

# Attendance Policy

## Polisi Presenoldeb

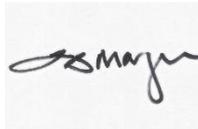
**Reviewed:** March 2022

**Signatures:**

**Headteacher:** 

**Date:** March 2022

**Chair of Governors:**



**Date:** March 2022

**Work Together – Play Together – Succeed Together**  
*Gweithio, chwarae a llwyddo gyda'n gilydd*



**Whitchurch Primary School**

**Attendance Policy**

**1. Introduction and aims**

All children have the right to education, based on equality of opportunity, and Whitchurch 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.

Whitchurch 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, email, leaflets, parents' evenings, school reports and via the school attendance webpage on our school website.

Whitchurch 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

Whitchurch 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.

Cardiff 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 Cardiff Local Authority's System of Attendance Management.

Whitchurch 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
- School Attendance Administrator
- School Attendance Officer

## 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 Attendance Officer where there are concerns and acting upon them.
- Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness.
- Discussing attendance at consultation evenings/days.

### ***Registration procedures:***

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

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

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 within 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 system is not working.

***Procedures for absence and lateness:***

Parents are asked to contact the school by telephone, via the school website or email every day of their child's absence. These communications are monitored by the administration team throughout the day.

Should a pupil be absent from school without explanation, they will be marked as unauthorised, and parents will receive an email querying the non-attendance. 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 sign the electronic entry system 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 sign their children out using the electronic entry system.

***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. Whitchurch Primary School will only authorise family holidays where parents are able to demonstrate that unique or exceptional circumstances prevent the holiday from being taken outside of term time. In general, holidays during term time will not be 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. The School Attendance Officer is present at Parents' Evenings.

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.

## **5. Intervention**

We write to all parents on a termly basis with an update of their child's attendance rated against a traffic light system.

Periodic 'late gate' punctuality checks will be undertaken by the School Attendance Officer to challenge patterns of lateness. A first day response system is in place for vulnerable pupils and a list is available in all classes. We will generate punctuality letters when punctuality is raised as a concern.

In cases of concern where the attendance level is falling or consistently low, the School Attendance Officer will engage with the pupil and family by use of appropriate means. This may include telephone conversations, letters, home visits and meetings in school which may involve other senior members of staff.

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

The School Attendance Officer 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 Whitchurch 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 a 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.

In addition to Fixed 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'.

The Attendance Officer works closely with the Whitchurch High School cluster group to ensure that good school attendance is maintained

Whitchurch 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 sections 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

## **6. Target Setting, Monitoring and evaluation**

The Attendance Officer and the Attendance Administrator are responsible for maintaining accurate attendance records for each pupil and for monitoring pupil attendance and punctuality.

It is a statutory requirement for the school to set targets on attendance. The Governing Body will set, monitor and evaluate annual targets which are both realistic and sufficiently challenging in order to raise school attendance.

The Attendance Officer and/or Attendance Administrator are required by the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher to produce detailed reports pertaining to the attendance of pupils upon request.

The Attendance Officer and/or Attendance Administrator meet monthly 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.

The Attendance Officer meets with their designated Educational Welfare Officer once per half term (or as required) to review cases and seek advice when required.

Attendance data is reviewed each academic year by the Leadership & Support 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



16 October 2018

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.

Please use our Absence Line (20623441) or email the school via our website –  
whitchurchprm.co.uk - 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

Mrs A Griffin  
Headteacher

---

Reason for Absence : .....

Periods of Absence:

.....

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

Signature: ..... Relationship: .....



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 97% for this academic year.

**Your child's current attendance percentage is 100.00%**

	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:

<http://www.whitchurchprm.co.uk/attendance/>

Best wishes,

**Ann Griffin  
Headteacher**

## WHITCHURCH HIGH SCHOOL

Penlline Road, Whitchurch, Cardiff CF14 2XJ

Headteacher **Huw Jones-Williams**

## YSGOL UWCHRADDYR EGLWYS NEWYDD

Penlline Road, Yr Eglwys Newydd, Caerdydd CF14 2XJ

Telephone: 029 2062 9700  
Fax: 029 2062 9701 Upper School  
029 2062 1695 Lower School  
e-mail: whs@whitchurch.cardiff.sch.uk



### School Attendance

As your child is due to start Reception at Whitchurch Primary School in September 2016 we wish to emphasise the importance of attending school regularly.

Whitchurch Primary School motto is "Work together, Play together, Succeed together", and we strive to achieve excellence in all areas of school life for your child. Our average school attendance is 97%, which plays a vital part in achieving our aims for all our children.

Our School Attendance Officer, Mrs Joy Richards, works in conjunction with Whitchurch High School and the other partner Primary Schools to raise the awareness of attendance issues, and engage with the families of those pupils whose attendance needs to improve.

**Please be aware that with effect from September 2014 the Local Authority has introduced Fixed Penalty Fines, which will be issued by the Education Welfare Service, for unauthorised holidays and non-attendance across all Cardiff Schools.**

**Absence from school** – Please use our Absence-line (02920 623441) or email the school via our website – [www.whitchurchprm.co.uk](http://www.whitchurchprm.co.uk) – to report the reason for your child's absence on his or her first day away from school. In the case of illness, please be specific (eg: sickness, chickenpox), so that the class teacher can be made aware of any possible infections or implications.

