



# Attendance Policy

<b>Head Teacher: -</b>	Mrs. S. Munro
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Mrs D. Storey

<b>Date Adopted:</b>	November 2025	<b>Review Date:</b>	November 2026
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## **1. Rationale**

- Parents hold the legal responsibility for ensuring regular school attendance, but the school and Local Authority (LA) jointly promote good attendance and address concerns.
- Schools must keep accurate statutory attendance records.
- Good attendance supports learning, progress and wellbeing.
- Poor attendance harms achievement disrupts learning routines and affects pupils and staff.
- The Local Authority must ensure that children receive suitable education, which includes attending school regularly and punctually.

## **2. Objectives**

We aim to:

- Promote good attendance as essential for educational success.
- Make clear that:
  - regular attendance is vital;
  - unauthorised absence and persistent lateness are not acceptable;
  - only the headteacher can authorise absence;
  - parent condoned, unjustified absences will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Keep accurate attendance records to support monitoring and intervention.
- Respond promptly to pupil absence and recognise good or improved attendance.
- Be sensitive to circumstances affecting attendance, such as bereavement, emotional wellbeing or ALN.
- Use a learner-centred approach to strengthen attendance.

## **3. 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 runs from the term after a child's 5th birthday to after the last Friday in June of the school year in which they turn 16.

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 LA; 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;

#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

##### Whole School Approach

Ysgol Llanfechain promotes good attendance through a whole school and **Learner Centred Approach** (Appendix 1). To support attendance, Ysgol Llanfechain focuses on the learner and adopts a community focussed approach where family engagement and multi-agency working is integral to improving school attendance.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff. However, the head teacher oversees attendance matters. Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together, through a community focussed approach, and provide evidence of absences where available (e.g. appointment cards/medical letters).

If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service. The Education Welfare Officer will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers with the head teacher can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from:

- ✓ [Belonging, engaging and participating | GOV.WALES](#)
- ✓ [Guidance on penalty notices for regular non-attendance at schools \(gov.wales\)](#)

To help us all to focus on attendance **the school will:**

- Provide parents with access to attendance information.
- Report regularly on attendance and progress.
- Use the learner-centred approach to support pupils. (Appendix 1)
- Acknowledge good/improving attendance through communication home.
- Offer a caring and nurturing environment where pupils feel safe, respected and listened to.
- Build strong relationships with parents and agencies.
- Monitor attendance trends and evaluate early intervention strategies.
- Work closely with multi-agency teams and Powys Education Welfare Officer to improve attendance and punctuality
- Report termly to the Governing Body.

**The Headteacher will:**

- Liaise with staff on attendance concerns.
- Meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer.
- Monitor and analyse attendance patterns.
- Lead the learner-centred attendance approach. (Appendix 1)
- Maintain the school register and ensure accurate recording.
- Communicate with key staff to help remove barriers to attendance.

**5. Responsibilities of Parents**

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children attend school, be 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 support the regular and punctual attendance of their children by:

- taking interest in school life;
- attending meetings and events;
- maintaining good bedtime routines;
- checking school communication;
- avoiding unnecessary absences;
- reporting absences on the first morning via email or phone;
- avoiding term-time holidays;
- contacting school early if their child is reluctant to attend.

**6. Attendance Targets**

We know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling. The school has targets to improve attendance, and every child has an important part to play in meeting these targets. The preferred level of attendance for this school is 95 %+ and we will regularly update parents about progress to this level and let them know how their child's attendance compares. Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

**7. Importance of Good Attendance**

**Safeguarding:** Children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Failing to attend school on a regular basis and/or failing to follow the absence reporting protocols will be considered as a safeguarding matter and will be acted upon by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses: - Attendance, Behaviour for Learning, Health and Safety, Access to the Curriculum, Emotional and Mental Wellbeing and Anti Bullying.

**Learning:** Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring children's regular attendance at school is a parent's legal responsibility and permitting absence from

school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. The school will collaborate with parents to reduce and remove barriers to learning. If attendance is 80%, this means a child will have missed:

- 1 day EVERY week
- 6 days EVERY half term
- 12 days EVERY term
- 36 days EVERY year
- 180 days in five years...

...that's nearly ONE WHOLE SCHOOL YEAR!

