



*Dreaming, believing, succeeding together*  
*Breuddwydio, coelio, llwyddo gyda'n gilydd*

# Cluster Attendance Policy

Policy reviewed: *October 2022*  
Policy valid until: *October 2025*  
Policy owned by: *The Headteacher*

*Headteacher:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Chair of Governors:* \_\_\_\_\_

## **Purpose**

- To raise standards in our school is a key priority of our school - standards of attainment, behaviour, personal and social skills and attendance.
- So that our pupils realise their full potential, regular and punctual attendance is vital.
- Pupils with low attendance under-perform - if a child is not in school on a regular basis, they will have 'gaps' in their knowledge.
- Governors and staff recognise that our school should strive to achieve as close to the 100% figure as is practicable given the co-operation of all parties involved - pupils, parents, staff and Cluster Attendance Leader.

## **Roles and responsibilities of Curriculum Leader/Headteacher**

- Ensure registers are completed correctly by teaching staff on a daily basis
- Monitor any attendance that falls below 94%
- Analyse data produced using SIMS on a half-termly basis
- Present attendance information to governors for consideration at meetings of the Governing Body
- Administer letters home advising parents of any difficulties regarding lateness or unauthorised absences
- Meet regularly with the Cluster Attendance Lead to flag up and discuss any pupil attendance problems
- Make requests, if need be, for Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) to be issued by Conwy Local Authority in the case of continued poor attendance or punctuality (unauthorised absence)
- Liaise with and offer support to families and parents experiencing difficulties getting their children to school
- Refer families and parents on to external agencies who can help with their child's attendance
- Liaise with feeder infants school and secondary school to encourage and maintain good attendance and punctuality
- Emphasise and make high profile the importance of being in school so as not to miss important work and activities
- Reward good attendance across the school, through the use of praise, attendance medals and rewards
- Consider applications for holidays within term time, in liaison with the Chair of the Governing Body
  - Each request will be considered on an individual basis and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, following the scrutiny of the pupil's attendance past and present (minimum of 94% required)
  - No holidays will be authorised in September so as to protect "transition time"
  - 4 weeks notice of request for holidays must be given
  - Up to a maximum of 10 days will be granted in an academic year

## **Roles and responsibilities of Classteachers**

- Register their class using the SIMS system at the start of every morning and afternoon session
- Close their register at 9:25am and 1:05pm respectively
- Use the appropriate codes for recording absences (see marking of registers)
- Record the times of arrival and reasons for lateness on SIMS
- Notify the school office of any absent children by 9:25am using Class Absences book
- Gently question parents on a child's return to school for reason for absence if one hasn't been provided already
- Keep letters giving explanations for absence (these should be dated by the classteacher when they are received)
- Discuss specific pupil attendance concerns at parent - teacher meetings
- Communicate attendance figures to parents through annual reports to parents
- Foster a positive attitude to school and attendance amongst their class

## **Roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body**

- Consider and analyse attendance data presented at meetings of the Governing Body
- Question the data and the interpretation of the data
- Support the Headteacher and staff in their efforts to improve punctuality and attendance
- Communicate attendance figures through the Annual General Report to Parents

## **Roles and responsibilities of Parents and Guardians**

- Ensure their child arrives in school on time every day
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality
- Notify the school by telephone, relevant school APP or office email for the reason for their child's absence *that day and each subsequent day of absence*

- If no contact has been received parents are to expect a telephone call/text from school regarding their child's absence.
- If a child's absence continues parents are to expect further calls and attempts to contact with the expectation that a home visit will be carried out by the Family Liaison Officer and Cluster Attendance Leader to establish the reason for absence and any support needs
- Should a child's attendance fall below 90% school will refer to the Cluster Attendance Leader to provide additional support to family and child, identifying issues preventing regular attendance at school
- Should a child's attendance be identified as a concern, parents are expected to attend a meeting to discuss issues and regular review meetings if required.
- Holidays in term time are not encouraged for any child at any time of year however, if parents must take a holiday in term time parents are expected to notify school of their child's expected absence by using the School Holiday Request Form, available from the school office
- Hand in School Holiday Request Forms, in good time (4 weeks notice) to the school
- Parents are expected to provide a letter stating a reason for their child's absence on the day their child returns to school if no phone call or email has been made to school to prevent their child's absence being recorded as unauthorised.

