



Attendance Policy

2023-24

General principles

The All Wales Attendance Framework (2011) states that:

“The Welsh Assembly Government’s policies for children and young people have their basis in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We believe it is vital that children and young people have access to appropriate and effective learning opportunities and provision.”

The framework also states that:

“A child’s success at school is likely to be affected negatively by poor attendance. Those who do not attend regularly may not be able to keep up with their work and in a busy school day it can sometimes be difficult for schools to find the extra time needed to help a child catch up. In addition, research shows that children who are not in school are more vulnerable and can be easily drawn into crime and anti-social behaviour and are more likely to be unemployed after leaving school.”

Cefn Saeson fully endorses these principles which underpin the school’s attendance policy. The school’s ethos of ‘EACH’ and principles of ‘How learn, Ready to Learn and My Voice’ is also at the heart of the attendance policy. The raising of attendance is given priority in the School Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) and it is anticipated that all staff will comply with the guidelines for accurate record keeping for attendance and punctuality.

Procedures for recording and monitoring attendance

Along with other secondary schools in NPT, Cefn Saeson operates an electronic attendance recording system. This enables attendance records to be processed electronically, allowing immediate access to individual pupil data and whole school data. Since 2022, the school has adopted the use of Class Charts to record attendance. This package is integrated with SIMS and exchange data seamlessly. All staff have access to SIMS and Class Charts in classrooms, staff bases and in external teaching areas, e.g. Sports Hall.

The codes used to indicate pupil attendance statuses are found in Appendix A of this policy. It is important to note that absence codes are issued by Welsh Government and it is the school’s responsibility to ensure that the most current codes are in use and that staff are aware of any changes. Codes that are prepopulated or inputted by the PAWB Attendance Team should not be overwritten by the class teacher. Any anomalies or queries should be raised by the class teacher via email or phone call to the PAWB Attendance Team; this step acts as an additional step to ensure that records are accurate.

During Form time (8.30-8.50am) form tutors are expected to take the register and mark any absent pupils with an N code (unless a code has already been inputted by the PAWB Attendance Team).



When pupils move to lesson one, it is required that class teachers mark the register within the first ten minutes of the lesson, again using an N code for absent pupils (unless a code has already been inputted).

If pupils fail to attend class but are recorded as being present in school, the class teacher will alert the PAWB Attendance Team via email or phone call who will then follow up with the appropriate actions. This is particularly important for pupils who are on safety plans in order to safeguard these pupils. All classrooms are now equipped with phones which supports effective communication between the PAWB Attendance Team and class teachers.



The PAWB Attendance team will then scrutinise registers for registration and lessons to identify pupils marked absent with an N code.



The PAWB Attendance Team check the school's attendance email account and voicemails for any parent/carer messages explaining any absenteeism; the team also receive messages from reception about absenteeism from parents/carers.



The PAWB Attendance Team update registers with appropriate codes in light of any new attendance information they've received.



The PAWB attendance Team proceed to contact home for pupil who have unexplained absences. This is done in the main via electronic communication but can also done via phone call. Our most vulnerable pupils are targeted first as part of our unexplained absence response as a matter of safeguarding and child protection.

As part of the pastoral programme form teachers' weekly monitor pupil attendance (via class charts) and procedures, looking for patterns of absence. Concerns regarding the pattern of absence may be recorded on the safeguarding part of class charts.

Head of Years check weekly monitor procedures and looking for patterns of absence.

The Education Welfare Officer meets weekly with Heads of Year to discuss pupils' attendance. Any concerns are reported to the Head of Pastoral, Mrs Sian Humphries, when necessary.

Procedures for pupils arriving late to school and to lessons

Pupils arriving late, after the registration period, must report to reception. They then must attend class immediately. Any pupil found disregarding this health and safety requirement should be reported to the relevant Head of Year for a warning and for monitoring procedures to be implemented. Similarly, pupils who are required to leave the school premises must report to the relevant Head of Year in the first place and then to Reception to sign out before leaving. These pupils must present a permission slip to reception upon leaving as proof of reasons.

Daily registers and data sheets for lateness are scrutinised by the PAWB Attendance Team including Heads of Year and Pastoral Lead Assistant Headteacher. When initially recognised by the number of late codes (L), the pupil should be warned by the Form Tutor and referred to the Head of Year if the situation persists. Heads of Year will contact parents and carers to discuss poor punctuality and issue a sanction which will reflect the amount of time lost through lateness. Any after school sanctions require twenty four hour notice to parents and carers unless agreed otherwise with parents and carers.

