

P E R T H C E L Y N

Community Primary School

Attendance Policy

Policy Title:	Attendance Policy
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Link Governor:	Mrs Nicola Richards - Chair of Governors
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Link Governor:	Mrs Nicola Richards - Chair of Governors
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Headteacher: *Mrs Ellen Hook (21st October 2024)*

Chair of Governors: *Mrs Nicola Richards (21st October 2024)*

Dates of Policy Review
Headteacher: <i>Mrs Ellen Hook (25/06/2025)</i> Chair of Governors: <i>Mrs Nicola Richards (26/06/2025)</i>

Perthcelyn Community Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils, and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcomed and are committed to the fundamental principle that early intervention and partnership working is crucial in ensuring the attendance, protection and wellbeing of all children.

The school will follow the All Wales Child Protection procedures and local protocols in relation to specific and identifiable wellbeing issues that prevent a child from accessing education, or where there are safeguarding concerns.

For a pupil to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to education law and guidance, and our school attendance policy is written to reflect this legislation and the guidance produced by the Welsh Government.

The legislation makes provision for a school day, which is to be divided into two sessions (with a lunch break in the middle) and to be available for 190 days in any school year.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance on an annual basis to ensure that it is achieving its set goals and targets, as identified by the Governors, Local Authority, Central South Consortium and the Welsh Government.

This policy will contain the procedures that the school will use to work towards meeting its attendance targets, as set by the Local Authority.

This Policy has been established through discussions with and ratification by; learners, staff and the Governing Body of Perthcelyn Community Primary School.

At Perthcelyn, we believe that in order for pupils to learn effectively and reach their potential, it is vital that they attend school on time, everyday.

Good punctuality and regular attendance will provide a solid foundation for pupils to establish good habits that will support them throughout their lives.

The purpose of our Attendance Policy is to:

- Encourage pupils to be ready to learn by attending school regularly.
- Support our parents/carers, and learners, in their understanding of the importance of good attendance, as well as the impact of lower attendance.

Staff and Governors are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to ensure the highest level of attendance possible, so that as a school, we achieve at a minimum, our annual attendance target.

Our annual attendance target is communicated to parents/carers at the start of each academic year and again at regular intervals throughout the year.

At present, our annual target is 91%.

A system for analysing performance towards our target has been established and the Headteacher is responsible for overseeing this work.

The school and Governing body will make use of the attendance data available from the Local Authority when reviewing its targets and analysis of the outcomes in comparison with similar schools from across the region.

The Headteacher will present attendance data in each of the termly reports to the Governing body, for figures to be scrutinised. Governors will have the opportunity to challenge the data, alongside the practices for managing attendance, in order to tackle the overall absence rates across the school and within specific cohorts of learners.

Aims

The aims of this Attendance Policy are to:

- Promote a nurturing and inclusive ethos in which pupils feel safe, secure, and supported.
- Create an ethos in which regular attendance and punctuality is recognised and valued.
- Establish a consistent system for the monitoring of attendance.
- Ensure all school staff and governors are clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.
- Recognise the key role of all staff, especially class teachers, in promoting regular attendance.
- Improve the likelihood of pupil progress by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve, at a minimum, our school attendance target for all learners (with the exception of those with chronic health issues).
- Express to parents/carers the importance of uninterrupted attendance and excellent punctuality at every stage of a child's educational journey.
- Include our Nursery and Reception-aged learners (below statutory school age) so that we promote good life habits at an early age.

Objectives

At Perthcelyn, in order to fulfil our attendance aims, we ...

- Regularly raise awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among staff, parents/carers and pupils.
- Ensure that parents/carers have a clear understanding of the responsibility they have in making sure their child attends school regularly and punctually, and are aware of the procedures to follow if reporting an absence.
- Maintain effective means of communication with parents/carers, pupils, staff and governors on all school attendance matters.
- Ensure that our learners have a clear understanding of the importance of regular school attendance and encourage them in taking responsibility for their own attendance and punctuality (appropriate to pupil age/stage/development).
- Develop and implement procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of attendance concerns and persistent lateness.
- Develop and implement procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.
- Support pupils who are currently experiencing difficulty at home (or at school) that prevents regular attendance.

- Appoint a team of staff with overall responsibility for managing whole-school attendance. The attendance team currently consists of: Mrs Ellen Hook (Headteacher), Mrs Rachel James, Mr Anthony Jones (FEO) and Mrs Claire O'Brien (School Clerks).
- Celebrate and praise good attendance in weekly Celebration Assemblies.

