BRO PEDR

ATTENDANCE POLICY

SENIOR CAMPUS

2024-2025

DESIGNATED STAFF MEMBER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE

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NOMINATED MEMBER OF THE GOVERNING BODY FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE

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Introduction

Attending school regularly and on time is one of the most important ways of making sure your child gets the best possible start in life.

Ysgol Bro Pedr is committed to ensuring that every child reaches their full learning and development potential. For pupils to get the best out of their education it is vital that they attend regularly and on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. Ysgol Bro Pedr recognises that sometimes children and young people are sick and cannot come into school or there may be a family emergency.

The school will follow the All Wales Child Safeguarding procedures and local protocols in relation to specific and identifiable wellbeing issues that prevent a child from accessing education, or where there are safeguarding concerns.

For a pupil to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to education law and guidance and our school attendance policy is written to reflect this legislation and the guidance produced by the Welsh Government. For information relating to this legislation and guidance, see Appendix 3.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance on an annual basis to ensure that it is achieving its set goals and targets as identified by the Governors, local authority and the Welsh Government.

This policy will contain the procedures that the school will use to work towards meeting its attendance targets, as set by the local authority.

Whilst the legal responsibility for regular school attendance rests with parents, the school shares with them, and the local authority (LA), responsibility for encouraging good attendance and improving poor attendance.

The school is required by law to maintain specific records and to produce specified information on the attendance of pupils.

Statutory obligation apart, the school is committed to improvements in attendance standards as a direct stimulus to raising pupil achievement.

Poor attendance is destructive of educational achievement, undermines the well-being of each pupil and demoralises staff.

The LA has a statutory duty to ensure that a child for whom they are responsible is receiving suitable education and, if a registered pupil at school, this means attending school regularly and on time.

School Procedures

Clear systems and procedures will govern response to all pupil absence. The school will follow the 'Procedures for Non Attendance' flowchart (appendix 1).

Any pupil who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period will have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the head teacher, or a member of staff acting on their behalf, can authorise absence.

If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unexplained (N code) and promptly followed up by the school as part of its early intervention and safeguarding strategies. This will be in the form of a text message, telephone call or letter to the parent or carer to enquire about the whereabouts of the pupil. If no reason is given by the end of 10 school days or the reason given is not reasonable, the pupil will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (O code).

The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Welsh Government's All Wales Attendance Framework as in Appendix 2.

Punctuality

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 08:40am and afternoon registration will be during the fifth lesson. The registers will remain open for a maximum of 30 minutes from these start times, in accordance with Welsh Government guidance.

Pupils who arrive 30 minutes after the morning or afternoon registration time will be recorded as either:

- L - late before the register closes or
- U - late after the register closes - this counts as an unauthorised absence (absence without permission).

Arriving late to school not only disrupts the education of those arriving late but also those pupils who are already in school. Missing 20 minutes every week of school adds up to over 11 hours or nearly 3 whole days of learning over the year.

In the event of persistent late arrivals, the school may contact the parent by letter to inform them of the impact on their child's attendance and subsequent attainment. Should the pupil continue to arrive late for registration after being issued with this letter, the school will issue a second letter inviting the parent or carer to a meeting to discuss the barriers that are preventing punctual arrival and offer support where appropriate.

First day absence

Parents and carers are reminded that they should contact the school by 08:30am if their child is not able to attend school on that day. Parents and Carers should e-mail gweinyddu@bropedr.ceredigion.sch.uk or telephone 01570 422 214 and pressing option 1, leaving the following details:

- Pupils name.
- What year.
- Nature of illness/reason for absence.
- Expected return date.
- Caller's name & relationship to the pupil.

Parents should be prepared for the members of school staff to ask questions about the pupil's condition, the patterns or trends in their absences and any treatment they may be receiving.

If a parent or carer does not contact the school, staff will endeavour to ascertain the reason for non-attendance as soon as possible on the first day of absence, after both morning and afternoon registration. This may include a telephone call, texting service, a home visit from a member of school staff or in some circumstances the school may contact the Education Inclusion Service to undertake a welfare check. Once information is received, the register will be amended to reflect the appropriate absence code (see Appendix 2 for the types of code).

Priority will be given to children who are deemed to be particularly vulnerable, e.g. those known to Children's Services or are looked after (LAC). School will contact the relevant case worker as soon as possible if a pupil is absent from school without reason and is known to Children's Services or are LAC. They may conduct an unscheduled home visit to determine if the pupil is safe and well.

