Llwynypia Primary
Curriculum Policies

Attendance Policy

Date	Review Date
Summer 2026	Summer 2028

Legal Context

Parents/Carers of pupils of compulsory school age have a legal duty to ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education by attendance at school or otherwise. (Section 7, Education Act 1996).

If a pupil of compulsory school age who is registered at school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence. (Section 444(1), Education Act 1996)

It is the legal duty of the school to keep an accurate attendance register of all pupils. (Section 434(1), Education Act 1996)

All pupil's of compulsory age must be punctual and registered twice a day; at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. (The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010)

"To comply with The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013, the 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 head teacher to authorise absences in line with The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 attendance codes and supplementary guidance provided by the local authority."

Introduction

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.

- **Pupils must arrive at school at 8.45am, doors close at 8.55am.**
- **Pupils must be punctual for registration at the following times:**
  Morning registration between 8.45am and 8.55am.
- **After 9.05 am, staff will enter the pupil's mark as late (L)**
- **After 9.20 am, staff will enter the pupil's mark as (U)**
- **Afternoon registration takes place at 12.45.**

Any pupil who arrives after 9.05am will be marked on the register as late. Any pupil arriving after the registration period, an unauthorised late mark will be issued. The accuracy of the register is important in order to support any statutory intervention that may be required.

This register must record whether a pupil is present, absent, not required to attend or attending an

approved educational activity (treated as present), using the appropriate codes listed on Bromcom.

Importantly, every half-day absence must be classified as either 'authorised' or 'unauthorised', only the school can make this decision

We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

The school follows the regulation of the Welsh Government and guidelines from the LA. The governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and has otherwise good attendance, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Medical appointments must be supported by an official appointment card or letter.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.
- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school due to a holiday that was not agreed by the head teacher under her discretion.
- A child may be marked as unauthorised if they have persistent low attendance and takes another absence from school.

3 If a child is absent

- When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher and/or School Attendance Officer will record the absence in the register and ensure both parties are notified.
- If a parent telephones the school to report an absence, it will be recorded on Bromcom.
- The School Attendance Officer will collate the names of pupils absent without reason and will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian by telephone or text.
- When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence.
- A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical

appointment.

Requests for Holidays

- We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, e.g. a special event.

Authorised Holidays

- The school (Governing Body) uses its discretion to authorise pupils' absence from school for holidays up to 10 days in one academic year during the school term, in accordance with Welsh Government guidelines. The initial 10 days / 20 sessions will be recorded as a 'H'.
- The school (Governing Body) will authorise holidays under the following circumstances:
    - Attendance at the time of the holiday is above 95% for the year up to the date the holiday starts
    - Is NOT more than 10 days in one academic year.
    - There have been no exclusions in the previous 3 terms
    - The head teacher has used her discretion in special circumstances
- Requests for holidays must be received at least a week before the start of the holiday.
- Holidays requested well in advance will be unauthorised in principle but the decision to mark them authorised or unauthorised will depend on the above criteria being met on the date the holiday starts.
- Holidays that are marked unauthorised will be issued with a fixed penalty notice in line with RCT guidelines.

Unauthorised holidays

- The school has adopted the guidelines as set out the RCT Toolkit for Attendance and Wellbeing. All unauthorised holidays will be referred to the Attendance and Wellbeing Service and issued with a fixed penalty notice.
- After 10 days absence, the G code will be used.

Long Term Absence

- When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.
- If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

Repeated Long Term Absences

- The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

- The school has adopted the procedure as stated in the RCT Attendance Toolkit document. This is as follows -

The school will contact the parent, guardian or guardian of any pupil who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem.
If the situation does not improve and the pupil's attendance drops below 86% within the previous 6 week period, the school will then refer to the Attendance and Wellbeing Service (AWS), who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation. The AWS provides support to schools, pupils and parents to ensure regular attendance and address problems relating to absenteeism. The service liaises with other agencies and provides an important link between home and school. It helps parents and teachers to work in partnership to ensure that pupils benefit from regular attendance.
The responsibility of the Local Authority is devolved to the AWS. Where 'persistent absenteeism' continues despite input from the governors, supported by the AWS, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