Practice and Procedures

At Perthcelyn Community Primary School, attendance has a very high profile and this is regularly communicated to our learners, parents/carers and governors.

Parents are regularly reminded of the importance of good attendance and its links to pupil progress.

The school's attendance figure is regularly updated on the school website/Class Dojo for parents/carers to view, and parents/carers are informed of their child's attendance on a half-termly basis.

We follow the procedures detailed below as a means of monitoring and supporting attendance:

- Clearly communicate to staff, governors, parents/carers and pupils, the procedures and expectations related to attendance.
- Ensure appropriate registration processes.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Maintain consistent and systematic daily records which will provide detail of any absence and lateness.
- Follow up any absences and/or persistent lateness, if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- Refer to the Local Authority Attendance and Wellbeing Service any pupil whose attendance causes concern, and where parents/carers have failed to respond to school initiatives to support improvement.
- Report attendance data and statistics to Rhondda Cynon Taf LA, when requested.
- Raise any attendance and/or punctuality concerns (noted by staff) to Mrs Ellen Hook, Mrs Rachel James, Mr Anthony Jones and Mrs Claire O'Brien. who have responsibility for monitoring attendance.
- Strongly discourage unnecessary absences during term time, i.e. family holidays.
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes 'authorised' and 'unauthorised' absence.
- Work with, and support parents/carers in improving individual pupil attendance and punctuality.
- Celebrate and praise good attendance in weekly Celebration Assemblies.

Responsibilities

All members of staff at Perthcelyn have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

The following provides a list of more specific responsibilities which individual staff may have.

The Attendance Lead

The Attendance Lead is responsible for:

- Regularly monitoring school attendance through the use of official attendance registers and identifying pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- Identifying trends in authorised and unauthorised absence.

- Identifying pupils achieving Green/Amber/Red attendance on a half-termly basis, and providing details of this to the School Clerks who will subsequently inform parents/carers of this in writing.
- Monitoring attendance of all pupils identified as 'red', on a weekly basis.
- Contacting and/or arranging meetings with parents/carers of pupils with 'red' attendance, to discuss current attendance concerns, determine a way forward and to secure future improvement.
- Keeping staff informed of any updates with regard to the attendance of individual pupils.
- Making referrals to the LA Attendance and Wellbeing Service (in collaboration with the school clerks). Referrals to the service are made where:
 - A pattern of irregular attendance is either continuing or worsening (sporadic days or blocks of absence).
 - Parents/carers fail to send their child to school regularly and have refused any offer to discuss ways of improving attendance with the school.
 - Condoned and unjustified absence is increasingly a problem.
 - Parents request excessive authorised absences.
 - There are concerns involving the welfare of a child.
 - Parents/carers have been asked to provide medical evidence, but fail to do so.
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- Keeping governors up to date of attendance reports.
- Liaising with the Headteacher to determine a whole-school target for attendance.

Family Engagement Officer

The Family Engagement Officer is responsible for:

- Undertaking the 'first day response' each morning for those pupils whose families have not made contact.
- Monitoring attendance of all pupils identified as 'red', on a weekly basis.
- Monitoring individual attendance, looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance offered by parents/carers (and pupils), and reporting such concerns to the Attendance Lead (and Headteacher).
- Identifying pupils achieving Green/Amber/Red attendance on a half-termly basis, and providing details of this to the School Clerks who will subsequently inform parents/carers of this in writing.
- Contacting and/or arranging meetings with parents/carers of pupils with 'red' attendance, to discuss current attendance concerns, determine a way forward and to secure future improvement.
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- Communicate with the LA Attendance and Wellbeing Service (where appropriate).

School Clerk

The School Clerk is responsible for:

- Daily operational attendance duties.
- Ensuring that all registers have been completed by class teachers on a daily basis and if not, will escalate this to the Headteacher for action.
- Collating and recording registration and attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents/carers regarding absence.

- Recording daily, the details of pupils who arrive late, and uploading relevant details to Bromcom.
- Recording details of pupils who leave school early.
- Undertaking the 'first day response' each morning for those pupils whose families have not made contact.
- Collating any supporting evidence, and chasing any outstanding forms, absence notes, holiday request forms etc.
- Compiling data in preparation for analysis by the Head Teacher and making the referrals to the Attendance and Wellbeing Service.
- Monitoring individual attendance, looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance offered by parents/carers (and pupils), and reporting such concerns to the Attendance Lead (and Headteacher).
- Submitting referral forms/FPN requests to the LA Attendance and Wellbeing Service (on behalf of the Attendance Lead).
- Communicate with the LA Attendance and Wellbeing Service (where appropriate).
- Writing and sending individual pupil attendance letters on a half-termly basis (in collaboration with the Attendance Lead).