Any learners may be subject to a visit from the Education Inclusion Service where the school has any concern around attendance, or lack of contact from parents. These visits are intended to offer the right support to overcome any barriers to attending schools.

Absence notes and supporting evidence

Notes received from parents explaining the reason for the absence will be kept on file in line with school retention policies. Parents and carers are aware that only the head teacher or their representative can authorise an absence and that further information such as a letter from a GP or consultant may be required to support reasons given for absence.

Medical and illness absences

The school appreciates that there are times when a pupil has to attend a medical appointment during the school day. In these instances, a copy of the hospital appointment letter should be provided to the school **prior** to appointment date to inform the school of the set scheduled time. This, however, does not apply to routine GP or dental appointments, which can and should wherever possible be arranged for times outside of the school day.

If a pupil is repeatedly absent due to illness, the school may request supporting evidence that the pupil is receiving the necessary medical treatment. An appointment card, consultant letter, photograph of prescription medication, would all suffice as medical evidence. Without the necessary evidence, the school may notify the parent or carer that all future absences will be unauthorised until the necessary medical evidence has been provided, and a referral to the Education Inclusion Service may be made.

Persistent absence

Welsh Government defines persistent absence as pupils whose absence level is more than 10% (less than 90% attendance). Persistent absenteeism may lead to a referral to the Education Inclusion Service for additional support for the pupil and their family.

Ysgol Bro Pedr meet with the Education Inclusion Service on a regular basis to monitor all pupils below 95%.

What happens when you child's attendance becomes a cause of concern?

- Parents may receive a letter from school advising them of their child's attendance and number of days missed.
- If attendance continues to be of concern the school may invite parents in for a meeting. The Education Inclusion Service or other relevant agencies may also be invited to attend.
- Following a meeting, if your child's attendance continues to be of concern the school may refer to the Education Inclusion Service.
- Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without good reason may lead to issuing of a fixed penalty notice or prosecution. Regular absences from school affects the pattern of a child's learning and may seriously affect their learning.

Leave of absence/holidays during term time

Leave of absence during term time is actively discouraged as it negatively impacts on the pupil's ability to engage with the full curriculum. Parents and carers do not have the

automatic right to withdraw their children from school for a family holiday and will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement.

The school will consider any application for leave of absence; parents and carers must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence (at least four weeks prior to departure date for a family holiday). Forms to request a leave of absence can be obtained from the school, either in paper copy from the school office or from the school website. The head teacher will consider the request and respond in writing to inform the parent or carer whether the request has been authorised. Subsequently, a parent or carer can make an informed decision whether they wish to pursue the absence in the knowledge of any potential consequences.

There may be occasions where, even in exceptional circumstances, your child's school may not agree leave.

Where parents have children in more than one school a separate request must be made to each school. The Head teacher at each school will make their own decision based on the factors relating to the child at their school.

Fixed Penalty Notices for Non-Attendance at School

The school may request the local authority to issue a fixed penalty notices where a parent/carer has failed to secure their child's regular attendance at school. A penalty notice can be requested against one of following criteria:

1. A minimum of 10 sessions unauthorised absence within a term and where the attendance falls below 90% in the academic year. These do not need to be consecutive absences.

2. Late arrival at school i.e. after the registration has closed and marked as 'U' code as stated in the WG codes Guidance 2010. Persistent lateness for the purposes of this document consists of at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence (Code U) and where the attendance falls below 90% in the academic year. These do not need to be consecutive absences.

3. Where parent/carers have failed to engage with the school and/or the Education Inclusion Service in attempts to improve attendance but where court sanctions have not yet been initiated.

To comply with The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013, Ysgol Bro Pedr will operate in accordance with the local authority's Code of Conduct for fixed penalty notices for regular non-attendance at school. It remains the discretion of the head teacher to authorise absences in line with The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 attendance codes and supplementary guidance provided by the local authority.

Each pupil's absence will be considered on its own merits and, if appropriate, a fixed penalty notice may be requested to encourage improved future attendance. If a pupil's attendance is significantly low, a referral to the Education Welfare Service may be considered as an alternative to requesting a penalty notice.

Ultimately, if an attendance matter cannot be resolved by the school and the appropriate steps have been followed (as outlined in the 'Procedures for Non-Attendance, then a referral will be made to the Education Inclusion Service for further investigation.

Roles and responsibilities

Ysgol Bro Pedr are aware that ensuring regular school attendance depends on establishing and utilising close working relationships between parents, pupils, schools, the local authority and other professionals who work with children.

A key part of any successful working relationship is a clear understanding of each person's role and responsibilities, and as such the following sets out to clarify the roles and responsibilities for those people engaged with tackling absence issues.

