

Kind Hands and Clever Minds Make Our School



# Attendance Policy

(Updated November 2017)

Regular attendance plays an important part in enabling pupils to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. It is vital to the continuity and effectiveness of learning.

School attendance is subject to education law and guidance and this school attendance policy is written to reflect this legislation and the guidance produced by the Welsh government (see appendix 1 |).

At Tyn-y-Wern Primary School attendance is a partnership between parents and the school, and is the responsibility of everyone to monitor and support attendances and to be alert to any problems that may lead to absence.

It is a parent's responsibility to ensure that their child arrives at school on time and in a condition to learn.

Parents are expected to inform the school office, by telephone or letter, by 9.30am on the first morning of absence, if their child is unable to attend school.

## **Registration**

At Tyn-y-Wern Primary School the doors open at 8.50am for the start of the school day. Registration takes place at 9am. Pupils arriving after 9am but before 9.30am will be marked as 'Late', those arriving after 9.30am will be marked as 'late after registration' which will be an unauthorised absence.

Similarly afternoon registration times are 1.10pm to 1.20pm for KS2 pupils and 12.55pm to 1.05pm for Infants. The Nursery opens at 9am and registration is taken between 9.10am and 9.20am.

Registration is completed via electronic register in each class, **registration is the responsibility of the class teacher**. A set of registration codes can be found on the SIMS registration page and a copy is also on the inside cover of the Class Register (see appendix 1 – school codes). It is important that the codes are consistent and in line with those issued by the Welsh Government in September 2011. If the class teacher is aware of the reason for absence it

should be inserted at the time of completing the register. If the absence is received after this time the Attendance Clerk may insert the appropriate code on the electronic register.

### **Absences**

An absence may be either authorised or unauthorised, in the first instance it is the class teacher's decision. If the class teacher is unsure then the Attendance Clerk may be asked to carry out further investigation. The final decision will rest with the Head Teacher.

Parents are requested to telephone the school office (02920852528) on the first day of absence before 9.30am with reason for their child's absence. After 9.30am the clerk will start to telephone parents of absent pupils and will record reasons on a school form. All absences should also be followed up by a written note from the parents (only in exceptional circumstances will verbal reasons be accepted). Notes from parents will be retained in the school office.

Authorised absences may be illness, dental/medical appointments, family bereavement and some special occasions. If the school does not receive a reason for the absence or the reason is not acceptable the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

### **The Callio Project**

Parents will be informed of their child's attendance percentage half termly using an authority wide initiative called Callio. The Callio project aims to give parents more information about how attendance can impact on pupil achievement and keeps them updated regularly, on their child's attendance. The Bedwas cluster target is a minimum of 95% attendance at the end of the school year. The Callio colour banding framework will be used to inform parents of their child's attendance percentage.

**100% -95%** attendance –Parents will receive a green letter informing them of their child's attendance.

**94% -91%** - Parents will receive an amber letter informing them of their child's attendance and need for improvement.

**Below 90%** - Parents will receive a red letter informing them of their child's attendance. Parents will be invited to a meeting with the Head teacher and attendance officer to discuss how we can support them with improving their child's attendance.

In the event that following these interventions there is no improvement in attendance the case will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

### Callio Colour Banding

Category	Attendance % at the end of the school year	Total number of days missed at the end of the school year
Green	100%	0
	97%	5
	96%	8
	95%	10
Amber	94%	12
	93%	14
	92%	16
	91%	18
Red	90%	19
	87%	24
	85%	28
	80%	39

In addition to Callio parents will be informed monthly by text message when their child's attendance falls below 95%.

## **Leave of absence/holidays in term time**

Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents are advised that holidays taken during term time can have a detrimental effect on their child's education. Parents cannot demand leave of absence for a holiday as a right.

It is only in exceptional circumstances that a leave of absence will be authorised if the pupils' current attendance percentage is below the **Bedwas cluster target of 95%**. Leave of absence/holidays must be applied for on a school holiday form available from the school office (see appendix 2).

In addition to the guidelines introduced by Welsh Government and enforced via the local authority and East Wales Consortium, the Bedwas cluster of primary schools has agreed upon a number of actions to supplement the legislation:

- A maximum of twenty sessions (ten days) per academic year will be authorised. However, there may be "exceptional" circumstances where absence over ten days may be authorised. Governors will monitor the number of "exceptional" circumstances which are granted during the school year.
- To ensure a successful transition to the child's new class, no days will be authorised in September.
- To ensure that the school fulfils its statutory obligation to administer national tests in reading and numeracy, no days will be authorised for the period of testing.
- To ensure that pupils are fully prepared for the next phase of their education, no days will be authorised on Year 6 transition days to the High School.
- Holidays will be automatically refused authorisation if a child's attendance is already below the cluster target of 95%. However, there may be 'exceptional' circumstances where absence may be granted.
- Approval for attendance data will be checked retrospectively to ascertain a full year of attendance data.

