



## Attendance Policy

## **Policy for Attendance & Registration**

### **Introduction**

Glan Usk is a successful school and your child plays a huge part in making it so. For our learners to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you ensure your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Glan Usk is committed to ensure regular attendance at school is a priority which will in turn provide children with the best possible chance to succeed and achieve their goals.

This policy reflects the local authority's Attendance Strategy.

### **Aims for Improving Attendance**

The school fully recognises the importance of regular attendance if pupils are to develop personally, socially and academically to their full potential. Furthermore, attendance levels of below 90% are viewed as unacceptable by the National Assembly for Wales and the School Inspectorate.

This policy aims to ensure that attendance and punctuality remain a key focus for all, including governors, teachers, parents/ carers, pupils and partner agencies. We will strive to:

- offer a safe and friendly environment which welcomes children regardless of race, gender or ability
- raise standards and ensure all learners reach their full potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality
- ensure all stakeholders receive communication on the importance of regular school attendance
- identify those pupils with irregular attendance at an early stage and work with partner agencies to try and address any barriers that stop pupils from attending school regularly
- keep accurate and up to date attendance data
- ensure all learners are safe by following the local authority's 'Children Missing Education' guidance
- reward those pupils with high attendance and those who have made significant progress in raising attendance levels

This policy is supported by the [All Wales Attendance Framework](#)

It is also supported by the Newport Council Attendance Policy 2017-18

### **Good Attendance at School**

We consider good attendance is above 95% and we expect this to be the minimum level for all children at **Glan Usk**. As a school, we are open for 190 days a year; this leaves 175 days for holidays, rest and non-urgent appointments.

The school, parents and the LEA's Education Welfare Service all have a responsibility to promote the importance of regular attendance and to monitor and respond to cases of irregular attendance. It is important that this responsibility is carried out in partnership with us all working together for the ultimate benefit of pupils.

### **Parents**

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time. Absences, other than for illness, should be kept to a minimum. Unacceptable reasons for absence which the school regards as unauthorised absence or truancy include:

- Lateness e.g. after 9.30am
- Whole mornings or afternoons being taken off for doctor or dentist appointments. Ideally these should be arranged in out-of-school time
- Occasions such as birthdays and shopping trips.
- Holidays

### **Authorised Absences**

Where a pupil is absent due to sickness and is genuinely unable to attend school, then the school, after being informed, may authorise a child's absence. Parents are told to inform the school of their child's absence at the beginning of the day. The school has a very clear process for parents to follow if their child is absent. In law, only a headteacher can authorise a pupil's absence, and may require additional evidence such as a letter from your child's GP.

### **Unauthorised Absences**

The law states that parent/carer(s) must ensure that their child regularly attends the school where they are registered. With this in mind, the school governors have agreed that ALL holiday absences will be unauthorised. This means that any child who is taken out of school during term time to go on holiday will receive an unauthorised absence in the register from their class teacher.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from school in order for them to take part in acts of religious worship. The days when this occurs are known to the school and pupils will not be disadvantaged in their education by attendance at such worship.

When their children are absent, parents are asked to let the school know as soon as possible, preferably by telephoning on the first morning, or by sending a message. In this way absences can be authorised by the Headteacher. Without such notification the absence will, for record/reporting purposes, be counted as 'unauthorised'.

### Persistent Absenteeism

| Percentage Attendance | Days Missed (Termly) | Days Missed (Yearly) |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 90%                   | 7 days               | 20 days (4 weeks)    |
| 80%                   | 14 days              | 40 days              |
| 70%                   | 21 days              | 60 days              |
| 60%                   | 28 days              | 80 days              |
| 50%                   | 35 days              | 100 days             |
| 40%                   | 42 days              | 120 days             |
| 30%                   | 49 days              | 140 days             |

### The School

School has a responsibility to record and monitor pupil attendance, informing Governors on a termly basis of attendance patterns and issues.

Attendance registers are marked daily by class teachers with the school secretary transferring the information onto the school computer system. Absences are recorded as follows:

M – Medical/Dental

E - Exclusion

C - Authorised – Other Circumstances

H - Annual family holiday – authorised

L - Late before registration closes

@ – Late after registration closes

0 – Unauthorised absence.

Absence forms are available to the class teacher and will be used when no explanation for an absence has been received.

### **Attendance Team**

The school attendance team will provide the 'first response' to act upon lateness or poor attendance. Parents are contacted either by telephone or by letter if no explanation has been received regarding an absence. The attendance team will work with parents and offer support to help with issues relating to attendance. The attendance team may make impromptu home visits from time to time to provide support for parents/carers who require it.

