



Pupil Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Children's Rights	
Article 28: Your right to learn and go to school.	Article 29: Your right to be the best you can be.

General

Section 444 of the Education Act (1996) states that all children of compulsory age (5-16) should register with and attend a school regularly. The Governing Body believes that regular attendance is essential for Ysgol Pencae pupils to benefit fully from the opportunities we offer them. Evidence strongly suggests that pupils with persistent absence are at risk of educational failure.

“Those who leave full time education with no or low qualifications are at risk of subsequent failure in the job market.” The White Paper ‘Building Excellent Schools Together’ recognises that raising educational standards and tackling under-achievement is at the heart of Government policy. BEST also makes it clear that “the commitment to raising standards applies to all children including those who are socially excluded or are in danger of becoming so.”

Pupil Support And Inclusion, Circular 3/99, National Assembly for Wales

Parents, schools and the LEA share the legal responsibility when it comes to school attendance.

- Parents of children of compulsory age must ensure they receive a full-time education at school or make separate arrangements;
- The LEA must ensure that parents meet their statutory obligations concerning the education of their children, including, where necessary action through the courts;
- Ysgol Pencae teaching staff will register attendance at the start of each session using the LEA codes (through Group Ed App) and these are fed into our SIMS system to find out the school's attendance. This is used by the school and where appropriate, the Welfare Officer. Attendance data will be compiled and published for parents and the Governing Body in the School Handbook, the Governing Body's Annual Report to Parents and in the Headteacher's Reports each term to the Governing Body.

Operational details

In the morning, Reception, Yr 1 and 2 pupils should be led by parents to the bottom yard. Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils will access the school through the main gate.

At 8.50am school staff will come out on duty and meet the pupils on the yard.

In bad weather the school doors will be opened at 8.50am to let pupils into the building. Staff will be waiting for the pupils in the classes.

If a pupil arrives at school after morning registration has finished, parents / guardians should sign them in through the school's digital registration system at the main office. It is expected that a reason is given by the pupil's parent / guardian explaining why he/she is late.

Registers close for all pupil in the morning at 9:10a.m. and in the afternoon at 1.20a.m.

Absence

There is a clear link between lack of attendance, lack of achievement and the well-being of children. Pupils should come to school every school day where possible. Parents should encourage their children to attend school and emphasise the need to attend to reach their full potential.

If a pupil is not present at school, parents are asked to report that their child is absent to school through Group Ed / phone call before 10am.

It is expected that there is a valid reason for the absence. It will be necessary to continue to communicate with the school for the duration of the absence. If you know the length of absence in advance, e.g. sickness and diarrhoea meaning that they will be absent for a minimum of 48hrs, this can be noted in the first message / call.

If no message has been received to state the reason for the absence, the school will contact parents / guardians to find out a reason for their absence.

If the school has not communicated with the parents/guardians then a written record of the reason for absence will be expected on the child's return to school.

If a child is on the 'Child Protection Register' and is absent without notice, the school will attempt to contact the family as a matter of urgency. If the school fails to make contact with the family, then we will contact the family social worker as outlined in the 'All Wales Child Protection Guidance' document

Unauthorised absences are a serious matter and the school has a duty to try to reduce the occurrence of such absences. Therefore, parents are asked to work with the school to report the reason for the absence.

Monitoring of Absence

Pupil absences are looked at weekly; The data is analysed and absence patterns are identified. The school will work with the home and the Welfare Officer to overcome any absence patterns or issues.

The Headteacher will liaise with the LEA through the Welfare Officer and other agencies when assessing attendance issues in the context of the family's wider problems. These issues may include: -

- a continuing or worsening pattern of irregular attendance ;
- parents do not accept their responsibility for ensuring that the child attends school and refuse to discuss ways to improve attendance with the school;
- parents often allow unjustifiable leave or the parents request unauthorised leave too much;
- a pattern develops where there is constant absence on a particular day or days of the week.

Medical Appointments or other

Parents / guardians are encouraged to book appointments where possible after school hours.

If this is not possible, parents will be asked to write a note / email explaining to the office and class teacher in advance if there is a medical appointment or any reason when the pupil needs to leave school before the end of the school day.

