





ATTENDANCE POLICY

Version Control	Version 2
Adoption Date	14 th July 2025
Review Date	Summer 2026

Chair of Governors		14 th July 2025
Headteacher		14 th July 2025



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OUR PURPOSE, VISION AND VALUES

PURPOSE

At Ysgol Bro Taf we are committed to harnessing the power of education to enrich our learners' lives, ensuring that the communities of Pontypridd thrive now and for future generations.

Delivering equity and excellence is at the heart of our school, where there is a place and opportunity for everyone, every day, to discover their brilliance.

VISION

- Foster a culture of aspiration where everyone strives to discover their brilliance
- Provide a dynamic and innovative curriculum which broadens our learners' horizons through progressive learning experiences
- Enable consistently outstanding teaching and embrace every moment as an opportunity to learn
- Build **ONE** community characterised by fun, equity, and inclusivity, where everyone feels supported, trusted and valued
- Empower our community to realise that leadership is not confined to a select few but can be embraced by all.

VALUES

Be Brave	We will not be afraid to take risks and will overcome challenges by being resilient.
Be Respectful	We will be kind and value everyone in our community.
Be Optimistic	We will embrace opportunities and challenges with a 'can-do' attitude.
Be Trusting	We will rely on each other's integrity and competence, fostering a collaborative and supportive culture.
Be Aspirational	We will set ambitious goals, strive for excellence and pursue personal growth to achieve our full potential.
Have Fun	We will promote enjoyment and seek fulfilment, celebrating both our individual and collective achievements.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. A Regular school attendance has a positive effect on children and young people and a strong impact on pupil outcomes, standards and progression. Within this, regular attendance supports the development of literacy and numeracy skills, and on the conceptual understanding needed for further study and success in the workplace. Analysis shows that examination outcomes link strongly to attendance rates, for example, where a modest increase in absence can lower outcomes. Lessons missed can mean missing key information, skills and ideas. Good attendance also has a positive effect on emotional and physical well-being. Establishing good attendance patterns from an early age is vital for social development.
- 1.2. At Ysgol Bro Taf attendance is a key part in all pupils immersing themselves within our school curriculum. Attendance is a key priority for all stakeholders at Ysgol Bro Taf and as such we have set our whole school target at 90% for 2024/25. As a school we want to work in collaboration with all stakeholders to achieve the very best attendance rates and ensure all pupils achieve their potential.

2. OUR APPROACH

- 2.1. Our approach is based around building robust positive relationships across our whole school community, fostering a love of learning from 3 – 16 years, and beyond.
- 2.2. Staff at Ysgol Bro Taf will operate in a person-centred approach, always considering personal circumstances. All staff are ACEs trained and a selection of key staff are trauma-informed trained. All of these approaches will be used in developing a strong culture of support with pupils progress and well-being at the heart.
- 2.3. Staff will work to be pro-active in unearthing attendance issues by early intervention and by close monitoring of data.
- 2.4. Staff will look at attendance data at the following times throughout the school year:
 - Daily monitoring
 - Weekly monitoring
 - Half termly monitoring.
- 2.5. Key staff across the school are dedicated to improving attendance and supporting pupil well-being. All attendance concerns can be reported directly to the staff listed below:
 - Lower School (Nursery – Year 6): Miss Annika Ayres
 - Middle School (Year 7 – 9): Miss Ffion Walters
 - Upper School (Year 10 – 11): Miss Nathalie Coles
- 2.6. We are fully aware of all issues that might arise and impact negatively on school attendance and will work in multi-faceted manner to overcome these issues.

Promoting excellent attendance

- 2.7. We will always strive to ensure every pupil achieves a minimum of 95% attendance. Our school will promote excellent school attendance through:
 - Clear roles and responsibilities
 - Clear links with AWS and multi-agency working
 - Weekly attendance rewards
 - Half termly attendance competitions
 - Attendance foci during morning tutorial time
 - Operating a graduated response in tackling concerning attendance rates
 - Close monitoring of attendance data to identify trends and patterns
 - Operating a supportive and inclusive curriculum which allows all pupils to thrive.

3. EXPECTATIONS

Pupils

- 3.1. There is an expectation that all pupils will:
- attend school regularly and strive to achieve 95% attendance
 - arrive on time, appropriately dressed in school uniform and prepared for the school day
 - tell a member of staff about any problem which is making it hard for them to attend school regularly.

Parents / Carers

- 3.2. There is an expectation that all parents/carers will:
- ensure their child attends such for a minimum of 95%, arriving to school on time and ready to learn
 - ensure that they contact the school as soon as possible i.e. on the first day of absence before 8.30am whenever their child is unable to attend school
 - ensure that their child(ren) arrive in school in the correct school uniform and fully prepared for the school day.
 - provide the school with up-to-date home, work and emergency telephone numbers
 - not arrange family holidays to take place during the school term (unless exceptional circumstances) and where possible arrange all medical/dental appointments outside school day or hours
 - liaise with school and relevant staff if there are any problems / issues with their child that could affect their attendance.