Parents are informed by letter as soon as a child's attendance causes concern. If the attendance drops to 85% or below, the school will contact the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) who will be in touch with you.

Parents may be invited to attend a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss a child's absence.

### **The Education Welfare Service**

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) works in partnership with pupils, parents and the school to promote regular attendance. Regular meetings take place between the school Attendance Team and the EWO at which referrals to the service are made. A referral is accepted when action on the part of the school has failed to bring about an improvement in the child's attendance. Various actions are then open to the EWO. These form part of different levels of intervention open to the service. They include:

- Contact with the home (by letter and/or a home visit) to assess the situation and provide remedial intervention if appropriate and possible
- Arranging a meeting between the school, parents and child
- Offering specific support to the parents and individual children

If all else fails;

- Arranging planning meetings and case conferences
- Arranging the involvement of other agencies e.g. health workers and social workers
- Statutory intervention – court proceedings

### **Holiday/Leave of Absence**

The governors have agreed that ALL holiday requests will be unauthorised. If parents/carers still request a holiday form they are available from the school office.

### **Actions Due to Poor Attendance**

Regular attendance is required by law and Wales introduced Fixed Penalty Notice and Fines from September 2014 for parents who have children with more than **5 days** of unauthorised absence. This can be issued for any absences not authorised by the school, including holidays. Newport City Council will issue these notices when concerns are raised by school or the police. The fine is £120 unless paid within 28 days when it will reduce to £60.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate when:**

- At least 10 sessions (5 school days) are lost due to unauthorised absence during the current term. These do not need to be consecutive;
- Unauthorised absences of at least 10 sessions (5 school days) due to holidays in term time or delayed return from extended holidays; or
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed, in the current term. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of late arrival;
- Truancy, where the child has come to the attention of the Police or public during the school hours for being absent from school, without an acceptable reason.

### **Punctuality**

The school recognises the importance of a prompt start to each day so that children are in school ready to begin their lessons by 9.00 am in KS2 and 9.05am in FP.

In order to achieve this KS2 children are received into their classrooms at 8.50am and FP children at 8.55 am so that they have time to say goodbye to parents, hang up their coats and settle themselves into the class.

Parents are asked to bring children to the school office when they arrive late and are verbally asked for an explanation of the lateness. If children arrive after the register closes at 9.30am this is recorded as a 'late absence'.

Parents of children who are late arriving at school on a regular basis are contacted by letter and informed that the situation is being closely monitored. Continued lateness is then dealt with in the same way as absence.

It is to be noted however that as all children are brought to school by an adult it is seldom the child's fault that he/she arrives late. Accordingly, children are dealt with sensitively and parents always informed that in extraordinary circumstances it is better to be a little late rather than be absent from the session.

### **Incentives**

To promote good attendance in school we offer our pupils a number of incentives such as:

- Certificates to the class with the highest attendance each week
- A prize cup to the class with the highest attendance each week
- Certificates for 100% attendance each term
- Prize or reward for 100% termly attendance
- Certificate and prize for pupils who make significant progress in improving attendance
- A prize for any pupils who manage to get 100% for the year.

We actively promote the benefits of good attendance to all pupils through circle time activities, assemblies and by staff simply talking to pupils.

### **School Attendance Targets**

The school has annual local authority set targets for attendance and everyone has an important part to play in meeting them.

Parents are notified of their child's attendance levels at termly Parent Consultations.

Attendance percentages and targets are shared with parents on HT newsletters.

Pupils are made aware of these targets and weekly class attendance information is shared during Friday Praise assemblies.

Parents/ carers are informed of weekly class attendance figures via the school's social media sites and Seesaw.

Targets and attendance information is also displayed around the school building and in the main entrance.

The school operates a 'Callio' process which provides parents with information on a termly basis about their child's attendance. Attendance is categorised into the following:

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>GREEN</b> | 95% or above - good or excellent attendance |
| <b>AMBER</b> | 90-95% - worrying attendance                |

### **Monitoring Attendance**

The Headteacher analyses attendance data from the SIMS system and reports the information to the Governing Body each term. Targets are set each year for attendance, broken down into attendance by children before and after compulsory school age. The school is required to set attendance targets for the Welsh Assembly Government.

### **Equal Opportunities**

We do not discriminate (either directly or indirectly) against anyone on the grounds of their gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, ability, disability, sexuality or any aspect of their social/cultural background. Furthermore the school community is committed to countering all forms of racial prejudice and discrimination. All procedures are designed to promote equality and diversity.