100% Attendance	0 days of learning missed	Best chance of success
95% Attendance	2 weeks of learning missed	Poor attendance will impact on learning
90% Attendance	At least 4 weeks of learning missed	Impact on learning and at risk of underachieving
85% Attendance	At least 5 and half weeks of learning missed	Significant impact on Learning
80% Attendance	At least 7 and half weeks of learning missed	Missing out on a broad and balanced education. You are at risk of prosecution

## 8. School Practices

- All staff follow the school's registration procedures and understand the legal requirements for attendance. Registers are completed at the start of the morning session and at the start of the afternoon session.
- The school communicates attendance expectations clearly through newsletters, assemblies, the school prospectus and the website.
- Parents must contact the school as soon as possible on the first morning of an absence, by telephone or email, stating the child's name and the reason for absence. This ensures accurate recording and allows us to follow up promptly on any unexplained absences.
- If no contact is received from parents on the first day of absence, the school will make a telephone call to establish the reason. If contact cannot be made, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- If absence information is received later, it will be recorded and discussed with the headteacher, who will decide whether the absence can be authorised.
- Absences for pupils on the Child Protection Register or Child in Need plans are followed up immediately with Children's Services.
- If an absence remains unexplained for three consecutive days, staff will arrange a home visit to see the pupil or request a police welfare check via 101.
- When a pupil returns to school without an explanation for their absence, the school will contact parents to discuss the situation and identify any support needed.
- Parents of pupils who are persistently late will receive a letter outlining concerns and offering support; continued lateness may lead to further action.
- If attendance concerns cannot be resolved through school support and our learner-centred approach (Appendix 1), a referral will be made to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service for further investigation.

- Requests for legal intervention can be made by the school, the police or the LA when attendance remains poor despite prior support and warnings.
- Pupils who struggle to attend school for medical or wellbeing reasons will receive regular welfare calls and home visits, with involvement from the Education Welfare Officer where appropriate.
- All pupil absences are monitored through clear support systems and early intervention strategies as outlined in the learner-centred approach. (Appendix 1)

## 9. Understanding Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

**Authorised absences** are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason and will be authorised if it is for the following reasons: sickness, unavoidable medical or dental appointments (evidence can be requested through an appointment card/letter), days of religious observance and exceptional family circumstances. Parents are asked to make all medical and dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes (the list is not exhausted): shopping, haircuts, missed bus, overslept, tiredness, no uniform, looking after brothers, sisters or unwell parents, parents/carers keeping their children off unnecessarily, minding the house, birthdays, holidays/day trips taken in term time and truancy before or during the school day.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child through our Learner Centred Approach (appendix 1). If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse. Communication is key and the school will always respond to any requests for support meetings and discussions

### **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will have a considerable impact on any child's educational prospects and we need parent's/carer's fullest support and co-operation to address this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. PA pupils

may require closer monitoring in collaboration with the Powys Educational Welfare Officer.

## **10. Signing In and Out**

All pupils from Reception to Year 6 **MUST** stay in school and within school grounds throughout the school day. If your child needs to leave school to attend a medical appointment, please send notice in via phone or email prior to the appointment.

- Parents/carers must collect their child in person. If you wish for another adult to collect them, please ensure that you let the school know that you provide permission for this to happen.
- Wherever possible routine appointments like a dental check-up should not be scheduled for school time.
- No pupil will be permitted to leave school site without permission from their parent/guardian.

## **11. Contact Details**

Parents must keep phone numbers and email addresses up to date so the school can contact them quickly, especially regarding absence.

## **12. 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 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 Charge Notices as one of the interventions to promote better school attendance. For further information on Penalty Charge Notices please refer to the Code of Conduct which can be found on: [Guidance on penalty notices for regular non-attendance at schools \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/guidance/penalty-notice-regular-non-attendance-at-schools)

## **13. Registration Requirements**

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 school reports and information for other schools, LAs 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 pupils 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 LA.

#### **14. Lateness**

If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and assemblies. They will not get vital information and news for the day/week ahead. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, it can be unsettling for the child and their peers and can also encourage absence.

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 (late after the register closes) is not resolved.

- School begins at **9:00am** (gates open 8:45am).
- Arrival after 9:00am = late mark.
- Registers close at **9:30am**; arrivals after this are recorded as unauthorised.
- Persistent lateness may result in meetings and potential legal action.

**Being 15 minutes late every day will add up to TWO WEEKS of school missed every year**

If a child has a persistent late record following intervention and support from the school, parents will be asked to meet with the Headteacher to resolve the problem. Parents can approach the school at any time if they are having difficulties getting their child to school on time.

#### **15. Holidays**

Taking holidays in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not booking holidays during term time. Remember that any financial savings that may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to a child's education.

