



**COEDFFRANC
PRIMARY**

Giving our children the roots to grow
and the wings to fly

Attendance Policy

September 2023

Signed by: _____

Date: _____

Review September 2026



Introduction and background

As a school we want to achieve excellence in all areas of our provision. We aim to be a school where all pupils strive to flourish personally, emotionally and academically. We aim to be a school where all of our team are highly trained, highly motivated and passionate about all pupils' progress. We strive for our local community to view us proudly as a place of safety, support and progress for their children. A trusted place where the aspirations for their children are in safe, secure and skilled hands.

Coedffranc Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil attainment as well as supporting the aims of the school shown above. This policy is written with the above statement in mind and this policy underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding;
- ensure every pupil has access to the full time education to which they are entitled;
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school; and
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters
- Report to parents/carers termly on their child's attendance rate. Traffic light letters issued half termly
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance and invite them in for an informal attendance review meeting
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through school council reward schemes, certificates and time credits
- Visits/phone calls from Education Welfare Officer
- Offer the support and advice from our Family Liaison Officer to support positive routines at home.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason which can not be avoided

like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised absences include:

- *parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily*
- *truancy before or during the school day*
- *absences which have never been properly explained*
- *children who arrive at school too late to get a mark (after 9.30 am)*
- *shopping, looking after other children or birthdays*
- *day trips and holidays in term time.*

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we will work with that family to understand the root problem. We can use outside agencies to help with this such as our Family Engagement Officer and the Education Welfare Officer.

Persistent Absenteeism

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 20% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly. If your child falls below 90% attendance or risks falling below attendance then we will work with our Education Welfare Officer to investigate the reasons further. We expect full parental cooperation to improve the child's attendance. These pupils are tracked and monitored carefully we also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment.

Absence Procedures

If your child is absent the parent/carer must follow contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence before 9.30. The school has an absence reporting option available to leave a message, or parents can phone the main office or call into school and report to reception. If your child is absent we will telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you. We may invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer.

The Education Welfare Officer

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way following the informal attendance review meeting, the school will refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorized absences persist, these Officers can in extreme cases begin prosecution proceedings in the Magistrates Court.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at 8.50am and we expect our children to be in the playground before this time ready to line up when the whistle is blown. Registers are marked by 8.55am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At 9.30am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a late after the register has closed mark which is classed as an unauthorised absence. Our Education Welfare Officer will also take note if there is a record of persistent lateness.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Headteacher to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

We will encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and celebrate good class punctuality. We will always look to be supportive and encourage parents to work with our Family Engagement Officer (Tammi Williams) to see if we can help.

Holidays in Term Time

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday. Parents and Carers should request a holiday form from the school office which will need to be returned to the school for the headteacher to consider. We do not have a blanket ban on holidays in term time and each request will be considered against a range of factors. Parents will be notified by letter if the holiday has been authorised or refused along with reasons why. There is no right of appeal on this decision as the decision rests with the headteacher.

Targets

Our school target for 2023/24 is 91%, for 2024/25 is 92.5% and 2025/26 is 94%. These targets may be reviewed.

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. This information can be found in the Governors report to parents and school Prospectus which can be found on our website. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Penalty notices

Coedffranc Primary school follows the Neath & Port Talbot Code of conduct for Penalty Notices as set out in the document 'Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices, irregular attendance at school.

Further information on penalty notices can be found at: <https://www.npt.gov.uk/5875>

T. Richards
Acting Headteacher
September 2023