Before leaving the premises, parents will need to sign the pupil out on the digital registration system at the main office. This is to ensure that the school is aware that the pupil is no longer on school premises in the event of a fire or other serious incident.

Without permission, pupils are not allowed to leave the premises at any time from their arrival at school until the end of the school day at 3.30 a.m.

Holidays during school time

Parents are expected to take their holidays during school holidays. The school is committed to the County's central policy of not authorising holidays during a school term.

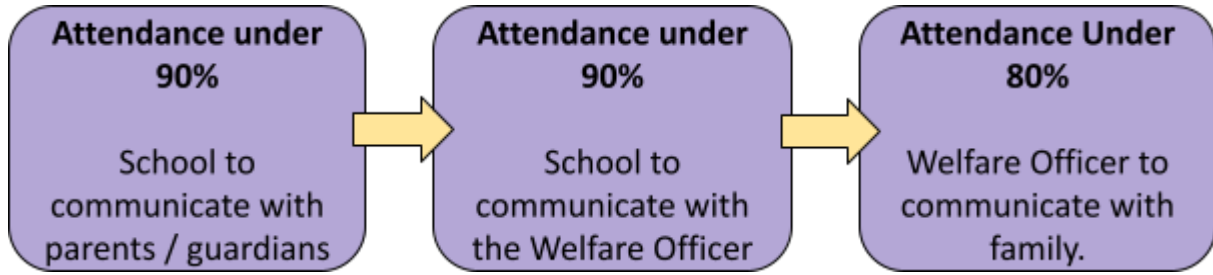
If a pupil goes on leave that has not been authorised by the school then it is counted as unauthorised leave.

It is anticipated that there are some exceptional conditions when the above cannot be achieved and each application will need to be viewed individually under such conditions.

When the percentage of attendance falls below 92% the application will need to be considered very carefully because this is generally regarded by the Authority as the lowest percentage for holiday authorisation.

The role of an education welfare service

Any pupil with an attendance of less than 90% will be closely monitored.



If we do not see an increase in pupil attendance following intervention by the Attendance Officer then the school and the Attendance Officer can refer the family to a team of LEA welfare workers for further interventions. This can include legal proceedings.

The Governor who has pastoral care for attendance and punctuality is Mrs Emma Simpkins.

Fixed Penalty Notices

In certain circumstances, the school may require the Education Welfare Service to issue notice of a Fixed Penalty Notice under the Education (Penalty Notices (Wales) Regulations 2013 to parents / guardians. A letter of notice will be delivered if;

- There have been 10 unauthorised sessions within one school term;
- A child has been late (after the register closed) on 10 occasions within one school term;
- Parents / guardians have failed to participate in efforts to improve attendance;
- Police have regularly found a pupil absent from school for no acceptable reason.

A Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued if:

- One further unauthorised absence within 15 school days of a warning letter being issued;
- Unauthorised holidays are taken during the season (please note that no letter is sent)

When the school feels that, despite its best efforts to support the family, attendance is not improving, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service. A referral might be made when, for example:

- A pattern of irregular attendance has developed;
- A period of invariant absence has been established;
- lack of parental cooperation that's causing the irregular presence of a child.

Ysgol Pencae will liaise with the Education Welfare Service to provide the evidence needed to prosecute parents / guardians who fail, without reasonable justification, to ensure that their child attends school regularly, under sections 444 (1) and 444 (1A) of the Education Act 1996.

Attendance Targets

A report of pupil attendance will be sent home with the pupils' end of year progress report.

The percentage of school attendance is shared monthly with the parents. This will be added to the Newsletter.

The school must set targets for attendance and absence levels on an annual basis.

These targets are ambitious and follow national targets.

The school reports the percentage of school attendance plus the percentage of absences without consent and the percentage of absences with consent at all Governing Body meetings.

In order for the school to meet these targets, parents are asked to comply with the guidance in this policy.

Conclusion

The above procedures are intended to ensure co-operation between pupils, school, home and external agencies to ensure the best possible attendance for Ysgol Pencae pupils and that pupils attend school and have every opportunity to reach their full potential.

Publication date: January 2025

Headteacher's Signature: Siwan Dafydd

Signature of the Chair of Governors:

Review date: January 2026