



Polisi

Presenoldeb

Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbrân

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(Addaswyd ym mis Medi 2026)

Introduction

Good attendance and punctuality are important if pupils are to take part fully in the life of the school and to take advantage of the learning opportunities offered by the school. We recognise that attending school regularly and punctually is vital to the educational process and encourages a good pattern of work.

Failure to regularly attend can increase the risk of leaving school without any qualifications and can also increase the likelihood of pupils being drawn into criminal and anti-social behaviour.

Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbrân will work with parents/guardians, pupils, the local authority and the Education Achievement Service to ensure that all pupils receive a good standard of education and attend school regularly.

This attendance policy reflects the Local Authority's Attendance Strategy.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that attendance and punctuality remain a key focus for all, including members of the Governing Body, all school staff, parents/guardians and pupils. We will strive to:

- offer a safe and friendly environment which welcomes children regardless of race, gender or ability;
- raise standards and ensure all pupils reach their full potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality;
- ensure all stakeholders receive communication about information on the importance of regular school attendance;
- identify those pupils with irregular attendance at an early stage and to work with partner agencies to try and address any barriers that stop pupils from attending school regularly;
- keep accurate and up to date attendance data; and
- ensure all pupils are safe, and to follow the local authority's 'Children Missing Education' guidance.

This document is supported by the All-Wales Attendance Framework.

Legal Framework

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The law outlining attendance is: The Education Act 1996 which places a legal obligation on:

- the local authority to provide and enforce attendance; and
- school to register attendance and notify the local authority of a child's absence.

Section 7 of the above act states that:

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full-time education suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.

Section 444 further states that:

'The parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable in law'.

School Attendance Orders (SAO):

Under the Education Act 1996 section 437- 443 a School Attendance Order applies when a parent/guardian of compulsory school age fails to prove that the child is receiving a suitable education and where the authority believes the child should attend school. A School Attendance Order may be used to direct a parent to send their child to a specified school, and should be used when a pupil is not on roll at any school.

The Education (Penalty Notice) Wales Regulations 2013:

This legislation came into force in September 2014 and has given local authorities new powers to issue fixed penalty notices. (FPN). A code of conduct has been agreed by Torfaen County Borough Council on the issuing of the FPN, which includes the following criteria:

- Minimum of 10 unauthorised absences in the current year which do not have to be consecutive.
- Minimum of 10 sessions of lateness after the close of registration.
- Parents/guardians who chose to take their children out of school on holiday during term time without authorisation from the Head teacher for a minimum of 10 unauthorised sessions.
- Pupil regularly coming into contact with the police during school hours without a justified reason.
- Parents/guardians failing to engage with school/EWS but where prosecution has not been instigated.

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The head will inform the parent by letter that a request for a fixed penalty notice will be completed and sent to the Lead Education Welfare Officer (Lead EWO) for the local authority.

The senior EWO will consider the request, considering levels of absence, level of parental engagement, any equality implications, history of attendance and also any statement of special educational needs.

A fixed penalty notice warning may be issued and a period of 15 days will be monitored for an immediate improvement. A warning may not be issued in respect of an unauthorised holiday in term time.

A penalty notice is £60, if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, increasing to £120 if not paid within 28 days. If not received by 42 days, then the local authority can prosecute parents/guardians for the child's absence.

For further information please see the Torfaen LA website.

Definitions

Compulsory school age - under section 8 of the Education Act 1996, children and young people should attend school from the start of the first term commencing after their fifth birthday. The ends of the term dates are 31st March, 31st August and 31st December. A young person ceases to be compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they have their 16th birthday.

'Parents/guardians' section 576 of the Education Act 1996 includes:

- All natural parents/guardians whether married or not.
- Any person who although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a young person or child, and any person, who although not a natural parent has care of a child or young person.

Meanings:

'EWS' - Education Welfare Service

'EWO' - Education Welfare Officer

'CME' - Children Missing Education

'CTF' - Common Transfer File - pupil file transferred to relevant school.

Attendance is everybody's concern, and the school will expect all stakeholders to play a part in improving attendance. There are clear expectations and roles which include:

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Role of Head:

- To be responsible for overall management and implementation of this policy.
- To work closely with the Governing Body to monitor attendance.
- Set attendance targets with the Governing Body and Education Achievement Service and take advice from the local authority if needed.
- To use discretion when receiving applications for holiday requests and to provide reasons to parents/guardians.
- Regular attendance reports shared and provided to Governing Body.
- Work closely with the local authority's nominated school EWO, and other support services.
- To notify the local authority when a 'child is missing education' and follow the local authority's CME procedures.
- Ensure the attendance policy is readily available for all stakeholders.

The Governing Body:

- Approve the policy and amend if necessary.
- Receive reports from the Head on a regular basis.
- Attend meetings as and when required.
- Ensure policy is shared with all relevant stakeholders.

Senior Leadership Team:

- Work with all staff responsible for attendance and punctuality.
- To look at attendance data regularly.
- Ensure all absences are recorded in line with the guidance of codes document including those unauthorised absences and no reasons provided.
- Regular and updated training on attendance for all relevant staff.

Class Teachers:

- To carry out the statutory role of completing attendance registers twice a day (morning and afternoon).
- Ensure absences are accounted for by ways of a note/call provided by parents/guardians.
- Follow up unaccounted reasons for absence and concerns with the Senior Leadership Team.
- To continue to raise the profile of attendance to all pupils.