## **Implementation**

- **Marking of Attendance Registers**
  - The register must be completed daily at the start of the morning and afternoon session. No gaps should be left for children who might be late or who are known to be arriving later in the session. The register must stand as a record of those children who were present in school at the time of marking.
  - The attendance register should be completed no later than 9.25 a.m. for the morning session and 1.05 pm for the afternoon session. Those children arriving in class once the children have been settled and the register started should be considered as being late L
  - Pupils arriving late after 9:25, when registers have "closed" should be marked as U
  - Pupils who have a planned medical appointment should be marked as M, and when arriving at school during the morning session, this code should change to L with a comment of arrival time due to medical appointment.
- **Children Arriving Late**
  - Doors onto the yard close just after 8:55am, children arriving late must enter the school building through the school office
  - Children will be signed in by the Office Administrator or Family Liaison Officer
  - On arrival in school the time should be recorded on SIMS
  - Where a pattern for lateness becomes apparent, class teacher should notify the Family Liaison Officer or Headteacher who will invite parents or guardians into school for an informal discussion.
  - Initial action should be to encourage the child to get to class on time
  - If the above action does not have the desired effect then a letter will be sent home explaining and clarifying the situation
  - If the problem continues the Cluster Attendance Lead will be contacted and a request may be made for a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) to Conwy Local Authority to be sent (U codes only)
- **End of the school day**
  - Any pupils who need to be picked up at the end of the day by a specific person, should ensure that a "Special Arrangements for the Collection of Children" form has been filled in and handed to the school office.
  - This form also outlines who is not allowed to pick up a pupil – legal documentation must be shown to the office to prove this
  - Pupils will not be allowed to be picked up by anyone under the age of 14
- **Authorised and Unauthorised Absences**
  - An authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance, or when an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences should be treated as unauthorised.
  - Parents can not authorise absence through letters or messages etc. only schools can do this. If school staff have reason to doubt that an explanation for absence is genuine, the absence should be treated as unauthorised.
  - When an absence does not fit into the criteria set or a member of staff considers the explanation to be false, the register should be marked for an unauthorised absence (shown by "O").
  - When a teacher is unsure as to whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised they should consult the Headteacher, Office Administrator Family Liaison Officer or Cluster Attendance Lead
  - When a reason for absence is provided this must be recorded on SIMS
  - If, on a child's return to school, a letter is not provided, the absence will remain as unauthorised using the code letter 'N' (No reason yet provided for absence)

- Continued unauthorised absence (5 days) should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher, Office Administrator, Family Liaison Officer and ultimately the Cluster Attendance Lead for further action.
- Decisions to involve the Cluster Attendance Lead in cases will be made after discussion with the class-teacher and due consideration of the surrounding circumstances e.g. levels of attendance in previous years, attitude of the parents, reasons being given for absence, etc.
- Letters/forms giving explanations for absence should be dated and kept in teacher's attendance folders
- When a parent requests authorisation for term-time leave for their child, a School Holiday Form should be sent out for them to complete. The returned form is then given to the Headteacher for consideration with the Chair of the Governing Body as to whether the absence will be authorised or not. Factors considered are:
  - Each request will be considered on an individual basis and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, following the scrutiny of the pupil's attendance past and present (minimum of 94% required)
  - No holidays will be authorised in September so as to protect "transition time"
  - 4 weeks notice of request for holidays must be given
  - Up to a maximum of 10 days will be granted in an academic year
- Parents will be informed by the Headteacher if their request for an authorised has been declined, the school office administrator will contact the parent if the holiday is authorised.
- The signed form is then copied and kept with a copy being sent back to the parents to inform them of the decision.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children and their families will be treated in the same way. The education and welfare of the child will come first in any decisions made.

### **Arrangements for policy monitoring and evaluation**

The policy will be reviewed and amended annually and approved at the first meeting of the Governing Body of the academic year.