On occasions, holidays and associated absences may be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher. There is a very clear protocol to follow and applications must be submitted at least 28 days prior to the date(s) of the requested holiday. (See **Appendix 3 – Holiday Request Form**)

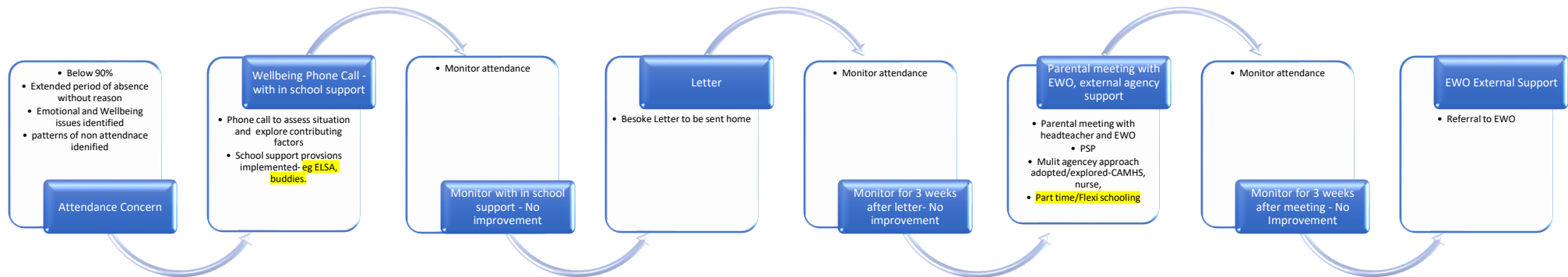
#### **16. Summary**

The school must publish attendance data and promote high attendance. Parents must ensure their children attend school regularly. Working together, we can support pupils' wellbeing, learning and life chances. This policy follows Welsh Government guidance: *Belonging, Engaging and Participating*.

# Appendix 1

## Learner Centred Approach

### Ysgol Llanfechain's Approach to supporting Attendance



## Appendix 2

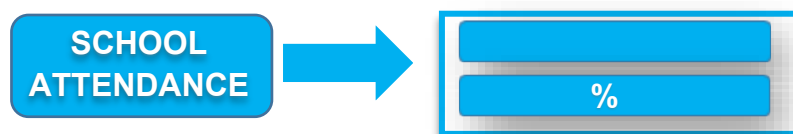
### Registration Codes

/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Off Site Education
C	Other Authorised Circumstances
D	Dual Registered i.e Present at another school or PRU
E	Excluded (No alternative provision made)
G	Family holiday (Not 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
#	School closed to all pupils
Z	Pupils not on roll yet

## Appendix 3

Dear Parent/Carer,

### Holidays / Absence during term time.



In Wales we want all of our pupils to achieve success, so it is important that parents do their best to support pupils in attending school for the full 190 days in an academic year, as stated in the Education (School Day and School Year) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006.

Under the Education Act (1996), it is the responsibility of the parent or carer to ensure that their son/daughter attend school. Regular school attendance is vital and missing school can have a significant impact on achievement over a one year period as illustrated 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 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 5 ½ 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.

We hope that you can support this policy and arrange your holidays around the existing 175 days the schools are closed through weekends and school holidays and help us support your child in achieving success in school.

If, however, there are circumstances that mean you have to take a holiday during term time, we ask that you fill in the form on the reverse of this letter and return to school for the attention of the head teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Munro  
Headteacher

## **Holiday Request Form**

If you wish to take your child/ren on a holiday during term time, the form below must be completed at least 28 days before the absence is required to be considered for authorisation.

The Pupil Registration (Wales) Regulations 2010 provide head teachers with a discretionary power to authorise leave for a family holiday during term time where parents seek permission. Save in exceptional circumstances, no more than 10 days leave should be granted for this purpose. The procedure at this school is that all the factors noted below will be taken into consideration before a decision is made as to whether to authorise any periods of holiday requested during term time.

- **Attendance figures for the last year. (We would expect attendance to be above 90%.)**
- **Behaviour and attitude to school life.**
- **That the holiday does not impact on any key periods of learning identified and highlighted by the school (such as the end of year pupil assessments carried out during the month of May each year).**
- **That this form has been completed correctly and the request has been made 28 days before the holiday.**

Please therefore remember that holidays can only be authorised at the Head Teacher's discretion.

It should also be noted that an application for a 'Fixed Penalty Notice' will be considered if there are 5 or more days (10 sessions) of 'unauthorised absence' recorded, in addition to the attendance level being below 90% for the school year to date.

An authorised / unauthorised slip will be sent back to you within 7 days of submitting this request.

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I request a holiday absence for my child/ren: \_\_\_\_\_

on the following dates: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like the following information to be taken into consideration:

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Thank you for submitting your holiday request form for the following

child/ren: \_\_\_\_\_

on the following dates: \_\_\_\_\_

**Your holiday has been AUTHORISED / UNAUTHORISED for the following reasons:**

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Please keep this slip in a safe place for future reference. A copy of your request and the response slip will be kept in your child/ren's personal records.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Munro  
Headteacher