Parent/Carer

The Education Act 1996 states that all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must access suitable, full-time education. Parents must ensure this happens by registering their child at a school or providing a suitable alternative arrangement.

Compulsory school age means that children and young people should attend school from the start of the first term commencing after their fifth birthday and are of compulsory school age until after the last Friday in June of the school year in which they have their 16th birthday.

A pupil's punctuality is also a legal requirement and parents/carers of a pupil who is persistently late (after the close of the register) can also face legal proceedings. Sometimes, there are situations at home that may make it difficult for a pupil to arrive on time and as such due consideration is given to any help or assistance a family may need in these circumstances.

Parents should contact school on the first day that their child is absent from school. Parents should speak to school at the earliest opportunity if they are concerned that their child may be reluctant to attend.

School

Schools are required under the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 to take an attendance register twice a day; at the **start** of the morning session and once during

the afternoon session. The accuracy of the register is important in order to support any statutory interventions that may be required. It should be noted that it is an offence not to maintain accurate registers.

The school has the responsibility to monitor individual attendance rates at least weekly and use their own intervention methods to tackle individual pupil attendance issues where the pupil's attendance rate is 86% and above. A referral to the Education Inclusion Service should be made by the school when an individual's attendance falls into one of the below categories:

- The pupil record of 85% or less over a period of 6 weeks where the majority of absences are unauthorised.
- A block of 20 sessions without satisfactory reason.
- Consistent irregular attendance which, following investigation by the school, staff are unable to authorise.
- Medical reasons that will significantly affect pupil's attendance and learning.
- Child is missing.

However, the school can refer a pupil to the Education Inclusion Service should there be concerns for the individual's wellbeing with attendance above 85% or for Welfare check visits.

The Designated Member of Staff

Attendance is the responsibility of all staff. There is, however, a designated member of staff for attendance and all staff are able to discuss individual pupil attendance with this person. The Designated Member of Staff for Attendance will:

- monitor the school's registers.
- liaise with teaching staff, in particular Heads of Years.
- meet with the Education Inclusion Service on a regular basis.
- refer to other agencies if appropriate.
- refer to the school nurse if there are doubts about the validity of an illness.
- oversee the use of standardised letters to parents addressing specific aspects of attendance and requiring parental response.
- arrange for an attendance meeting in the case of repeated, unexplained absences (school will consider inviting the named governor for attendance to such a meeting).
- ensure that the Education Inclusion Services' role is known and understood in school.

Attendance Lead will be responsible for the strategic management of attendance across the school. They will scrutinise the data on a weekly basis, monitor trends and patterns across cohort of pupils, and evaluate interventions for their impact and effectiveness and direct resources for the best possible outcome.

Form tutors will be responsible for completing the session registers fully and accurately during every registration. This practice ensures good safeguarding processes, enabling the school to know where every pupil is at the start of all sessions and to commence the 'first day response' process if the pupil is not present.

Subject tutors will be responsible for completing lessons registers; ensuring they are completed fully and accurately during the lesson itself.

Attendance Officer/Attendance Administrator will be responsible for the daily operational duties of the attendance team. They will ensure that all registers, both session and lesson, are completed on a daily basis and if not will escalate this to the Attendance Lead for action. They will undertake the 'first day response' on each morning for those pupils whose families have not made contact. They will collate the supporting evidence, and chase any outstanding forms, absence notes, holiday request forms etc. The officers will compile the data in preparation for analysis by the Attendance Lead, form tutors and heads of year, and make the referrals to the Education Inclusion Service.

Education Inclusion Service

The principal function of the Education Inclusion Service is to improve attendance in all schools and alternative education provisions across the local authority by supporting pupils and their families to overcome their barriers to engagement.

The service provides support to schools, pupils and their families to ensure regular attendance and address any difficulties relating to absenteeism. The Education Inclusion Service works collaboratively with a range of support services and agencies and provides an essential link between home and school to ensure that pupils benefit from the educational opportunities available to them.

The service acts on behalf of the authority in its statutory enforcement capacity and is responsible for a number of related duties that include:

- the regulating and issuing of child employment and performance licenses for school age children and young people, and their chaperones.

- to investigate, locate and track children who are referred as "Children Missing from Education".

- to oversee the education needs of vulnerable pupils e.g. Gypsy Traveller families.

- to work in partnership with the Police in the arrangement and coordination of formal truancy operations in accordance with Crime and Disorder legislation.

Attendance initiatives

The school and local authority will work closely together to raise the awareness of school attendance, promote good attendance and tackle unauthorised absence.

