

Ysgol Gynradd Coed Glas Primary School



Attendance policy – Information for parents and carers

The full Attendance Policy was agreed by the Governing Body on Thursday 16th February and is available on the school website: www.coedglasprimary.co.uk

Introduction

The school attendance policy has its basis under Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We believe that all children have the right to an education, based on equality of opportunity, and that the school, in partnership with parents and other parties, will do all they can to encourage regular school attendance and reduce rates of absence.

Regular attendance at school is essential to enable children to reach their full potential. All children on roll are to attend every day as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and learning.

Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's:

- attainment in school;
- relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships and
- confidence to attempt new work and work alongside others

We are keen to ensure that all of our pupils and staff are treated equally and fairly but if someone feels that this is not the case they have an equal opportunity to redress that. We recognise and celebrate that British and Welsh society is made up from diverse backgrounds and life experiences. We promote equality for people with 'protected characteristics' (Age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and embed fairness and equality at the heart of our school community.

95%+

Our school target is for every child to achieve an attendance of each year



Working Together

We aim to work together with children, parents/carers and families so that pupils make the most of all of the experiences provided for them at school. The following table shows how each partner contributes to high levels of attendance at Coed Glas:

Partners	Expectations
Pupils We expect all pupils to :	• Attend school every day. • Arrive on time properly equipped for learning.
Parents/Guardians We expect all parents/carers to :	• Encourage their child or children to attend school every day and on time. • Ensure that they contact the school as soon as possible whenever their child is unable to attend school stating the reason for absence. • Ensure that their child or children arrive in school fully prepared for the school day. • Inform the school about any problem which might affect their child's attendance or behaviour. • Parents are strongly encouraged not to take holidays in term time.
School Parents/carers can expect the school to :	• Provide a good quality education appropriate to their child's needs. • Record their child's attendance regularly and accurately. • Make every reasonable effort to contact the parent/carer on the first day of absence, when their child fails to attend school without good reason. • Deal discretely with any problems notified to the school. • Make all efforts to encourage and reward good attendance, punctuality and behaviour.

Celebrating Success

Attendance is celebrated in the whole school assembly each Friday. All children who have achieved above 98% will be given attendance stickers. The classes in both Key Stages with the highest attendance receive the Attendance Cup, a class certificate and are given 5 minutes extra playtime. The percentage attendance is recorded on the Attendance display board in reception.



The two classes who achieve the highest attendance each term will be rewarded appropriately.

Children who have received at least 98% attendance will also be rewarded with a certificate at the end of each term (all authorised absences will be discounted for the purpose of rewards).

Procedures



The school registers pupils twice a day, at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.

All children should be in the school ready to register at 8.55am each day.

Registration closes at 9.00am. Any child arriving after this time will be recorded as late and if they arrive after 9.30am this will be recorded as an absence. If a child needs to attend a medical appointment, parents and carers are asked to send a letter to the school along with the appointment card/letter. This will be recorded as a Medical absence.

Decision to authorise absence and term time holidays

The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 give schools discretionary power to grant leave for the purpose of a family holiday during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw their child from school for a holiday and, in law, have to apply for permission from the school in advance. Coed Glas Primary School will only authorise family holidays where parents are able to demonstrate that unique or exceptional circumstances prevent the holiday from being taken outside of term time. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are where requests are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

The decision to authorise absence is at the head teacher's discretion, but it is the school's policy that absences will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances based on the school's assessment of the situation.

The statements below outline the main considerations the Headteacher will make to decide whether the request is because of exceptional circumstances:

- The time of year of the proposed trip;
- The length and purpose of the holiday;
- The duration of the holiday and its impact on the continuity of learning;
- Absences to visit family members are also not normally granted during term time if they could be scheduled for holiday periods or outside school hours. Children may however need time to visit seriously ill relatives.
- Families may need time together to recover from trauma, crisis or bereavement involving an immediate relative, i.e., parent, sibling, guardian, carer or grandparent.
- Absence for a bereavement of a close family member i.e., other relative, is usually considered an exceptional circumstance but for the funeral service only, not extended leave.
- Absences for important religious observances are taken into account but only for the ceremony and travelling time, not extended leave. This is intended for one off situations rather than regular or recurring events.
- The needs of families of service personnel will be taken into account if they are returning from long operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled holiday time.
- Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for children with special educational needs or disabilities.
- The school will take the child's previous record of attendance into account when making a decision to authorise a holiday request.
- The Headteacher may determine the length of the authorised absence.
- This list is used as a guide by the Headteacher, but other contributing factors will be considered if necessary.

A fixed penalty notice (FPN) is not a mandatory accompaniment to an unauthorised holiday request, should the Headteacher feel that a family's circumstances do not warrant an FPN being issued.

Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)

From September 2014 schools in Cardiff will work alongside the Education Welfare Service to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice under the Education (Penalties Notice) (Wales) Regulations 2013.

In certain circumstances the Education Welfare Service may issue parents/carers with a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) under The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013. A warning letter may be sent if:

- There have been 10 unauthorised sessions in one school term.
- A child has been late (after registration has closed) on 10 occasions within one school term.
- Parents/carers have failed to engage in attempts to improve school attendance.
- The Police have regularly found pupils to be absent from school without an acceptable reason.

A Fixed Penalty Notice will then be issued if:

- There is one further unauthorised absence within 15 school days of a warning letter having been issued.

Support and Intervention

Where concerns are raised by parents or staff about a pupil's school attendance, our Family Liaison Officer will contact the family to discuss any underlying issues which may be affecting a child's attendance. If this is unsuccessful, an Attendance Officer will make a home visit to discuss the matter in an environment which many families find comforting. During the home visit the Attendance Officer provides information and advice and seeks to support the pupil in returning to school.



The Attendance Officer works closely within the Llanishen High cluster group of schools and to ensure that good school attendance is promoted.

Coed Glas Primary School always seeks to resolve matters of poor attendance through effective partnership working with parents/carers.



The purpose of this leaflet is to ensure the co-operative work between pupils, the school, home and external agencies to ensure the best possible attendance of pupils in Coed Glas Primary School.



