



St Athan Primary School

Policy For Attendance

'Believe and Achieve'

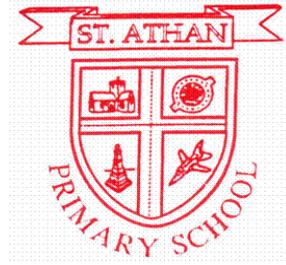
'Credw i lwydd'



Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes



Cynlluniau Ysgolion Iach - Rhewydswyddi Cymru



St Athan Primary School

Attendance Policy

1. Introduction and aims

All children have the right to education, based on equality of opportunity, and St Athan Primary School, in partnership with parents and other parties, must take measures to encourage regular school attendance and reduce rates of absenteeism.

A child's success at school is likely to be affected negatively if their attendance is poor. Those who do not attend regularly may fall behind in their learning, leading to underachievement, both academically and socially.

St Athan Primary School recognises the crucial role that parents play in promoting good school attendance. The school therefore seeks to provide professional, quality information and advice, communicated frequently by telephone, letters, email, leaflets, parents' evenings, school reports and via the school website.

St Athan Primary School aims to:

- Give attendance and punctuality a high priority;
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities to ensure consistency and accuracy;
- Provide support, advice and guidance to families;
- Use attendance data systematically to evaluate success and to prioritise appropriate follow-up procedures;
- Use rewards to celebrate good attendance;
- Use sanctions sensitively and only when necessary;
- Work in partnership with the Education Welfare Service to improve attendance; and

- Support pupils returning to school after significant periods of absence.

2. Rights, responsibilities and roles

St Athan Primary School is required under The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010, to take attendance registers twice a day; at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

Parents are required under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that their child receives effective full-time education.

The Vale of Glamorgan Local Authority is required under section 437 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that a child for whom they are responsible is receiving suitable education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

The school operates in conjunction with Vale of Glamorgan Local Authority's System Attendance Management.

St Athan Primary School aims to work in partnership with children, parents and families so that pupils can benefit from the educational opportunities provided to them at school. Key members of staff include:

- Headteacher
- Deputy Headteacher
- Wellbeing lead

3. Procedures

Class Teacher Procedures:

- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance, looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, improvement in attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for absence offered by children and their parents/guardians.
- Informing the School Wellbeing lead or DHT where there are concerns and acting promptly.
- Discussing attendance at consultation evenings/days.
- Encourage good whole class attendance data which is shared at Merit Assembly.

Registration procedures:

To ensure accuracy and consistency, all pupils are registered electronically via the School Information Management System (SIMS).

Pupils are registered at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Pupil's attendance is therefore recorded on two occasions during the school day.

Any learner leaving school before the end of a school day will be signed out on the Sign In app

Teachers and Supply Teachers are each provided with login credentials for SIMS and are required to record present or absent against each pupil's name. No pupil may be left with a 'missing' mark.

In instances of lateness, the administration team alter the absent mark to the late mark. The degree of lateness may be recorded as necessary, using the appropriate function with SIMS.

Attendance registers for all classes must be completed on time.

Class teachers must keep a 'Fire Register' in case of emergency during the school day.

A paper register must be taken and information forwarded to the school office in the event that the online SIMS registration is not working.

Procedures for absence and lateness:

Parents are asked to contact the school by telephone/ email / text every day for their child's absence. These communications are monitored by the administration team throughout the day.

Should a pupil be absent from school without explanation, the school operates a first day calling system. A member of the Administration team will ring home to enquire about a child's absence. The administration team will update the register upon receipt of information from parents.

A list of vulnerable pupils on first response is kept in the office. Teachers should notify the administration team immediately if they are not in school and a telephone call is made to the home.

Parents bringing their children to school late must speak to the school main office staff giving a reason for the lateness. Sims registers are subsequently updated by the administrator responsible for attendance. Persistent lateness is recorded on 'My Concern' as required.

Parents collecting children during the school day must inform the main office and class teacher.

Authorisation of absence:

Absences may only be approved by the Headteacher. Parents and the LA do not have the power to authorise absence. "Unauthorised absence" is absence without the approval of the Headteacher and includes all unexplained absences.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 give schools discretionary power to grant leave for the purpose of a family holiday during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw their child from school for a holiday and, in law, have to apply for permission from the school in advance. St Athan Primary School will only authorise family holidays where parents are able to demonstrate that unique or exceptional circumstances prevent a holiday from being taken outside term time. As a school closely linked to the Military, Governors agree to authorise all absences for family time around parental postings or return from long postings.

10 days of family holidays are authorised.

4. Promoting good attendance

The school promotes high levels of attendance in a variety of ways including contacting parents regarding the importance of good attendance, school prospectus, social media, newsletters and on our school website.

Letters are distributed to all Reception and Nursery pupils prior to admission informing them of the importance of good attendance at school.

Good attendance is celebrated weekly with the top attendance certificates for the week. Good attendance is also recognised by awarding 100% attendance certificates at the end of each term and at the end of the academic year via letters sent to home addresses.

5. Intervention

Punctuality letters are sent to parents when punctuality is raised as a concern or general reminders given in weekly newsletters.

In cases of concern where the attendance level is falling or consistently low, the School Wellbeing lead or H/TDHT will engage with the pupil and family by use of appropriate means. This may include telephone conversations, letters, home visits and meetings in school. If deemed necessary the Headteacher will engage with the persistent offenders.