Staff

- 3.3. There is an expectation that all staff will:
- complete registers accurately and in a timely fashion (within first 10 minutes of the lesson)
 - provide a high-quality education with a diverse and enriching curriculum to suit all abilities
 - deal discretely and appropriately with any problem notified to the school by the parent or carer, to which might affect the pupil's attendance
 - make all efforts to encourage good attendance and attitudes to learning throughout the school
 - follow the school's graduated response and procedures for dealing with declining attendance
 - fully engage with school initiatives to promote excellent attendance.

4. PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING AND MONITORING ATTENDANCE

- 4.1. Ysgol Bro Taf operates a computerised attendance recording system. All registers are completed by class teachers via Bromcom.
- 4.2. Lesson registers are checked each lesson to ensure accuracy and safeguarding of all pupils.
- 4.3. The school's Data Team will monitor registers on a lesson-by-lesson basis, identifying any concerns and relaying to the school's Attitudes to Learning Assistant.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Improving attendance rates is a whole school priority at Ysgol Bro Taf. As such, it is everyone's responsibility. Throughout the school community specific staff have key roles in promoting excellent school attendance amongst pupils.

- 5.1. The Governing Body will:
 - ensure that the school has in place a whole school attendance policy which is fit for purpose and updated annually
 - receive annual and half termly reports from the Deputy Headteacher in respect of attendance data, trends and comparisons
 - monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the whole school policy.
- 5.2. The Deputy Headteacher (Care, Support and Well-being) will:
 - analyse and interrogate attendance data on a half termly basis
 - put strategic plans in place through the whole school improvement plan to drive attendance improvements
 - report to the school's SLT and Governing Body on attendance data, trends and celebrate successes
 - ensure the attendance policy is in place and being used consistently and effectively across the school community
 - promote excellent attendance through whole school rewards and initiatives.
- 5.3. The Heads of School will:
 - lead the respective schools to improve attendance rates
 - monitor, track and drive improvements in pupils with attendance rates below 80%
 - link with AWS and LA for pupils requiring specific support
 - track and monitor weekly attendance rates for classes within their schools, celebrating successes and targeting for improvement.
- 5.4. The Heads of Year will:
 - distribute weekly and cumulative attendance data to tutors and ensure the tutors are using the data correctly
 - monitor and work with pupils whose attendance is below 85%
 - lead staff through the attendance graduated response systems, ensuring Letter 1 and 2 are sent in a timely fashion
 - hold regular meetings with tutors, providing all relevant and up to date information
 - communicate attendance concerns to parents / carers and put in plans for improvement.
 - raise the profile of attendance at key times during the school year
 - launch and run whole school attendance initiatives to improve whole school attendance rates.
- 5.5. The Well-being and Family Engagement Officers will:

- work closely with Heads of Year to monitor and track attendance rates of pupils with attendance below 90%, with a particular focus on pupils eligible for free school meals
- meet regularly with pupils to remove barriers to learning and improve attendance rates
- communicate attendance concerns to parents / carers and put in plans for improvement
- provide regular attendance updates to Heads of Year
- complete 'First Day Response' calls for any pupils who are absent from school without reason.

5.6. The Tutors will:

- ensure class registers are completed at promptly and accurately at the start of each day
- develop robust and positive relationships with all members of tutor group
- monitor and track pupils with attendance rates between 90 – 94.9% on a termly basis, setting SMART targets for improvements
- report any concerns or trends to Heads of Year.

5.7. The Data Team will:

- ensure accurate coding is used throughout the school
- ensure all registers are complete and that there no missing marks at the end of each school day
- ensure all reasons for absence are logged appropriately
- update Bromcom with any lateness
- monitor registers each lesson, informing the school's AtL Assistant of any truancy
- inform parents / carers of any internal truancy. There will be occasions whereby parents / carers will be expected to attend site to support staff to ensure the safeguarding of pupils
- collaborate with HoS / HoY ensuring graduated response documentation is sent out and adhered too:
 - Letter 1
 - Letter 2 (If no improvement 3 weeks after Letter 1)
 - FPN's
 - AWS Referrals
 - Emergency Well-Being Referrals
- inform HoY, HoS, WFEO of pupils who have been absent without reason for over 4 days allowing for appropriate safeguarding measures to be put in place, e.g. an emergency well-being referral
- ensure tracking systems are updated and accurate to enable HoS / HoY and the school's SLT to utilise the data.

