

Policy for Recording and Management of Attendance

As children we are safe, happy and cared for. We are listened to, supported and valued. We work together openly and look after each other. We are free to learn about things which interest us and which we enjoy, and we gain skills we need for life. We respect people, places and property and we are given time to think and to reflect. We believe and we achieve.

Objectives

It is proven that poor attendance is often linked to poor performance in the classroom. This can result in children struggling with their relationships with their peers, developing low self-confidence and experiencing a disrupted pattern to their education; all of which can be damaging in the long run.

Glyncollen Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

It is the duty of all school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure that each pupil attends school regularly and punctually. This is an important part of our Home/School agreement.

The school is working with Morriston Comprehensive School in targeting those parents who are in need of additional support. We also promote attendance through Values Education and through the UNCRC articles. The school will feed back information on attendance and punctuality to Governors.

Governors will feed back information on attendance and punctuality to Parents in their Annual Report to Parents.

The school will feed back information on attendance and punctuality to Parents in the Annual End of Year Report on individual pupils.

To meet these objectives Glyncollen Primary School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Families who achieve good attendance will be notified as will those whose attendance is unsatisfactory.

Authorised Absences

An authorised absence (one which the school agrees is a reasonable one) will only be granted for:

- Child illness
- Medical appointments (on production of the appointment card/letter)
- External examinations
- Educational assessments conducted by approved agencies
- Religious observances
- Education activity at an alternative site
- Visits to prospective new schools
- Very special family circumstances

Unauthorised Absences

An unauthorised absence – absences which the school would not consider reasonable, include:

- A trip to the theatre
- Shopping for new shoes
- Your child staying home because a parent is ill unless there are exceptional circumstances
- Having a hair cut

All such absences need to be avoided in the interest of ensuring that your child develops a good habit of attending school regularly, allowing them to fulfil their potential academically, socially and emotionally.

Family holidays will no longer be authorised.

Penalty notice statement

The Welsh Government (WG) Education (Penalty Notice)(Wales) Regulations 2013 states that Local Authorities (LA's) are required by law to adhere to the Education Act 1996 section 444 to include penalty notices as one of the interventions to promote better school attendance.

Sections 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996 provide that certain cases of unauthorised absences can be dealt with by way of a penalty notice. A penalty notice is a fine of up to £120 and may be issued to a parent / carer as a result of a child's regular non-attendance at school / educational provision.

The school adheres to the code of conduct for penalty notices as issued by ERW and agreed by the Local Authority, and therefore may request the local authority to issue a penalty notice in certain cases.

Punctuality and Lateness

It is important for children to be on time, as missing the first few minutes of any session can be disruptive and unsettling for all. If your child arrives late (after close of register), a code is entered to indicate the lateness. If lateness is persistent it will affect your child's attendance figure and you may be contacted for a meeting within school regarding this.

Registration Procedures

Under normal circumstances children are registered in their classroom in the morning and afternoon and their attendance or absence is recorded electronically. Absences are recorded using a code appropriate to the absence. If the electronic system is unavailable attendance is recorded manually. Parents should contact school as soon as possible before an absence in order to inform us of the reason. We need this information in order to ensure the correct attendance code is entered as this can make the difference between an authorised and unauthorised absence. If children need to leave school during the school day they must be signed out by a parent or carer stating the reason for absence. If the return is within the same school day they must be signed back in. We must have sight of all medical appointment letters/cards.

On the first day and third day of absence please phone or e-mail the school office with the reason for absence. You may leave a message on our automated system. We operate a 'first day response' system. If we do not hear from you on the first day of absence you will receive a phone call allowing us to ascertain the reason for absence. If we do not receive a reason for absence within two weeks of your child's return the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If you need to request a period of authorised absence please download from the school website or pick up a form from the school office requesting the absence from the Headteacher. This will need to be done as early as possible, so that there is time for the request to be considered and for approval to be given if appropriate.

If a child is educated off premises for all or part of the week attendance data will be requested and shared by both providers.

If your child is absent from school more than they should be you may receive a letter if no prior discussion has taken place. The attendance officer at school will use the computer system to analyse absence across the school at the end of each school term.

We send letters for the following reasons (unless the reasons have already been discussed):

1. Attendance is below 90% for the first time
2. Attendance falls below 90% over a second term
3. If, following the above, there is no significant improvement a meeting will be arranged which may involve the Educational Welfare Officer
4. In the unlikely event of there being still no improvement we may be unable to grant authorised absences without a medical note

The Educational Welfare Officer has access to attendance figures and unauthorised absence data. If they are unhappy that attendance is not being improved in these extreme cases the Local Authority is likely to take action against families where persistent absence is a problem.

We are committed to supporting your child effectively, to ensure that they get the very best education possible and therefore have the best life chances. All challenges which may be made concerning persistent absence will be handled sensitively and in confidence.

Role of Teacher

- Ensure children are registered morning and afternoon at the designated registration times
- Ensure that the correct codes are entered for absence
- Share messages from parents with attendance officer
- Alert the attendance officer to attendance problems

Role of the Attendance Officer

- Ensure that all registers have been taken and that there are no missing marks on a daily basis.
- Take messages regarding reasons for absence
- Contact parents/carers to ascertain reasons for absence on first and third day
- Follow up absences with letters where appropriate
- Keep records of applications for authorised absence
- Inform Administration Manager of persistent absenteeism
- Provide data when requested
- Liaise with EWO on a fortnightly basis

Role of Administration Manager

- Support Attendance Officer
- Inform Headteacher

Role of Headteacher

- Ensure policy and procedure are followed
- Receive regular reports and updates
- Meet with parents
- Meet with Education Welfare Officer
- Analyse data and set targets
- Implement strategies
- Work with other agencies

Role of Governing Body

- Analyse end of year attendance data
- Set targets

Morning Registration – 8.45 am – 8.55 am

Late Code recorded before registration close – 8.55 am – 9.25 am

Late Code recorded after registration close – after 9.25 am

Attendance Officer: Paula Grey

This policy was ratified in February 2012 and will be revised bi-annually unless National / LEA policy changes.

Revised September 2015

Anna Bolt