

Glenboi Community Primary School

YSGOL GYNRADD GYMUNEDOL
GLENBOI
COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance Policy

Date: June 2024
Review Date : June 2026

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Introduction

Children cannot learn if they are absent from school. Therefore, we aim to ensure that all our children take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and to raise standards by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of pupils.

All children regardless of circumstances have the right of access to high educational provision and we believe it is the duty of every parent to ensure good levels of attendance and punctuality for their children.

Aims

- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm.
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality are valued by the school.
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school.
- To promote the value of attendance as a key determinant of achievement

There is little doubt that there is a direct correlation between poor attendance and low achievement. Successful participation in education is the passport to future personal, social and economical health and well being.

At Glenboi Community 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. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and put into 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, because children learn best when they are happy and relaxed. We strive to involve, excite and motivate all our children during the school day, so they will want to come to school

At Glenboi Community we set targets for the improvement of attendance and report progress against the targets annually in the Governors Annual Report to Parents and in the School Improvement Plan.

We collect and analyse attendance data which allows patterns to be identified, e.g. by year group, class, week day or pupil. It also helps to identify pupils with problems who need support.

Parents are expected to notify the school on the first day of absence the reason for the absence. If there is no explanation forthcoming, the school writes to the parents requesting the information.

Communication

The First Day Contact Supervisor (Mrs J Evans) is responsible for:

- contacting parents if they have not reported their child's absence
- sending a letter if no contact is made
- continuing to contact the parents throughout the day until contact is made
- contacting the key worker if a child is on the child protection register and no reason has been given for the child's absence
- informing the Executive Headteacher Mrs G. Powell or the Head of School and Mrs A Evans or attendance lead Mrs K Lewis (Family engagement officer) of any trends or issues regarding attendance.

Information on lateness, illness and absence is given to parents in the School Prospectus. This highlights the importance of being at school on time and notifying school if their child is absent for any reason. At the pre-school induction meetings held each year for children about to enter the reception class the importance of regular attendance is discussed and explained. This talk also includes parents and children arriving at school on time so that each child can be given the best possible start to each school day. Being picked up on time is also stressed, especially for young children who can be very upset if they are the only ones left.

Parents are asked to share any worries their child might have in school. Sometimes little things upset children, which means they become unhappy, and may not want to come to school. Parents need to be aware of this.

Again at this initial meeting parents are asked to arrange their family holidays within the school holidays, rather than in term time so that their child's education is not disrupted.

Children are also admitted to school at various times of the year, and into various year groups. All parents requesting a place are asked to make an appointment with the headteacher. At this meeting the importance of regular attendance is always highlighted along with other school routines.

Registration

The attendance register for each class is marked at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session using the Sims registration system. If a child is absent and no reason has been given then they are marked with an 'O' until parents have been contacted and an explanation has been given. If no explanation is given and the child returns to school the absence will be marked as unauthorised and parents will be informed. If the child remains absent and parents cannot be contacted then LA emergency attendance and well-being procedures are followed.

Registers are closed at 9:15am and 1:15pm.

As registers are electronic, for the purpose of fire regulations laminated registration sheets are filled in and kept by the class teacher daily.

Absences

Attendance is regularly monitored, any concerns are discussed with the headteacher and Attendance Officer. The attendance record at our school is good. At regular intervals we remind parents that the school must be notified of absence by letter or telephone. The absence may then be authorised (considered legal) if the reason given falls into one of the following categories:

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for the pupil to be absent from school, or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted by the school as satisfactory justification for absence. Only schools, and not parents, can authorise an absence, we will consider whether the reason for absence is reasonable before doing so.

The following codes should be used for authorised absences:

M – Medical/dental appointments

This is used for medical/dental appointments that could not be arranged outside school hours;

I – Illness

This is used for absences due to illness;

R – Religious Observance

Includes absences for days set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/pupil belongs;

C – Other Authorised absence

This includes absences for public performances and employment (licensed by the local authority), approved absences for family bereavements and special occasions. Parents should be encouraged to give advance notice.

Absences for special occasions will be considered carefully by the school and only authorised in exceptional circumstances. We will consider the nature of the event; its frequency; whether advance notice was given and the pupil's overall attendance pattern. For example, attendance at a family wedding would be acceptable, but absence on a pupil's birthday or shopping trips in school hours would not be authorised.

D- Dual registered

E – Exclusion

This category should include absences due to exclusion from school. A child who is excluded for a fixed period remains on roll and on the attendance register, so their absence should be treated as authorised as it results from a decision taken by the school. Similarly the absence of a permanently excluded pupil is treated as authorised while any review or appeal is in progress. If the permanent exclusion is confirmed the child's name is then removed from the school roll and attendance register. This will normally happen on the school day immediately following an independent appeal committee's decision to uphold a permanent exclusion, or on the expiry of the time allowed for appeals to be made, or if before that a pupil takes up a place elsewhere. In the meantime the pupil's absence is to be recorded as authorised under this code.

H – Family holidays

Our Governing Body has agreed to authorise 10 session's holiday (5 days), in line with advice from Welsh Government. Authorised absence due to term time holidays are at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher, Head of School and Chair of Governors and will only be granted if the child has good attendance throughout the year.

X – Non-compulsory school aged absence

Approved Educational Activities

Since 1998, pupils who are attending an approved educational activity away from school premises can be marked as such in the register, rather than as an 'authorised absence'. An 'approved educational activity' must be:

- Approved by the Headteacher or her designated deputy
- Of an educational nature (including work experience and sporting activities) and,
- Supervised by a person authorised by the headteacher of the school.

[as set out in regulation 7(4A) of the 1995 Regulations].