Detentions for persistent lateness will be routinely imposed by the Heads of Year for those who continue to incur late marks. These detentions are logged and monitored by Heads of Year.

In the most extreme cases this may lead to a fixed penalty notice.

All teaching staff are required to use Class Charts in order to take registers for the classes they teach. The register should be taken in a formal manner and pupils encouraged to respond in Welsh. Pupil attendance should be recorded in the first ten minutes of a lesson. Pupils arriving late should be marked as with a late code and the number of minutes late recorded on Class Charts.

Parent/carer responsibilities and school procedures following pupil absence

It is believed that early intervention following an absence will prevent pupils drifting into more frequent or prolonged absences. A member of the PAWB Attendance Team will routinely contact parents and carers of pupils who systematically lose time from school to determine reasons for absence and update school records. The appropriate code will then be assigned to the absence including any unauthorised absence. Cases of continued failure to make contact with parents and carers over attendance or persistent unauthorised absence will be escalated to the Education Welfare Service. If, by following the procedures outlined above, it is established that the pupil was in fact sent to school and that the parent or carer was unaware of the absence(s), the period(s) of absence will be marked by the PAWB Attendance Team as truancy.

Pupil absence notes need to be obtained from parents and kept as a record of the reason for absence and to allow tracking of unauthorised absence. The note/message must be adequate in that it fully explains the absence; if this is not so then it must be followed up and more detail sought. Cases of persistent failure to produce a note should be referred to the Heads of Year.

Parents may use the messaging application via Class charts to submit a note to form tutor.

Internal Truancy

If pupils fail to attend class but are recorded as being present in school, the class teacher will alert the PAWB Attendance Team via email or phone call who will then follow up with the appropriate actions. This is particularly important for pupils who are on safety plans in order to safeguard these pupils. Internal truancy checks are also carried out by the PAWB Attendance Team who will use Class Charts and SIMS to spot any patterns or identify individual truancy incidents. In all cases of truancy the PAWB Attendance team will inform parents and carers. The pupil will then be issued with a HOY sanction.

In cases of persistent truancy, the pupil should be placed on a daily report to closely monitor attendance and punctuality. The pupils then reports to the relevant Head of Year during the day to show teacher signatures as proof of attendance. The report card should also be signed by parents and carers.

Irregular attendance

Where concern regarding irregular attendance exists at a subject level, the Head of Department should inform the PAWB Attendance Team for further enquiries to be made.

Where infrequent attendance exists and intervention by the PAWB Attendance Team and EWO fail to make significant improvement, communication will be made to parents/carers by the HOY or member of the PAWB team. Any actions and interventions should be logged by PAWB Attendance Team on provision maps meeting logs.

When no action is seen from parents/carers after letter 1 and letter 2 have been issued the EWO and Head of Pastoral will convene an attendance panel to discuss strategies to improve attendance with parent/carer and pupil prior to issuing a fixed penalty notice.

Expected long-term absence

In the event of expected long-term (more than four weeks), due to injury or other health reasons, the Head of Year should make the necessary referral to initiate support provided by the Local Authority. In such cases work must be provided by the school, as far as reasonably practical for a short period of time.

Parent/carer request for term time absence for holidays

The Local Authority is fully supportive of the national drive to raise school attendance, recognising the crucial link between attendance and attainment. Whilst considering each holiday request on its merits, head teachers play an important role in scrutinising term time absence and should properly apply any discretion based upon their knowledge of the pupils and their families. Where possible and appropriate, requests for absence during term time should be discouraged, especially during periods when external examinations are taking place. Parents and

carers should be advised to avoid term-time disruption and reminded of the link between attendance and attainment.

