

Penyrheol Comprehensive School



To Achieve You Need To Believe
I Lwyddo Rhaid Credu

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Updated April 2021

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

'There is a clear link between pupil attendance and attainment' (DfES)

Introduction

This policy outlines the management of attendance and punctuality of pupils at Penyrheol Comprehensive.

Aims

- > To foster a climate where regular attendance and punctuality are valued by the school community.
- > To provide support and guidance for parents and pupils.
- > To develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- > To develop a systematic approach for gathering and analysing data.
- > To improve the overall attendance of pupils at school and reduce unauthorised absence.
- > To implement a system for rewards and sanctions.
- > To promote effective partnership with the Education Welfare Service and other agencies.

The Education (School Day School Year) (Wales) Regulations 2006 states pupils are expected to attend school for 190 days a year. The strong correlation between good attendance and high achievement is set out below:

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 will have to spend time catching up with work.
85-90% attendance	At least 4 weeks of learning missed	Your child will 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.

Practice and Procedures

The majority of registration and attendance procedures for Penyrheol are statutory requirements and they are similar to those that apply to all pupils of compulsory school age at all maintained schools. These requirements are

* Registers provide the daily record of attendance for pupils and this information can act as the initial warning system for a number of issues which may affect a child's welfare, including truancy, child protection, illegal child employment, illness and a range of home or school-based issues.

* Truancy Call is sent out on the first day of absence. If no reason for absence is given after three days, the EWO is involved.

* If a pupil is registered as Child in Need or on the Child Protection register and absent from school without reason, the response must be immediate and the CPO informed.

* Any staff following up absences by calling or visiting parents/carers rely on data entered on our SIMS system being precise. Incorrect information

about absences can undermine parents'/carers' confidence in the school.

* Accurate recording of registers is fundamental to a whole-school approach to promoting good attendance. Effective whole-school approaches rely on data to inform planning and actions. The quality of data produced by any registration system is only as good as the quality of the data that is recorded.

* Registration procedures are statutory. Schools are required to take an attendance register twice daily: at the start of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon session during lesson 5. This cannot be ignored or treated lightly as morning registration is a key activity that links directly to systems such as making contact with families on the first day of any unexplained absence and the management of punctuality. Afternoon registration is equally important in continuing vigilance and demonstrating priorities.

* The quality of registration practice is an indicator of a school's awareness and prioritisation of attendance issues and is a matter considered during Estyn inspections.

* Registers must also be available for inspection by authorised LA officers (in practice this will most often be the Education Welfare Officer assigned to the school) who are permitted to make copies of register extracts.

As well as these requirements we also adhere to the following procedures to ensure registers are maintained accurately:

* At the start of each new academic year a Pupil Data Collection sheet is issued to each pupil to update any personal information. It is important that all details of pupils are accurate, i.e. spelling of names, dates of birth, addresses, telephone numbers and emergency contact names. Pastoral Support Officers are requested via their Head of Year to update/inform the Attendance Officer of any changes of circumstances during the year.

- * SIMS reports are generated and effectively used by the Pastoral Support Officer, Attendance Officer and Head of Year to monitor attendance within the year group.
- * All staff have immediate access to the SIMS system and are able to obtain data/information in a variety of forms.
- * If Pastoral Support Officers know in advance of a pupil's impending absence e.g. medical appointments, the SIMS attendance register is updated.
- * When a new pupil enrolls in the school their name will be added to the SIMS register by the SIMS manager.
- * If a pupil is transferred to another form, the SIMS manager will automatically update the register.
- * All transfers and changes in circumstances are collated by the Pastoral Support Officers and Attendance Officer and updated on the SIMS database records.
- * A list of pupils taking part in any out-of-school activity must be given to the relevant Year Team and Attendance Officer. Lists should also be placed in each staff room or be e-mailed out to all staff.
- * Pupils who have had permission to leave the school premises during the day for any reason e.g. dental appointment must be given the accurate code on the SIMS attendance system. It is vitally important that a record is kept of pupils leaving or returning to the site in case of an emergency. Pupils should sign in and out at the Attendance Office in the annexe.
- * To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children at Penyrheol we do not remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling.
- * It is important that we respond sensitively to requests to attend family bereavements or associated events and it is up to our discretion to authorise such absences.
- * In all cases where there is a genuine crisis, we will approve absence for a child caring for a sick or disabled family member (young carers) until other arrangements can be made. We look at all such cases sympathetically but in every one work is set so the pupil does not fall far behind while at home.

Parental Request for Term-Time Absence for Holidays

(As agreed by the Education legal department June 2014)

The Local Authority is fully supportive of the national drive to raise school attendance, recognising the crucial link between attendance and attainment. Whilst individual requests will be considered, no absences due to holidays during term times will be authorised by the Headteacher, other than in exceptional circumstances. This means absences due to pupils being taken on holidays during term time will be recorded as unauthorised.

Penalty Notice Statement

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 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.

Computerised Attendance Registers

Pupil attendance is recorded on computer using the SIMS system.