In order to request a fixed penalty notice, the school will monitor the individual attendance patterns of pupils. If trends are identified (that match the criteria stated in the Local Authority's Code of Conduct), a formal request to the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice can be made.

Class Teachers/Staff

Class Teachers/Staff are responsible for:

- Completing registers twice daily.
- Identifying particularly poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance offered by pupils (on return to school).
- Informing the Attendance Lead/Family Engagement Officer/Headteacher of attendance concerns.
- Providing background information to the Headteacher/Attendance Lead/Family Engagement Officer/School Clerk to support referrals to the LA Attendance and Wellbeing Service (where appropriate).
- Liaising with the Attendance Lead following any actions taken to correct attendance concerns.
- Providing opportunities to share the importance of good attendance and punctuality with their class.
- Discussing attendance issues at parent consultation meetings, where necessary.

Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually (unless prevented from doing so due to illness, required attendance at medical appointments etc.).
- Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence (either by speaking to the clerk or by leaving a message on the school's answering system).
- Informing the school of any upcoming medical appointments that need to be taken in school time. N.B. In order for an absence to be recorded as 'medical', we require relevant evidence, i.e. an appointment card/letter.

- Submitting requests for any term time absences (however, this should only be done if absolutely necessary). N.B. Such requests do not ensure automatic authorisation.
- Informing the school immediately of a child's reluctance to attend, so that such issues can be promptly dealt with and resolved.

Learners

Learners are responsible for:

- Knowing and understanding the importance of regular school attendance (where age/stage appropriate).
- Speaking to a member of staff if they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly (if age/stage appropriate and developmentally able).
- Attending school on time and being ready to learn.

Attendance and Wellbeing Service

The Attendance and Wellbeing Service (AWS) has an important role in liaising between home and school. They regularly communicate with school and offer assistance in a supportive capacity.

Officers of the LA Attendance and Wellbeing Service are responsible for:

- Monitoring whole school attendance through regular register checks.
- Communicating findings from register checks with the School clerk and/or Attendance Lead and discussing ways forward.
- Supporting schools to achieve attendance targets and addressing possible barriers to this.
- Supporting families to achieve regular attendance for their child.
- Contacting parents/carers by phone, letter or by visiting the home, to discuss the school's attendance concerns and suggesting ways in which attendance and punctuality can be improved.

Registration

- School starts at 8.50am and classroom doors remain open until 9.05am. (For pupils who attend breakfast club, school doors open at 8.00am. These pupils remain in the hall (canteen) before being dismissed to their respective classrooms at 8.50am.
- The school is required to complete attendance registers twice daily (once at the start of the school day and again at the start of the afternoon session) and these are marked promptly at the start of each session.
- Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers and the school clerk adds prescribed codes for absence.
- All attendance records are currently documented using Bromcom MIS software, which is supported by Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Authority.

Punctuality

Morning registration takes place at 8:50am. Registers remain open for a maximum of 30 minutes from this start time, in accordance with Welsh Government guidance.

Pupils who arrive in school after 9:05am (after external classroom doors are locked) need to enter school through the main entrance.

Pupils who arrive after 9:05am (and before 9:20am) are marked as 'late' and this is documented on the electronic register as an 'L' code and detailed in the school 'Late Book'.

Any pupil arriving after 9:20am is marked as having an unauthorised absence (U code), unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In addition, where the

absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered (M code in this instance).

Pupils who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning. In the event of three late arrivals, the school will contact parents/carers by letter to inform them of the impact on their child's attendance and subsequent progress. Should the pupil continue to arrive late for registration after being issued with this letter, the school will issue a second letter inviting the parents/carers to meet with the Attendance Lead/Headteacher. The purpose of such meetings is to discuss the issue of persistent lateness, and to offer support to parents/carers, if necessary.

Parents and carers are reminded that the Local Authority may issue a fixed penalty notice for persistent lateness (after the close of the register), in accordance with the Local Authority's Code of Conduct for the Issuing of Fixed penalty Notice for Non-School Attendance (if the number of unauthorised absences or lates (O or U codes) is 10 sessions or greater in the current term).

Absences

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence.