6. REPORTING A PUPIL ABSENCE

- 6.1. All pupil absences should be recorded as early as possible via the Bromcom 'report absence' feature. There might be occasions where parent / carers will be asked to provide medical evidence.
- 6.2. If a child is absent from school and has attendance below 86% or this is the third (or more) bout of illness, parents / carers will be asked to supply medical evidence. Without medical evidence all absences will be unauthorised.
- 6.3. Absences should be reported before 8.30am to allow our staff to record this centrally on school systems.
- 6.4. If a pupil is absent from school without a reason, parents / carers will receive a 'First Day Response' call from a member of staff at school. In some cases, parents / carers may also receive a home visit (DART).
- 6.5. If a pupil is absent for 5 days without reason, we will refer to the attendance and well-being service within the local authority to request a home visit to check on the well-being of the child.
- 6.6. Pupils who arrive late for school will be requested to sign in via an electronic system in main reception.
- 6.7. For any hospital, doctor or dental appointments during school time, evidence will be required via the Bromcom system. Evidence can be uploaded through the route of reporting an absence. This will be recorded as an authorised absence. However, this will not count as a present mark. Any pupil attending a morning appointment is required to return to school as soon as possible or for an afternoon appointment would still be expected to attend school prior to said appointment.
- 6.8. Routine, non-urgent doctors or dental appointments should be made outside of the school day.
- 6.9. If a pupil needs to be taken out of school early, parents / carers will need to sign them out at reception.
- 6.10. The school will authorise pupil absence if we are satisfied that the reasons given are genuine (e.g. illness or medical appointment). The school will use accurate coding to monitor and record attendance.
- 6.11. If the school does not receive evidence or no communication is had, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and the relevant coding will be used.
- 6.12. Unauthorised absences are closely monitored throughout the school year by staff within the well-being team. All unauthorised absences will be chased through the platform Bromcom.
- 6.13. Approved educational activity codes can be used for appropriate activities which are agreed by the school and in some cases the local authority, examples of these are:
 - Work Experience and placements
 - Trips and educational visits

- Sporting activities
- Approved education at an alternative venue
- Education arranged via alternative means such as CAMHS or the LA CLA team.

7. PUNCTUALITY

Procedures for lateness to school

- 7.1. Pupils who arrive late for school will be requested to sign in via an electronic system in main reception.
- 7.2. Punctuality is incredibly important across the school. All lateness is tracked centrally. Pupils who are persistently late for school or lessons without a reason will be upscaled through the school's detention system.
- 7.3. Each time a pupil is late for a lesson or to school they will be issued with an 'L' code and they will receive a 'B1'.
- 7.4. Lateness will be tracked centrally through the school's attendance systems. Parents / carers will be notified weekly if their children are persistently late for school / lessons.
- 7.5. Each time a pupil is late for a lesson or to school they will be issued with an 'L' code. The teacher/staff member will also record how many minutes late the pupil was and this will be totalled at the end of each week and communicated with parents/carers.

Truancy

- 7.6. Pupils attending Ysgol Bro Taf must attend all allocated lessons/sessions. Missing lessons can have a serious effect on a pupil's education due to missed learning.
- 7.7. Electronic registers will be completed within the first 10 minutes of every lesson, this will be monitored by the Data Team and Attitudes to Learning Assistant. Any pupil missing from lessons will be highlighted.
- 7.8. Truancy presents a well-being and safeguarding issue, as staff in school are unaware of a pupil's whereabouts.
- 7.9. Once a pupil has been identified as truanting, staff will attempt to locate the pupil and ensure the pupil is safe.
- 7.10. Parent/carers will be notified and if the pupil is not located this will be escalated to the Police. It is possible that this may lead to multi agency involvement.
- 7.11. The truancy will then be fully investigated and followed up, resulting in a sanction being put in place.
- 7.12. Persistent truancy will be dealt with in line with the school's Attitude to Learning Policy and it is likely a truancy risk assessment will be put in place.

8. TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

- 8.1. We operate a zero-tolerance approach to term time holidays.
- 8.2. If parents / carers decide to take their child(ren) on holiday during term time, a holiday notification form must be completed. They may be issued a Fixed Penalty Notice by the Local Authority.
- 8.3. If a child's attendance is below 86% on the first day of their holiday a fixed penalty notice will be issued.
- 8.4. All holiday requests should be submitted through to the school at least two weeks before the holiday is due to start. Holiday requests will be processed as soon as possible.
- 8.5. There are a few exceptional circumstances in which the school may authorise holidays during term time:
 - Services Families
 - Families who have suffered a close bereavement
 - Families who have suffered significant trauma

The school will decide on each case on an individual basis, however these are for exceptional circumstances only.

9. FIXED PENALTY NOTICES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

- 9.1. The school works very closely with the AWS service and 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.
- 9.2. A penalty notice can be requested against one of following five criteria:
- Where a pupil has accrued 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absences in the current term (O codes)
 - Where a pupil has been persistently late on 10 or more occasions in the current term, arriving more than 30 minutes after the registration period (U codes)
 - Where a parent(s) / carer(s) refuses to engage with a school in the interest of improving their child's school attendance levels
 - Where a pupil is repeatedly caught truanting in public places during school hours (Police can request a penalty notice be issued for this offence)
 - Where a holiday during term time has been requested but has been unauthorised if the child has attendance below 86% on day one of the holiday.
- 9.3. To comply with The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013, Ysgol Bro Taf will operate in accordance with the local authority's Code of Conduct for fixed penalty notices for regular non-attendance at school.
- 9.4. It remains the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise absences in line with The Education (Learner Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 attendance codes and supplementary guidance provided by the local authority.
- 9.5. 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 Attendance and Well-being Service may be considered.