The following factors are considered before granting leave of absence:

- Age of the child
- Time of year of the proposed trip
- Length and purpose of the holiday
- Impact on continuity of learning
- Circumstances in the family
- Wishes of the parents/carers
- Overall attendance patterns
- The stage of education
- The child's progress in school
- Any cultural issues
- Benefits to the child's wellbeing or educational development
- Any child protection or safeguarding concerns
- Any guidance or clarifications issued by Welsh Government

The Welsh Government advises the following when schools receive requests for absence to observe religious festivals:

- Any application made by a parent for their child to receive an authorised absence for religious observance is treated with sensitivity and considered carefully and fairly
- Absence should only be authorised for a date 'exclusively set apart by the religious body' as detailed above
- If a date has not been 'exclusively set apart' by the relevant religious body, it is suggested that the head teacher enquires whether the learner/s can fulfil their religious observance outside of school hours
- If a festival falls on a weekend or during a school holiday, absence taken on a school day for that festival would not be authorised
- Similarly, absence taken on a school day either side of a festival that has been 'exclusively set apart' by the relevant religious body would not be authorised

Dates for religious festivals are identified in the 'School attendance and religious festivals guidance'

For term-time holidays, approval must be sought in advance with a request submitted, ideally, two school weeks in advance to enable sufficient time for consideration. Head teachers cannot by law authorise a term-time holiday after the event and in such cases the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

The school has a discretionary power to authorise up to ten days absence during a school year for family holidays during term time.

School procedures for tackling low attendance.

The Welsh Government target for pupil attendance in school is 95%.
Once a pupil has been absent for 10 days the following actions will take place.

Prior to involvement of the EWO Form tutors will monitor attendance of pupils on a weekly basis



Letter 1 attendance letter will be completed by the Education Welfare officer and sent out by the school attendance officer – This is a general letter informing parents of a pattern of low attendance and to give parents and pupil a chance to alter this behaviour.



A period of time will be allowed to monitor for improvement
Letter 2 attendance letter will be completed by the Education Welfare officer and sent out by the school attendance officer – This is a more formal warning to both parents and pupil warning about consequences should the low attendance continue.



Head of year meeting with parents – This may be a phone call if parents are not available, to discuss strategies to improve attendance and to see if any support is needed by the family.



A period of time is allowed to monitor for improvement



An Attendance panel is convened. This panel includes EWO service, Head of Pastoral Assistant Head, Safeguarding Governor and any available external professionals who are working with the family.



Two weeks after the attendance panel, if no improvement is seen in the attendance of the pupil, a fixed penalty fine will be issued by the EWO.

Cefn Saeson Reward System

Good attendance is reflected in the Cefn Saeson Reward system and all certificates and graduations are closely connected with %attendance.

Rewards for attendance will be in this format

% Attendance	Half Term points	Full term Points
100	5	5
95	3	3

Form group and Year group rewards

Once every half term form classes will be in competition for the best attending form. Rewards will be given to the highest form class % attendance.

Year groups will compete against each other and whole year rewards will be given for the highest year group % attendance.

Collating Data

Each term attendance data will be collected and analysed in order to assess performance and trends.

Data collected and analysed will include:

- whole school attendance rates
- weekly totals
- weekly attendance % for each class and year
- rates of unauthorised absence
- weekly totals for groups of learners.

Data is checked by the Head of Year, E.W.O. and Deputy Headteacher.. Attendance data is used to set attendance targets for the whole school.

ESO and Headteacher to quality assure process monthly including EWO priority list and minutes of weekly HOY meetings.

Termly, Headteacher to share information, monitor and report progress to the Governor School Improvement Committee.

Document Ratification

This policy was presented to Governors on 21st March 2024

It will be reviewed in Autumn Half Term 2024 or if the National and Local policy or Guideline is updated.