- The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Fixed Penalty Notices

In September 2013, the Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013 came into force, as part of Welsh Government's commitment to addressing poor school attendance. All local authorities across Wales are expected to use the fixed penalty notices to assist them to prevent unnecessary absence from school:
A requirement of this is for every local authority to develop a Code of Conduct outlining how the scheme would operate ensuring consistency in the issuing of fixed penalty notices across the county. The implementation of the regulations will affect all pupils of compulsory school age (5 to 16 years) registered at any infant, junior, primary, secondary and special school, including pupil referral units in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
On 31st July 2014, Rhondda Cynon Taf Cabinet approved the Code of Conduct, including the criteria for issuing fixed penalty notices:

- *Where a pupil has accrued 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absences in the current term;*
- *Where a pupil has been persistently late on 10 or more occasions in the current term, arriving more than 30 minutes after the registration period;*
- *Where a parent refuses to engage with a school in the interest of improving their child's school attendance levels;*
- *Where a pupil is repeatedly caught truanting in public places during school hours;*
- *Where a holiday in term time has been requested but has been unauthorised.*

Fixed penalty notices will offer a means of intervention to prevent individual cases becoming persistent non-attendance cases and progressing to the local magistrates' court. Only one notice will be issued to a parent/carer (who has parental responsibility) in any one academic year but notices can be issued for more than one child in that family. A fixed penalty notice is a £60 fine if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days of receipt. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 42 days, the local authority must either prosecute parents/carers

for the offence or withdraw the notice. Therefore, from the 1st September 2014, the Code of Conduct will be operational across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Rewards for Good Attendance

- The class with the overall best attendance from the previous week are celebrated in Friday Celebration Assembly. This class receives extra play as an incentive.
- All children with 95% attendance at the end of the year will get a certificate.
- Children are entered into an end of year raffle if they have over 95% attendance to win a hamper.

Parents

- Parents are reminded of the importance of attendance through newsletters, SeeSaw and social media.
- Weekly news letters are sent to say which class has the highest attendance of the week.

10 Attendance targets

- The school is set attendance targets each year by the Local Authority. The school strives to achieve these targets.
- The school has its own target of 90.7% which is regularly referred to in school assemblies and clearly displayed throughout the school.

11. ALN Statement

- The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all pupils who attend the school.
- If a pupil has an additional learning need or disability, we will work with external agencies to ensure individual needs are met.
- Our provision complies with the requirements set out in the ALN code of Practice.
- If a concern arises suggesting that a pupil may have additional learning needs the teacher is able to provide additional resources and educational opportunities which meet these needs within the normal class organisation. Support programmes are in place, as an intervention tool.
- If a pupil's need is more severe, in consultation with the pupil's parents, the ALNCO makes a referral to the appropriate external agencies.

12 Monitoring and review

- It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor the overall attendance, and it forms part of the Headteacher Report which is discussed in the termly Governing Body meetings. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus, and in the annual governors' report.

- The School Clerk works in the office and her role involves checking to see if all pupils are in school. If not texts or phone calls are made to enquire why. If there is a pattern of missed sessions or days late then the school works closely with the AWS (Jade Thomas and Rachel Cooper) to support parents to bring their children to school.
- School uses the RCT Vulnerability Groupings to ensure the most vulnerable pupils are closely monitored and any absences checked immediately.

The school has agreed that it is the responsibility of the school to:

- monitor pupil attendance regularly;
- monitor overall attendance on a fortnightly basis;
- send letters to parents for attendance under 90%
- submit attendance rates to the LA on a half-termly (six week) basis;
- liaise with the LEA to discuss targets to improve attendance; and
- for Estyn and Welsh Government Purposes make attendance data available.
- If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Attendance and Wellbeing Service, who will contact the parents or guardians.

Headteacher		Date	
Chair of Governing Body		Date	