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Pupils:

- Attend regularly and on time unless unwell or received an authorised absence

Parents/guardians:

- To ensure their children attend school daily and punctually
- To notify the school via the dedicated voice mail service or email if their child is unable to attend, on the first day of absence and every day thereafter
- To keep the school updated on parents/guardians/guardians contact details, including mobile numbers and new addresses
- To work with the school and partner agencies to address any issues of irregular attendance of their children

Role of Attendance/School Clerk:

- To speak with parents/guardians on a daily basis to establish reasons for pupil's absence.
- To ensure registers are completed daily.
- To ensure all pupil absences are recorded.
- To 'mop up' missing marks, providing reasons and inputting reasons on the red flag system on SIMS.
- To check messages on the voice mail at the start of each school day.
- Work closely with the schools EWO, providing attendance data for those not achieving the threshold of 93%.
- To attend meetings with the EWO.
- To arrange letters and meetings for those parents/guardians whose children's attendance is posing a concern.
- To monitor patterns of irregular attendance

Keeping school registers

The school's register is a legal document and, under The Education (pupil registration) (Wales) regulations 2010, the school is required to keep an accurate record of attendance. Registers need to be marked twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Registers may be needed in a court of law if deemed appropriate.

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Schools Information management system (SIMs) is used in all schools across TCBC to record all pupils' attendance.

Types of absences

It is important for parents/guardians to understand the definition of the different types of absences. They are classed as unauthorised absence and authorised absence. The Head can only decide on whether an absence should be classed in either one of these categories, parents/guardians cannot.

Absences maybe authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Religious observance
- Medical/Dental appointments during school hours. However, where possible these should be arranged outside of school hours.
- Fixed term and permanent exclusions
- Holiday agreed by Head Teacher

Examples of what are classified as unauthorised absence are the following, however they are not limited:

- Truancy
- Late after the close of registration
- Staying at home for no reason
- Going shopping
- Birthdays
- Holiday not agreed by the Head

In addition, there are several codes classed as a present mark which include the following:

- Late before the close of register (Register closes at 9:30am)
- Educated off site
- Sporting activity
- Educational visit
- Traveller absence

Punctuality

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Punctuality is a legal requirement and pupils must attend on time. Persistent lateness has a detrimental effect on a child's learning and disrupts other pupils within the class and throughout the setting.

Those parents/guardians of pupils who are persistently late will be contacted by the Head Teacher.

Medical absences

Where a child is continually absent from school on the grounds of medical reasons, it will be necessary for the parent to provide medical evidence to staff. This will be initiated by school and the EWO which will result in the pupil and family receiving the appropriate support in assisting in attending school regularly. There may be times where a reintegration plan may be necessary.

Holidays during term time

Parents/guardians do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school during the school term for a holiday. Under the Education (pupil registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010, the Head has the discretion to authorise a holiday of up to 10 days during term time, over 10 days can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

All requests for holidays must be completed on the school's school absence request form and completed by the parents/guardians. The Head will make the decision and may include the following contributory factors:

- Length of time requested
- Overall percentage of attendance
- Impact on the child's learning

Parents/guardians are expected to contact the school on the first day of absence and provide reasons for their child's absence.

If parents/guardians fail to notify the school, then the office staff will make every effort to contact the parents/guardians and other persons listed as a point of contact. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if no contact is made. Failure to receive any contact on the third day of absence may result in the involvement of the EWO.

As a school, we have a duty to safeguard all our pupils and the Education & Inspections Act 2006 requires the Local Authority to make arrangements to enable them to establish the identities of children residing within TCBC who are not receiving an

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education. For example, these may be pupils who have not attended school for an excessive amount of time without any contact or reason for the absence. The duty lies within the Local Authority to investigate further.

The school strategies to improve attendance:

- We aim for all pupils to achieve 100% attendance but there may be instances where pupils unfortunately, are unwell.
- The school promotes Torfaen's '#Not In Miss Out' initiative.

Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbran's website

Our website will also provide all stakeholders and the public with the relevant attendance information including the attendance policy, along with all other policies and procedures.

Our environment

Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbrân will provide a happy, welcoming, attractive, stimulating and caring environment to ensure all pupils enjoy learning which results in good attendance.

Education Welfare Service

The Education Welfare service is a statutory service which supports schools in ensuring all pupils attend school regularly. We have a designated EWO who visits the school regularly. The EWO meets with the Head Teacher and Attendance Officer to discuss those pupils who have attendance of below 90%. Individual circumstances of each pupil will be considered. The EWO will then either send a letter home informing parents/guardians of the child's attendance, make a telephone call home, invite parents/guardians into school or/and will conduct a home visit.

Parents/guardians have a legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually under the Education Act 1996. Where parents/guardians fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child, they are committing an offence and the EWO will need to be informed.

It is unfortunate on occasions, but a punitive approach may be needed, which may result in prosecution of parents/guardians.

However, the EWS does not take this lightly and will endeavour to work and support parents/guardians, schools and pupils to improve attendance levels.

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First Day contact

Whilst we as a school operate a first day contact, there may be times where the Education Welfare Officer will conduct this and contact parents/guardians of those pupils who are absent on a specified day. This is deemed as good practice and identifies those pupils who are regularly absent at an early stage with a view to referring to additional support services.

Data Collection

Our school's attendance data is continually being tracked and monitored electronically, both on an individual pupil level and also as a whole school . This data is collated by the senior EWO and shared amongst all schools across Torfaen on a monthly basis.

We hope this policy will ensure that all stakeholders understand our expectations regarding attendance and together, we can provide the best education possible for each pupil at Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbrân. As a school, we will always strive to ensure that each pupil is in school as much as

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