Signed P.A. Rees

Cllr P Rees
Chair of Governors

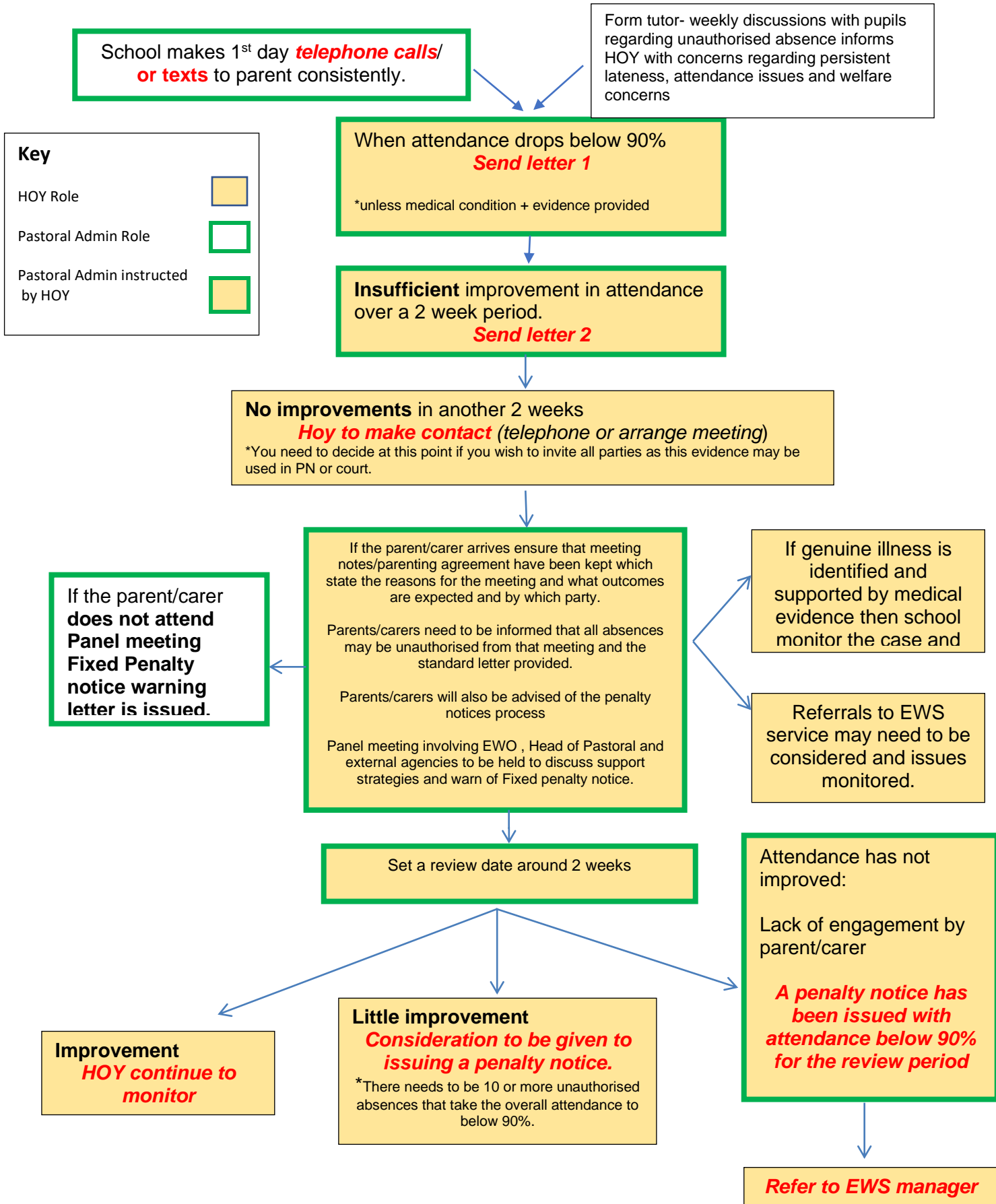
Appendix A

Attendance Codes

(as sited in All Wales Attendance Framework 2023)

Code	Meaning	Statistical category
/\	Present at registration	Present
L	Late but arrived before the register closed	Present
B	Educated off-site (not dual registration)	approved educational activity
D	Dual registered (present at another school of PRU)	approved educational activity
P	Approved sporting activity	approved educational activity
V	Educational visit or trip	approved educational activity
J	Interview	approved educational activity
W	Work experience (not work based learning)	approved educational activity
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
F	Agreed extended family holiday	Authorised absence
H	Agreed family holiday	Authorised absence
I	Illness	Authorised absence
M	Medical or dental appointment	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
N	No reason for the absence provided yet	Unauthorised absence
O	Other unauthorised absence (not covered by other codes or descriptions)	Unauthorised absence
G	Family holiday (not agreed or sessions in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the register closed	Unauthorised absence
X	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not required to attend
Y	Partial and forced closure	Not required to attend
Z	Pupil not on roll yet	Not required to attend
#	School closed to all pupils	Not required to attend

Attendance Procedure Flow Chart



Meeting with the EWO

The EWO will be situated in PAWB. This will aid communication between pastoral admin and wellbeing staff and will also enable the EWO to closely monitor and be proactive with pupil welfare concerns eg lateness.

It is expected that each HOY will meet with the EWO 1 session per week (allocated management time on timetable). If this time cannot be kept a reserve time of Wednesday 3pm has been allocated. It is imperative that the meeting is held weekly.

Adopted by the Governing Body 21st March 2024

Chair of Governors Signature

P.A. Dees