If we are not notified of the reason for your child's absence, he or she will be marked as 'unauthorised absence', and please note that Fixed Penalty Notice fines may be issued to parents whose children have been marked unauthorised absent for five or more days in any term.

The school day at Whitchurch Primary School starts at 8.55am. 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 from the teacher.

Where possible, please make routine medical or dental appointments outside school hours, as collecting pupils early interrupts the teaching process. If you do need to collect your child early, please notify the class teacher of the appointment in writing.

**Holidays during term time** – It is the policy of Cardiff County Council and Whitchurch Primary School not to authorize term-time holidays or heritage leave, and Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued where a child has unauthorised holiday for ten or more sessions (five days). Any such absences will be recorded as unauthorised and if a child is absent for a period of longer than four weeks they could be removed from the school roll and will no longer have a place at the school.

**There is no right that enables parents and carers to take a child out of school for a term-time holiday. To put this in context, schools are open to pupils on 190 days of the year which leaves 175 days for holidays and visiting family.**

**If you decide to take your child out of school, his or her learning will be affected.**

Below is a table showing the national guidelines for attendance:-

<b>Your Child's Attendance</b>	<b>National Guidelines</b>
100% - 95%	Optimum chance to achieve well. Your child is taking full advantage of every learning opportunity.
94.99% - 90%	Satisfactory, although your child may have to spend time catching up with work they have missed.
Below 90%	Cause for concern:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Your child may be at risk of underachieving.</li><li>2. Your child may need extra support from you to help catch up with missed work.</li><li>3. Your child may be missing out on a broad and balanced education.</li></ol>

We hope you will find this information useful and that you will continue to work with us to further improve attendance at Whitchurch Primary School.

Mrs. Ann Griffin  
Headteacher

Mrs J Richards  
School Attendance Officer  
Tel: 02920629700 Ext. 1226  
Mobile: 07760474415  
Email: [richardsj@whitchurch.cardiff.sch.uk](mailto:richardsj@whitchurch.cardiff.sch.uk)



Acknowledgement of Request for Term-time Holidays

Dear Parents,

I acknowledge your request to take..... out of school on the following dates.....

It is the policy of Cardiff County Council not to automatically authorise term-time holidays or heritage leave, and your child's absence may be recorded as unauthorised.

Your child's attendance is currently:.....

Whitchurch Primary School motto is "Work together, Play together, Succeed together", and we strive to achieve excellence in all areas of school life. Our average attendance is 97%, which plays a vital part in achieving our aims for all our children.

If you decide to take your child out of school, his or her learning will be affected:

<b>Your Child's Attendance</b>	<b>National Guidelines</b>
100% - 95%	Optimum chance to achieve well. Your child is taking full advantage of every learning opportunity.
94.99% - 90%	Satisfactory, although your child may have to spend time catching up with work they have missed.
<b>Below 90%</b>	Cause for concern:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Your child may be at risk of underachieving.</li><li>2. Your child may need extra support from you to help catch up with missed work.</li><li>3. Your child may be missing out on a broad and balanced education.</li></ol>

Best wishes,

Ann Griffin

Headteacher



## 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 the learning process.

The school day at Whitchurch Primary School starts at 8.55am. 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 to school 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.**

A total of 17,323 minutes (the equivalent of over 48 school days) of lesson time was lost by children arriving late for school between September 2016 and March 2017.

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 8.55am, including those using the Foundation Phase entrance, will need to be signed in to the 'late book', which is held at the main reception office.

If you have a problem getting your child to school on time, please talk to the school, or to the School Attendance Officer, Mrs. Joy Richards, for advice and support.

Best wishes,

Ann Griffin

Headteacher

## Punctuality

Dear Parents/Guardians of

Please find enclosed a list of dates on which your child/children have been late for school since the start of the Autumn term.

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 the learning process.

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

The school day at Whitchurch Primary School starts at 8.55am. 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 to school late because of a medical appointment, please notify the class teacher of the appointment in writing beforehand.

If your child arrives after 8.55am, please would all parents, including those using the Foundation Phase entrance, complete and sign the 'late book', which is held at the main reception office.

If you have a problem getting your child to school on time, please talk to the school, or to the School Attendance Officer, Mrs. Joy Richards, for advice and support.

Best wishes,

Ann Griffin  
Headteacher



Acknowledgement of Request for Term-time Holidays

Dear Parents,

I acknowledge your request to take..... out of school on the following dates.....

It is the policy of Cardiff County Council not to automatically authorise term-time holidays or heritage leave, and your child's absence may be recorded as unauthorised. Please note that Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued where a child has unauthorised absence for 10 or more sessions (5 days).

Your child's attendance is currently:.....

Whitchurch Primary School motto is "Work together, Play together, Succeed together", and we strive to achieve excellence in all areas of school life. Our average attendance is 97%, which plays a vital part in achieving our aims for all our children.

If you decide to take your child out of school, his or her learning will be affected:

<b>Your Child's Attendance</b>	<b>National Guidelines</b>
100% - 95%	Optimum chance to achieve well. Your child is taking full advantage of every learning opportunity.
94.99% - 90%	Satisfactory, although your child may have to spend time catching up with work they have missed.
<b>Below 90%</b>	Cause for concern:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Your child may be at risk of underachieving.</li><li>2. Your child may need extra support from you to help catch up with missed work.</li><li>3. Your child may be missing out on a broad and balanced education.</li></ol>

Best wishes,

Ann Griffin  
Headteacher