The school will consider an awards system to reward pupils who have excellent or improving attendance. Any reward system must be meaningful to the children and the timing of rewards needs to be taken into account to ensure that the children can make the link between their attendance and any rewards.

The school will work with the Education Inclusion Service to undertake local authority initiatives such as the Welfare Check Visits, Meet and Greet sessions and target groups.

Categorisation of absence

All pupils who are on role but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories:

- Authorised Absence
- Unauthorised Absence
- Approved Educational Activity

Unauthorised absence

These codes are for those sessions where pupils were absent and no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason i.e. shopping trips, attending a concert, haircuts, missed bus, looking after sibling or unwell parents, birthdays, no uniform, holidays.

Authorised absence

These codes are for those sessions where pupils are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid i.e. genuine illness, unavoidable medical or dental appointments, days of religious observance, exceptional family circumstances. Evidence may be requested to support the reason given (e.g. medical evidence, appointment cards, etc.)

Approved educational activity

These codes cover types of supervised educational activity undertaken off the school site but with the approval of the school and/or the LA, where the session has been supervised by an approved tutor.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities

- Link courses or approved education at another venue.

Dual Registration

Pupils who attend another school or unit will be dually registered at both venues. The enrolment status within the management information system (MIS) indicates the main place of education and the subsidiary. An example would be a pupil registered at this school but attending a pupil referral unit for certain days each week. The main school will be whichever the child attends for more than 50% of their time. The other will be the subsidiary.

The school or provision where the child is expected to attend is responsible for accurately recording the pupil's attendance and chasing up non-attendance. School will liaise with the other education provider on a daily basis in order to identify pupils who are absent for the session and mark the register accordingly.

Retention of records

Attendance regulations stipulate that attendance records should be retained for at least three years; however, it is good practice to extend this period in line with the education record retention schedule.

Register checks

The local authority will formally check the school registers on a termly basis to ensure there is compliance with the national legislation. It should be noted that registers are legal documents and it is an offence not to maintain accurate records.

Attendance targets

The school and Governing body will make use of the attendance data available from the local authority when reviewing its targets and analysis of the outcomes in comparison with similar schools from across the region.

The head teacher will present the attendance data in each of the termly reports to the Governing body for the figures to be scrutinised against the attainment data. The Governors will have the opportunity to challenge the data alongside the practices for managing attendance, in order to tackle the overall absence rates across the school and within specific cohorts of learners.

Ysgol Bro Pedr targets are: 95%

Self-Evaluation Assessment

The school will produce a self-evaluation assessment to show how the school will set about achieving its attendance targets. This will include data for vulnerable cohorts, strategic

management, attendance policies and procedures, attendance management and monitoring and communication.

This self-evaluation assessment will be reviewed on an annual basis and will be used to inform the School Improvement Plan.

Monitoring And Evaluation of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually.