When parents/carers notify school of their child's absence, it is important that they provide accurate details of the reason for absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Decisions regarding authorised or unauthorised absences rest with the Headteacher (the Attendance Lead and School Clerk are also involved in discussions, due to their understanding of trends in low/poor attendance etc.).

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised.

However, notifying the school and providing a reason for a child's non-attendance, does not automatically ensure an absence becomes authorised. This is at the discretion of the Headteacher and a number of factors are considered when making a decision.

Where school has not received reasons for a child's absence, the school clerk will contact parents/carers by telephone. If an answer is not obtained, a message is sent out via the schools text messaging service, requesting that the parent/carer contact school at the earliest opportunity to discuss the absence.

If no response is provided following the text, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (attendance code 'O')

Authorised Absences

Absences will be authorised in the following circumstances:

- Where school is satisfied that a pupil is too unwell to attend. Where, over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will request that parents/carers provide medical evidence for any future period of illness-related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription etc.
- Where pupils need to attend a medical appointment (parents/carers should endeavour to make all appointments outside of school hours, however). Where this is not possible, we encourage parents to send pupils to school before an appointment and return their child to school immediately afterwards.
- Where there is an unavoidable cause for absence which is beyond the family's control.
- Where pupils are following a religious observance by the religious body to which parents belong.

- In other exceptional circumstances, e.g. a family bereavement.

Unauthorised Absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable, and for which no 'leave' has been given. For example:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Absences which are not properly explained.
- Pupils who arrive after the close of registers and are therefore, too late to receive a 'mark'.
- Taking day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed by the Headteacher.
- Frequent sickness absence without any medical evidence provided.

School Targets

The LA and school set yearly targets of attendance. At present, our overall whole-school target is 91%.

Parents/carers are kept up-to-date with the current whole-school attendance figures through ClassDojo and the school website.

Letters

Parents/carers are also informed (in writing) of their child's attendance on a half-termly basis through a RAG-rated (Red, Amber, Green) system. Red, Amber, Green letters are currently reflective of the following attendance percentages:

Green	Amber	Red
Pupils currently with attendance 95% and above.	Pupils currently with attendance 90% - 94.99%.	Pupils currently with attendance 90% or lower.

Green Letter

For pupils identified with attendance 95% and above, a letter is sent to parents/carers acknowledging the excellent support they have given school in working towards our whole-school attendance target of 91% and congratulating them on their child's excellent attendance.

Amber Letter

For pupils identified with attendance 90% - 94.99%, a letter is sent to parents/carers acknowledging that their child's attendance is currently satisfactory, but attendance could still be improved. It further requests that going forward, they take all possible steps to improve attendance.

Red Letter (First)

For pupils identified with attendance below 90%, a letter is sent to parents/carers informing them that their child's attendance needs to improve, and that going forward, attendance will be monitored weekly. They are further advised in the letter, that if no improvement in attendance is noted during this monitoring time, a referral will be made to the LA Attendance and Wellbeing Service.

If, during this monitoring period, there are periods of sporadic attendance/incidents of unauthorised attendance etc. school will request home visits from the Attendance and Wellbeing Service. These are different to attendance referrals.

Red Letter (Second)

If no improvement in attendance is noted from weekly monitoring, parents/carers are sent a second letter inviting them to attend an individual meeting with the Attendance Lead to discuss

current concerns, identify any support that may be required and ways forward to secure future improvement. The letter will also inform them that a referral has been made to the Attendance and Wellbeing Service.

Fixed-Penalty Notices

A school attendance fixed penalty notice (FPN) is offered as an alternative to prosecuting parents/carers who do not ensure their child attends school regularly.

From January 2025, Perthcelyn Community Primary School will be issuing Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for the following reasons:

- Where there is a minimum of 10 unauthorised sessions (5 school days) in the current term (these do not need to be consecutive) which may or may not include pupils who are persistently arriving after the close of the registration period (registers be kept open for thirty minutes and close at 9:20am);
- Where parents/carers refuse to engage with a school in the interest of improving their child's school attendance levels.
- Where a holiday in term-time has been requested, but has not been authorised.

However, the codes for a FPN referral can also be 'mixed', e.g. a FPN request can be submitted for six 'O' codes and four 'U' codes, as long as they total 10 or more.

To comply with The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013, Perthcelyn Community Primary School will operate in accordance with the Local Authority's Code of Conduct for fixed penalty notices for regular non-attendance at school. It remains the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise absences in line with The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 attendance codes and supplementary guidance provided by the Local Authority.

