on the issuing of Penalty Notices can be obtained from your child's school or from the Early Intervention Officer, Pupil Support Service.

For more information please visit
www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/schoolattendance

or email:
educationpn@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

or call:
01437 764551



School Attendance **PENALTY NOTICES**



Information for parents / carers & pupils

www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk

Penalty Notices

Welsh Government has instructed all local authorities to implement Penalty Notices under the Welsh Government Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013 from September 2014.

Pembrokeshire County Council believe that any absence from school, for whatever reason, is detrimental to a child's long term life opportunities, so should be avoided if at all possible.

A Penalty Notice is a method of intervention with the aim of seeking to secure an improvement in the child's attendance at school.

Appealing against a Penalty Notice

There is no statutory right of appeal under the Regulations, but where a parent contests the issuing of a Penalty Notice they can contact the Pupil Support Service.

Who can receive a Penalty Notice

A notice will be issued to each parent in respect of each child under section 576 of the Education Act 1996

Definition of a parent

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law).

Why should my child attend school every day

100% attendance	Best chance of success!
95% attendance	Poor attendance will impact on learning.
90% attendance	
85% attendance	Very poor attendance has a significant impact on learning.
80% attendance	

A penalty notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.

A penalty notice may be issued:

The key criteria is as follows:

When a pupil has a minimum of 10 sessions (five school days) that have been lost due to unauthorised absences* during the current term and this brings the pupil's overall attendance to below 90% in the school year to date (these absences do not have to be consecutive).

*unauthorised absences include:-

- unauthorised non-attendance at school;
- unauthorised holidays in term-time; and
- unauthorised late arrival after registration has closed.