The school send out a letter of awareness to any learner who absence is less than 90%

And any learner whose attendance is less than 80% is invited to an absence review meeting face to face or via a telephone call with the Head teacher and wellbeing lead for pupils. These invites are sent via a letter

Those learners, where attendance remains a concern a referral is made to the LA inclusion team.

Medical evidence is requested in longstanding cases before attendance can be authorised.

The school will provide information and advice and seek to support the pupil in returning to school.

In some circumstances following the Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013 and Welsh Assembly Government guidelines, it may be appropriate that Educational Welfare Service in consultation with St Athan Primary School, issue parents/carers with a Fixed Penalty Notice. Circumstances when they could be used as follows:

- When a child has a minimum of ten unauthorised sessions recorded during the current term (these do not need to be consecutive and please note that a school day is divided into two sessions, am and pm);
- In response to persistent late arrival at school i.e. after the registration period. Again this will be when there are at least ten recorded late marks in the current term;
- For unauthorised holiday absence. Parents are advised that taking a family holiday during term time may result in an FPN payment;
- If parent(s)/carer(s) does not attempt to engage with the school or Local Authority regarding their child's absence;
- If a pupil regularly comes to the attention of the police during school hours without an acceptable reason, the police authority may request the Local Authority issue an FPN.

Before a Penalty Notice is issued, parents will receive a written warning outlining the extent of your child's absence and the possibility of you receiving a Penalty Notice.

When the school feels that, despite its best efforts to support the family, attendance is not improving, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service. A referral might be made when, for example:

- A pattern of irregular attendance has developed;
- Parents/carers have failed to engage in attempts to improve attendance
- A period of entrenched non-attendance has become established;
- There is a lack of parental cooperation in ensuring a child's regular attendance

When a pupil has been absent for an extended period, they are welcomed positively on their return. The Deputy Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that extended support is made available to the pupil, helping them to 'catch up'.

St Athan Primary School will liaise with the Education Welfare Service to provide the evidence required to prosecute parents who fail, without reasonable justification, to cause their child to attend school regularly, under section 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

6. Target Setting, Monitoring and Evaluation

The school maintains accurate attendance records for each pupil and monitors pupil attendance and punctuality.

It is statutory requirement for the school to set targets on attendance. The Attendance Governor alongside the HT monitors pupil's attendance and whole school attendance levels. Attendance of vulnerable groups are also considered. The Local Authority will set, monitor

and evaluate annual targets which are both realistic and sufficiently challenging in order to raise school attendance.

HT and Attendance Governor meet half termly to discuss individual cases of absenteeism and lateness across all year groups and reflect upon the effectiveness of interventions to date. Decisions are taken at this time as to whether individual cases meet the criteria for referral to the Educational Welfare Service, for either Fixed Penalty Notices or possible legal action.

Attendance data is reviewed each academic year by the Senior Leadership Team and is used to populate the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and inform the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

7. Safeguarding and Child Protection

All staff will adhere to the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, and any specific child protection concerns must be referred to the Designated Child Protection Officer.

Appendix – Exemplar letters



Date:.....

Dear Parents

Re:

We note that was absent from school without reason on the dates given.

Please complete the slip below and return to the school office by the end of next week.

Ensure you contact the school directly to report your child's absence on his/her first day away from school.

Please note that Fixed Penalty Notice fines may be issued to parents whose children have been marked as unauthorised absent for five or more days in any term.

Yours sincerely

Reason for absence:

Periods of absence:

.....

Reason for absence (in case of illness, please be specific):.....



Punctuality

Dear Parents/Guardians,

From the moment our children enter the classroom, they are engaged in a wide variety of learning experiences. Punctuality and attendance at all lessons are therefore vital to their learning process.

The school day at St Athan Primary School starts at 8.50am. Please make every effort to ensure that your child arrives on time, to minimise disruption for the pupil, the rest of the class and the teacher: **late arrivals may miss the important teaching points at the start of the lesson.**

Where possible, please make routine medical or dental appointments outside school hours. If you do need to bring your child late or collect him or her early, because of a medical appointment, **please notify the class teacher of the appointment in writing beforehand, and bring the appointment card to show the school office.**

Being late by just 10 minutes every day for one year is equal to 33 hours – approximately 6 days of lost learning.

Minutes late	Days lost in a school Year
5 minutes	3 days
10 minutes	6.5 days
15 minutes	10 days
20 minutes	13 days
30 minutes	19 days

Any child who arrives after 8.50am, will need to report to the main school office where the late arrival will be recorded.

If you have a problem getting your child to school on time, please talk to the school, or to Mrs Chiplin (Pupil Wellbeing lead) / Mrs Davies (Deputy Headteacher) for advice and support.

Best wishes,

Headteacher



DATE

Dear

Attendance Report for:

Attendance at school is vitally important in order to ensure that children make excellent progress in their learning as well as other aspects of school life. Our school target for attendance is XX% for this academic year.

Your child's current attendance percentage is 100%

	97% and above
	92% to 96%
	91% or below

We would appreciate your support in aiming for attendance in the green category. We do however understand that children are sometimes absent due to illness and other authorised reasons.

If you have any concerns regarding your child's attendance or if you require our support, please do not hesitate to contact us at school.

Further information regarding attendance can be found on our school website:

www.stathanprimaryschool.co.uk

Best wishes,
Louise Haynes
Headteacher