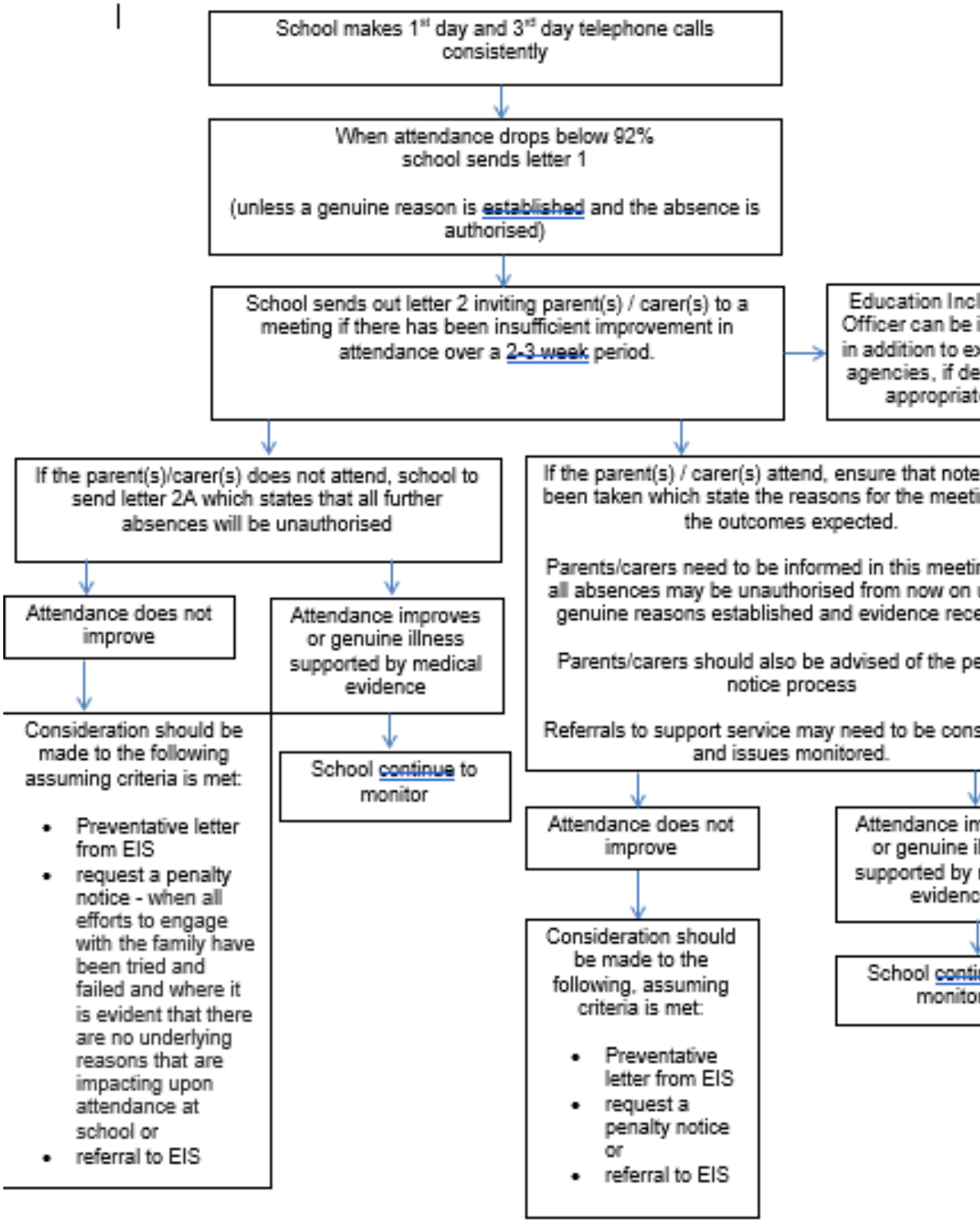
Date passed by Governing Body November 2024

Chairman Mr Justin Davies

Designated Governor for school attendance Mrs Elen Page

Appendix 1

NON-ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOLS



APPENDIX 2

The registration system

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
****	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorized absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

APPENDIX 3

Legislation and guidance

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

(a) to his age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent means natural parents and includes any person who has parental responsibility or has day to day care of the child.

Section 444 1, 1(a) and (ZA) contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school or alternative provision arranged by the Local Authority.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013 set out the framework for the operation of the Fixed Penalty Notice scheme.

The Equalities Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

Registers and admission.

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010
- The Education (School Day and School Year) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006

Attendance targets

- The Education (School Performance and Unauthorised Absence Targets) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006.

Guidance documents relating to attendance

- All Wales Child Protection Procedures
- Keeping Learners safe
- Belonging, engaging and participating – Guidance on improving learner engagement and attendance
- The All Wales Attendance Framework
- The National Assembly for Wales Circular 47/2006 Inclusion and Pupil Support.
- Consortium's Attendance Strategy
- Local Code of Conduct relating to the Fixed Penalty Notice scheme
- Welsh Government Guidance on penalty notices for regular non-attendance at school
- Welsh Government Guidance on attendance codes

Code Use for Common Courses and Activities

EXCEPTIONS	**Code**	**SIMS Notes Field Exemplar**
Music Exams	B	Music Exam. Letter provided & copied
Speech & Language Therapy	B	SALT Letter provided & copied
Asthma Clinic	M	Asthma Clinic. Appointment card copied
Physiotherapy	M	Physiotherapy Appointment card copied
Sporting Tours	C	Tour (E.g. Rugby) and date. Evidence copied
Football Academy (With classroom learning)	B	E.g. Cardiff Academy with classroom. Letter copied
Football Academy (Without Classroom learning)	C	E.g. Swansea Academy. Letter copied
Club & National Competitions	P	Activity / Competition, Place and Date. Letter copied
Overseas Trips through Competitions	P	Activity / Competition, Place and Date. Letter copied
Travelling Time to Competitions (With letter from the Club)	C	Travelling to (Place Name) for competition . Letter copied
E-learning where there is an agreed package with the L.A	B	E-learning. Evidence Letter copied.
Child Performance	C	Child Performance. Evidence with L.A.

*** Any evidence provided to support code usage must be retained by school**