## Non Attendance (Fixed Penalty Notices)

The **Welsh Government** has introduced important amendments to legislation surrounding school attendance. The Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a parent to "fail to secure their child's regular attendance at the school"

The new amendments include a penalty notice scheme. This means that from September 2014 a headteacher can request the issue of a **Fixed Penalty Notice** for irregular attendance of a child or young person registered in their school. This includes pupils who attend an alternative education provision arranged by the Council.

### Examples of when a Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued

- ❑ **Unauthorised absences** - Where at least 10 sessions (5 schools days) are lost to unauthorised absences; these do not need to be consecutive. You will receive a formal notification from the Head teacher explaining the actions that may be taken.
- ❑ **Holidays in term time** - A Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued for unauthorised leave of absence for 10 sessions (five school days) or more during term time; these have to be consecutive school days.
- ❑ **Persistent late arrival** – at least 10 sessions of late arrival at school after the register has closed (there are two sessions in a school day, morning and afternoon).
- ❑ **Truancy** – where a child or young person comes to the attention of the Police during school hours for being absent from their registered school without an acceptable reason.

Where both parents have responsibility for their child, each parent will receive a fixed penalty notice of £60 when paid within 28 days. If the fine is NOT paid within 42 days, no further notification will be given in connection with the offence. If the fixed penalty notice remains unpaid the parent / carer will be prosecuted in magistrate's court for the offence

### Education Welfare Officer

The EWO visits the school on a regular basis to check the register and discuss any issues/problems regarding attendance or lateness. He/she may send letters or visit homes where no response to absence has been received by the school and act as a liaison officer between home, school and the Social Services.

## **Lateness**

Punctuality is important at Tyn-y-wern Primary School and pupils are expected to arrive on time for registration. The school operates a 'late register' for pupils who arrive after 9.10am which is signed by the parent/guardian. A letter will be sent or appointment made with the Head teacher for pupils who are regularly late to ascertain the reason. If there is no improvement the EWO will be asked to investigate.

## **Truancy**

If truancy is suspected then the Head teacher should be informed immediately as concerns are for the pupil's safety and welfare. The Head teacher will then contact the parents or request the EWO makes a home visit promptly. Parents will be asked to bring the child into school in order to find out the reason and resolve any issues.

## **Good Attendance**

Tyn-y-wern Primary School encourages good attendance through its weekly recognition of the best class attendance in our Golden Assembly every Friday. There is also a weekly draw for KS1 and KS2 pupils with full attendance and a draw for a book token at the end of the school year. Attendance stickers are given /postcards are sent out termly for 100% attendance and improved attendance. Each term there is a reward (trip, visitor to school etc.) for pupils with high attendance and good behaviour.

## **Monitoring and Reporting**

The Local Authority requests attendance figures from the school at the end of every term. Parents will be informed of individual pupil attendance using the Callio colour banding system. Overall attendance is recorded in the Governor's Report to Parents.

## The Registration System

## Appendix 1

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (not dual registration)	Approved educational activity
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending another establishment)	Approved educational activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved educational activity
L	Late (before register closes)	present
M	Medical/dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after register closes)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational trip or visit	Approved educational activity
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity
X	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school aged pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances



## **Legislation and Guidance**

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) To his age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) To any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent means biological parents and includes any person who has parental responsibility or has day to day care of the child.

Section 444 1, 1(a) and (ZA) contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school or alternative provision arranged by the Local Authority.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013 set out the framework for the operation of the Fixed Penalty Notice scheme.

The Equalities Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

### **Register and admission**

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010
- The Education (School Day and School Year)(Wales)(Amendment) Regulations 2006

### **Attendance targets**

- The Education (School Performance and Unauthorised Absence Target) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006

### **Guidance documents relating to attendance**

- All Wales Child Protection Procedures
- The All Wales Attendance Framework
- The National Assembly for Wales Circular 47/2006 Inclusion and Pupil Support
- South East Wales Consortium Attendance Strategy
- Local Code of Conduct relating to the Fixed Penalty Notice Scheme
- Welsh Government Guidance on penalty notices for regular non-attendance at school
- Welsh Government Guidance on attendance codes

## HOLIDAY FORM

### TY’N Y WERN PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Governing Body discourages parents and guardians from removing their children from school for a family holiday during term time, as it recognises the vital importance of regular attendance to a child making good progress at school.

However, in some circumstances, where the situation is unavoidable, the Head teacher can authorise a maximum of 20 sessions (10 days) absence in one academic year, for holidays. This is providing that the child’s attendance is **above 95%**. Holidays taken when absence is below this level or in excess of 20 sessions (10 days) will be marked as unauthorised absences.

If you must take you child on holiday during term time please complete and return this form to the school prior to the holiday.

Child’s name ..... Class.....

Reason for removing your child from school during term time:

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.....

Number of days holiday taken since September 1<sup>st</sup> .....

Inclusive dates of holiday .....

Number of school days that will be missed .....

Signature of Parent/ Guardian ..... Date .....

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Authorisation to be completed by school

I authorise ..... days absence

I do not authorise this absence due to .....

.....

Signed ..... Position..... Date.....

Copy to parents/guardian;  
Copy to class teacher;

If you wish to discuss this decision please telephone the school office to make an appointment with the Headteacher