

# Awel y Môr Primary School



# Attendance Policy

## Awel y Môr Primary School Attendance Policy and Procedures

Awel y Môr Primary School is committed to providing a full and effective educational experience for all pupils. We believe that children can reach their full potential only by receiving full-time education, through regular and structured attendance. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and can lead to educational and social disadvantage. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible in line with procedures agreed by Neath Port Talbot local authority.

It is the policy at Awel y Môr Primary School to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career and establishes a good pattern for later life. We will actively promote, encourage and reward 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils.

We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance. The school has invested in a school to parent texting service to foster a quick and efficient means of communication with parents/carers in the drive to improve attendance and punctuality of our pupils.

### **Aims**

- to foster a climate where regular attendance and punctuality are valued by the school community – staff, parents and pupils;
- to record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies which provide support and guidance for pupils and parents;
- to develop positive and consistent communication between home and school, including set procedures for attendance information;
- to acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance through the school's reward systems;
- to promote effective partnership with the Education Welfare Service and other agencies in line with all schools within Neath Port Talbot.

### **Statutory Duty of Schools and Parents**

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers to ensure their children receive effective, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their children attend school and on time. This extends to ensuring that their child/children is/are properly attired, readily equipped for the school day and in a condition to learn.

Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once at the start of the afternoon session. At Awel y Môr Primary School an electronic recording system (SIMS) is in place for pupil attendance and only the National

Attendance Codes are used. Holidays taken during term time will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

In Awel y Môr we will make every effort to promote good attendance, giving advice and support where needed.

## The Educational Welfare Service and School Attendance

The EWS is a part of the Local Authority. Its aim is to ensure that every child has the opportunity to benefit from a full time education by attending school regularly. The EWS can help and advise parents/carers who may be experiencing difficulties that prevent this. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly and the EWS expects parents/ carers to do all that is necessary to make sure this happens.

### Statutory Attendance

There is a legal requirement to have a morning and afternoon registration. In Awel y Môr:

**AM:** Pupils will be registered at the beginning of each morning (8.50am) by the class teacher using the SIMS system. Registration closes at 9.00 am.

**PM:** Registration takes place at the beginning of the afternoon (1.00pm) by the class teacher/PPA cover teaching assistant.

The attendance and punctuality of pupils as recorded on SIMS is monitored by the school's Attendance Officer (school clerk) and, when concerns arise, the EWO is notified. Accurate registration is very important as registration details will be used as evidence where parents/carers are prosecuted for school attendance offences.

### Reporting Absences

It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to inform the school on the first day of absence the reason for a pupil's absence. The school will operate a First Day Calling system and the parents/carers of every absent pupil will be contacted by our Attendance Officer if contact has not been initiated by the parent/carer.

In any case of absence, parents/carers should contact the school by one of the following methods:

- By phone to the office and leave a message
- Personal contact with office staff at school, where the teacher will be informed and the reason recorded on SIMS.
- Parents/carers who do not contact the office, are required to provide a written note explaining the absence on the absent child's first day back at school.

In the case of long term illness the school should be notified so that teachers can set work. If it is known that the pupil will be absent for more than 2 weeks, the EWO will be notified.

Where, over the course of an academic year, a pupil has 20 sessions of illness, the school will discuss this with parents to ask them about any issues and to provide medical evidence for each

future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription.

## Truancy

It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends school as required. Parents/carers will be informed by staff if their child has been identified as truanting from the school. Persistent cases will be referred to the EWO. Pupils who have been identified with attendance issues will be placed on First Day Response and the EWO will be notified on the first day of absence and a visit arranged.

## Reporting to Parents

The school's Annual Report to parents/carers includes summative information on attendance. Two mid term reports are also issued that inform the parents of their child's current attendance.

## Distribution of Data

The Attendance Officer (school clerk) will produce for the Headteacher:

- any concerns regarding absence
- all pupils with below 90% attendance
- the % attendance figures for all pupils weekly, half termly, termly, annually
- report on any issues regarding transport

The Headteacher will report attendance data to the Governors termly and targets annually.

## Absence from School

### Authorisation of absences from school:

Teacher to record on SIMS using appropriate code. Only National Attendance Codes to be used.

### Follow up procedures for lateness to school in the morning:

Headteacher/SMT to contact parents. Where there is no improvement of attendance or if lateness continues to persist SMT or Attendance Officer (school clerk) will refer pupil to EWO who may make a home visit.

## Roles and Responsibilities

**Role of Governing Body:** Reviews policy, receives termly report via Headteacher's Report to Governors. A governor will have specific responsibility for attendance.

**Head/Deputy Head:** Oversees and implements policy. To co-ordinate and monitor the above. Responsible for Pupil & School Attendance Data and meeting the Local and National Attendance Targets. To co-ordinate/monitor attendance of vulnerable groups

**Office Staff:** Inform relevant staff of attendance and punctuality data within the framework of this policy, first day contacts.

**Teachers:** To keep an accurate register and follow up absences and lateness within the systems and procedures of this policy.

**Education Welfare Officer:** Implements LA procedures in enforcing attendance. Assists school staff with advising pupils and parents/carers of the legal consequences of failing to meet these obligations. The EWO for our school will be fully informed of all absences giving cause for concern and will have full access to the electronic registration system (SIMS) and will liaise with SMT to decide on the best possible course of action.

SJ Greasley  
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