'Approved educational activity' is treated as a 'present' marking when attendance data is analysed or published.

The 1995 regulations require that the nature of an 'approved educational activity' is also recorded. The following codes should be used for recording approved educational activities.

D- Dual registered

This would include children who are registered in more than one educational establishment (e.g. Dual registration in a mainstream school and a Pupil Referral Unit), and flexible education programmes – such as part-time attendance at college or attendance at an off-site voluntary project.

This does not, however, include traveller pupils who are attending more than one school at which they are registered. An authorised absence must be recorded for these pupils at the school they are not attending.

Approved flexible arrangements with families providing education for children at home on a part-time basis or short-term basis, for example in the case of school phobics or school refusers or education provided by religious establishments can also be included in this category. This would be dependent on the school's agreement to the arrangements, and the LEA would need to be satisfied that the pupil was receiving 'suitable education at school or otherwise' in line with their responsibilities under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996.

B- Educated off site (not dual registered)

This would be used for pupils educated off site for example, education visits or trips.

P- Attendance at or participation in approved sporting activities; field trips; educational visits; or other activities in which pupils are representing their school.

Schools are encouraged to treat sporting and other activities they have not organised or where pupils are not representing the school, as 'authorised absences' (if the absence is approved by the school).

Coronavirus Attendance Procedures

; - Illness due to Covid 19

Code ; should be used if the learner has been notified they have a confirmed case of COVID-19. This would only apply when they have a positive test result and are self-isolating and the school has been notified accordingly.

The temporary code ; is for school use only and schools should remind all SIMS users of their duty of confidentiality.

[- Remote learning due to Covid 19

This includes individual learners who are unable to physically attend school for reasons understood and agreed by the school. They should be recorded as code [.

This code will apply to learners with symptoms of COVID-19; and those where shielding has been recommended by their clinician or they have been advised to self-isolate by TTP.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence that is not authorised by the school should be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Under the Education Act 1996 prosecutions for unauthorised absences can only be pursued on the basis of unauthorised absences. Unexplained absence of more than two weeks, regular non attendance and frequent odd-day absences are referred to the EWO.

O-Unauthorised absence for the duration of a morning or afternoon session

If teachers have reason to doubt that an explanation offered about a particular absence is genuine, the absence should be treated as unauthorised. All absences are to be treated as unauthorised until the school has agreed that a satisfactory explanation has been given, which should normally be within one day.

The school will contact the parent or carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parent 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 EWO.

L-Late arrivals for registration

'Schools should make their policy to discourage late arrival. A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt, not only his or her continuity of learning, but also that of others.' (School Attendance: Policy and Practice on Categorisation of Absence).

In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties, or where prior notice of late arrival is given, registers may be kept open for longer. Keeping registers open all morning or afternoon is unacceptable. Where prior notice has been given that a pupil will be late for a justifiable reason or where the lateness is due to exceptional, unavoidable causes, such as traffic accident or sudden family illness, it would be appropriate to record the absence as authorised absence.

Where pupils miss registration and fail to provide an adequate explanation, this will therefore be counted as an unauthorised absence even though the pupil is now on site. Marking of pupils on the register a 'L' for late will highlight the fact that they are at school as they would otherwise be marked as 'U' for unauthorised absence. This is important in the case of emergencies such as fire. The blame for lateness will usually lie with the parents rather than the child. In this case there is a need to educate the parents rather than the child. At primary school it is unfair to punish the children for something that is probably beyond their control.

G – Family holiday not agreed or days in excess

Leaving the school premises during the school day

Children are not allowed to leave the school premises during the school day. If they have an appointment at the doctor's or dentist's, then they should be met from school unless written authorisation or other arrangements are provided by parents.

These registration codes may not always demonstrate when a pupil is present on the school site, e.g. A child who leaves school after registration due to illness or because of an appointment. All such cases must be recorded in a record book held in the school office.

Temporary School Closures

Schools may close temporarily for a variety of reasons, including:

- In- Service Training for teachers
- Very bad weather
- Fire or other serious structural damage
- Major structural work extending into term time
- Major incident or emergency

Schools are not required to take attendance registers when they are temporarily closed

Rewards for Good Attendance

Classes who have over 95% attendance in any one week receive an additional 10 minutes of 'Golden Time' at the end of the week. Good attendance is also celebrated at the end of each half term, with certificates being issued to children with over 95% attendance, and raffle draws in each class. Special attendance challenges are also organised by Mrs Lewis at various times

throughout the year e.g Christmas attendance challenge and Summer attendance challenge. These are intended to target times of year which traditionally had poorer attendance.

Parental Responsibility

At Glenboi, we believe that parental responsibility extends beyond securing regular school attendance. Parents should ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn. Furthermore, they need to see themselves as partners with the school in the education of their children, instilling in them a respect for education and those who deliver it – and impress upon the children the need to observe the school rules to ensure we achieve our aim to:

‘establish and maintain an atmosphere of a caring community, where everyone is well motivated and well disposed to others, inside and outside school.’

The Nominated Governors will:

- work closely with the Headteacher and the coordinator;
- ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
- ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
- report to the Governing Body every term;
- annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

“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. ”

Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has had an initial equality impact assessment and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school. A full assessment will be undertaken at the next review after training from Rhondda Cynon Taff County Council’s Equality Officer.

Monitoring and Review

Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is a concern about a child’s absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of this Policy

Annually (or when the need arises) the effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and the nominated governor sub-committee and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the Governors

Headteacher:	G Powell	Date:	January 2016 Reviewed June 2024
Chair of Governing Body:	<i>A. Morgan</i>	Date:	January 2016 Reviewed June 2024

Date of next review June 2026