Staff mark the register by typing in the appropriate code. Selections are made as follows:-

Student present - [/] [\]

Student absent - [N]

Student late - [L] (also record actual number of minutes)

The advantages of our electronic system are that:-

- * attendance monitoring is speedy and in immediate detail;
- * attendance data is gathered to a central administration point and can be easily accessed to identify individuals, groups and trends;
- * the quality of data that can be extracted for analysis is greatly enhanced;
- * a professionally produced detailed attendance certificate can be produced for individual pupils at any time during the academic year;
- * reporting on attendance to the LA and WAG is more easily managed.

Registration

To ensure consistency of approach, and to minimise unnecessary pupil movement, the following guidelines should be adhered to by staff when taking a.m. and p.m. registers.

Procedure for morning registration

1. It is essential that staff be good role models by being punctual to registration. Morning registration should be a quiet, well-disciplined and important occasion in the school day as it sets the tone for the rest of the day.

2. To ensure consistency throughout the school, all staff should adhere to the following guidelines for morning registration:

- registers should be taken from 8.40 a.m. to 8.45 a.m.

- a pupil arriving between 8.45 a.m. and 9.00 a.m. should be marked late by the Form Tutor.

- persistent offenders should be still marked late by the Form Tutor but then sent to the HoY/Pastoral Support Officer to explain their lateness if the Form Tutor deems this necessary.

- on the mornings when the Year Group has assembly, Form Tutors should complete their registers, then take them to assembly and amend if necessary.

3. It is important that after end of morning registration, NO blank spaces are left alongside a pupil's name.

4. All registers should be completed by 9.00 a.m. This information is then read by the Attendance Officer/ Pastoral Support Officer.

5. Pupils arriving after 9.00 a.m. (i.e. after morning registration is finished), should report to the Attendance Office in the annexe. Pupils who report late will then be entered on SIMS.

6. The main school gates are locked at 8.50 a.m. every morning. The Attendance Officer will 'meet and greet' pupils after this time in order to monitor punctuality (weather permitting).

7. Pupils arriving after 10.00 a.m. will be marked absent for the session. Obviously if a pupil arrives during the session and has a valid reason – orthodontist, hospital appointment etc. a mark may be awarded at the discretion of the Head of Year/ Pastoral Support Officer.

Procedure for afternoon registration

1. At the start of the afternoon session, pupils will report directly to lesson 5 where they will be registered on SIMS by their subject teacher.

2. Once again, the importance of staff being punctual to the start of the afternoon session is essential.

3. All subject teachers must complete the SIMS attendance register for their class. **It is essential for the system to operate smoothly, that these registers are taken and saved.**

4. To ensure consistency, staff should adhere to the following guidelines:

- registers should be taken between 2.00 p.m. and 2.10 p.m.

- staff must ensure that they amend the SIMS data for pupils reporting late to afternoon sessions after they have taken the register. These pupils will be later challenged by the Head of Year/ Pastoral Support Officer.

5. Procedure when covering for absent colleagues:

a) Staff covering for an absent colleague should be able to use their own SIMS login details to access the register.

b) If the register cannot be accessed through SIMS, attempt access through the Portal. Failing that staff should make a list of absent pupils and send it to the Attendance Officer in the annexe to amend SIMS.

Strategies Used to Improve School Attendance

The school operates a team based approach to improving attendance rates and tackling poor punctuality. In order to reach the school target of 95% attendance, many strategies have been implemented. These include:

> Reward led attendance schemes (e.g. monetary prizes, certificates, year trophies, school trips, fast passes).

> Dedicated phone line for absence.

> Dedicated Attendance Office and Attendance Officer.

> Deputy Head (pupils) overseeing Attendance and co-ordinating the procedures for improvement.

> Raising the profile of attendance in Year Team and Whole School assemblies.

> Ensuring staff record attendance accurately and promptly every lesson.

> Attendance featuring regularly on HoY and SMT agendas.

> Fortnightly meetings with Year Heads and EWO.

> Class registers are taken every lesson.

> Truancy call used on the first day of absence and third day response if required.

> Missing marks on the registers are checked every day by the Attendance Officer.

> Parents regularly receiving information emphasising the importance of full and regular attendance.

- > Meetings with EWO/ Attendance Officer/ Deputy Head (Pupils) / parents and individual pupils.
- > Target setting on the Whole School Review Day featuring attendance if it falls below our expectations.
- > Attendance record in Student Planner updated regularly by pupils and form teachers.
- > Displays around school raising the profile of attendance.
- > Attendance displays in our Year 6 open evening.
- > Mentoring of targeted poor attendees or latecomers by Pastoral Support Officers.
- > Specific targeting of FSM pupils as part of narrowing the gap agenda.
- > Consistency of sanctions used for poor punctuality by Year Teams.
- > School based EWO who is active and willing to prosecute.
- > Cluster led initiatives giving a consistent message to pupils and parents.

100% - Excellent

97% - 99.9% - Very Good

93% - 96.9% - Good

90% - 92.9% - Room for Improvement

Below 90% - Cause for Concern

- > Spot checks for internal truancy.
- > Implementation of Fixed Penalty notices