Each pupil's absence will be considered on its own merits and if appropriate, a fixed penalty notice may be requested to encourage improved future attendance. If a pupil's attendance is significantly low, a referral to the Attendance and Wellbeing Service may be considered as an alternative to requesting a penalty notice.

Requests for the issuing of FPNs are submitted to the LA Attendance and Wellbeing Service who will review the information provided. Consequently, they will only issue a FPN if they feel it is appropriate to do so.

Prior to the Fixed Penalty Notice being issued, parents/carers will be sent a written warning from the LA Attendance and Wellbeing Service. If there is an improvement in attendance and no unauthorised absences are recorded during a 15 day period, the Fixed Penalty Notice will not be issued. However, if an unauthorised absence is recorded by the school in that 15 day period, a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued. This 15 day warning, however, does not apply to a Fixed Penalty Notice issued for an unauthorised holiday absence.

If the Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within 42 days of issue, the Local Authority will be obliged to start legal proceedings under section 444 (1) Education Act 1996.

Term-Time Holidays

Leave of absence during term time is actively discouraged as it negatively impacts on pupils' ability to engage with the full curriculum.

Parents and carers do not have the automatic right to withdraw their children from school for a family holiday, and will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential progress and achievement.

The school will consider any application for leave of absence on an individual basis. Parents and carers must apply in advance for permission for their child to have a leave of absence **(not more than four weeks prior to the period of absence required)**. For example, if a request was made for holiday from 15th June, the form should not be submitted before 18th May, as this will enable the Headteacher to assess current attendance levels which will assist in deciding if a holiday is authorised/unauthorised. Forms to request a leave of absence can be obtained from the school office. The Headteacher will consider the request and respond in writing (within 7 school days of the first day of the holiday) to inform parents/carers whether the request has been authorised.

Parents and carers are advised that a fixed penalty notice may be issued by the Local Authority when permission for a holiday or leave of absence has not been authorised by the school. The Local Authority's Code of Conduct for Issuing Fixed Penalty Notices can be obtained from the school, the Local Authority's website or the Attendance and Wellbeing Service.

At Perthcelyn Community Primary School, we will only authorise term-time holidays for **5 days (10 sessions)** to pupils whose attendance is 95% or above. All requests will be reviewed on an individual basis at the discretion of the Attendance Lead and Headteacher.

Monitoring Attendance

Our school clerk has the responsibility for ensuring that all of the attendance data is accurately recorded on the Bromcom attendance software, and the Attendance Lead and Headteacher, in conjunction with the Attendance Wellbeing Service, is responsible for overall monitoring of attendance.

Regular meetings are held between the School Clerk, Attendance Lead and Headteacher to discuss all attendance concerns, and relevant action is taken following these meetings.

Advocating Good Attendance

At Perthcelyn Community Primary School, we understand the impact good attendance and punctuality has on our pupils' learning, and believe in rewarding good attendance and punctuality to engage and motivate our pupils.

As a result, we have many initiatives to support and celebrate attendance and punctuality, so that it remains a high profile in school and with our families.

We promote and celebrate good attendance and punctuality by:

- Sharing class attendance figures for the week in our weekly Celebration Assembly, and awarding a certificate to the class with the best attendance. The class with the highest attendance overall that week wins the school attendance trophy.
- Sharing individual class attendance is shared via ClassDojo on a weekly basis.
- Presenting certificates at the end of each half term to pupils who have achieved 100% attendance or have significantly improved their attendance that half term. Pupils who receive a 100% attendance certificate, each earn a raffle ticket that is entered into a prize draw. A winner is selected each half term, then their ticket is returned to the 'pot' ready for another prize draw at the end of the academic year.

- At the end of each term, the class with the best overall attendance, wins a 'prize'. The winning class can choose their prize (from a selection of options provided).
- At the end of the year, every pupil who has achieved 100% attendance is awarded with an attendance prize.
- Offering a reward to pupils who have 100% attendance in the 12 days leading up to the Christmas holidays.

Equality Statement

The school is committed to promoting equality and fostering respect for people irrespective of protected characteristics.

The school values, and encourages, involvement of people from all sections of the local community. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

Language, or behaviour, that is LGBTQ+ phobic, sexist, racist, or offensive to the disabled, and prejudicial language that is potentially damaging to any person or group, will not be tolerated and will be challenged.

The school recognises that British and Welsh society, and the school itself, is made up of people from many different backgrounds. It is important that all pupils, staff and visitors to the school can enjoy life in such a diverse society.

Mrs Ellen Hook - June 2025

