

Windsor Clive Primary School



Ysgol Gynradd Windsor Clive

Every Child – Every Chance – Every Day

Attendance Policy

Date agreed: May 2025
Review date: May 2026

Introduction

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend and place emphasis on importance of good attendance through the implementation of a range of appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for ensuring that the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Equal Opportunities and Race Equality

The school is committed to working towards equality, promoting positive approaches to difference, and fostering respect for people of all cultural and social backgrounds whatever their age, race, sexual orientation, faith, ethnicity, gender, appearance, language, disability or additional learning need. Developing positive relationships between pupils of all backgrounds is an essential aspect of the work of the school. Staff are committed to ensuring that all pupils achieve the highest possible standards in an inclusive environment. We are pro-active in tackling and eliminating discrimination and providing positive, non-stereotyped role models for all pupils. Through monitoring and evaluating our provision within the school improvement planning cycle, we aim to minimise the potential for discrimination and ensure that equality is at the centre of our attendance policy and practice.

Attendance aims

As stated in Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), we believe that all young people have the right to education, based on equality of opportunity, and that the school, in partnership with parents and other parties, must take measures to encourage regular school attendance and reduce rates of absenteeism.

Regular and punctual attendance is essential to ensure that each child is able to achieve their potential as well as ensuring that they are able to

fully access all the wider benefits of being part of a school community. Therefore, we aim to work with pupils and their families, to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually, making the most of the opportunities available to them.

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, every case is different and we will always try to support families to improve the situation. Our Attendance Policy is designed to help teachers, parents and pupils understand their rights, responsibilities and roles when it comes to school attendance. By working in partnership, it is our hope that every pupil achieves over 95% attendance.

The school aims to:

- Give attendance and punctuality a high priority;
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities to ensure consistency and rigour;
- Provide support, advice and guidance to families;
- Use attendance data systematically to evaluate success;
- 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.

Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason 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 includes:

- 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

- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time

Punctuality

If your child misses the start of the day they can miss out on vital learning and teaching opportunities. Pupils arriving late can disrupt lessons and also often feel embarrassed.

Our school day starts at 8.45 and children should be on the school site before this time.

Registers are marked first thing in the morning. If children have not arrived by 9.00 they will receive a late mark. If a child arrives after 9.15, close of register, they will receive a U code that shows them to be on site, but counts as an unauthorised absence.

Time of arrival and reason for lateness is recorded for all pupils arriving after 9.00. Minutes late and reasons are recorded on the electronic register for all pupils arriving after 9.15.

The importance of regular attendance

Absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring regular attendance at school is a legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution of parents/carers.

Pupils may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility.

Helping to promote regular attendance

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

The school and its staff will:

- Set targets for attendance in line with Welsh Assembly guidance
- Class teachers will keep an accurate, daily record of attendance for both the morning and afternoon sessions
- Class teachers will use recognised registration codes for absence
- Any child arriving after 9.00 will be marked late
- Any child arriving after 9.15 will be marked as 'U' which is unauthorised.
- The attendance clerk will phone home on the each day of a child's absence if the absence is unexplained.

- Weekly unexplained absence letters are sent home requesting reasons for any absence.
- Class teachers will inform AHT/Attendance clerk of any concerns regarding attendance.
- Attendance Clerk will monitor daily attendance of pupils highlighted as vulnerable and/or referred to SAO/EWO and report concerns as appropriate.
- Attendance Clerk will attend weekly meeting with AHT & SAO and report any emerging concerns.
- Class teachers will record attendance data for each child on their LR/WR monitoring and in their end of year report
- The Attendance Clerk will update the electronic register daily.
- Provide support and assistance to families experiencing difficulties getting children to school e.g. early morning phone calls.

The Assistant Head teacher will:

- Liaise with class teachers and office staff regarding attendance and punctuality
- Monitor the attendance of all pupils on a fortnightly basis
- Hold a weekly meeting with the school's attendance officer to discuss attendance matters and decide on action to be taken in accordance with the Five Step Approach
- Record action taken for individual pupils on SIMs and in class registers.
- Write letters to parents regarding attendance and punctuality
- Phone parents or arrange meetings with parents, the AHT and the SAO
- Liaise with the School Nurse if a child has a regular pattern of absence for health reasons
- Monitor, evaluate and review percentage attendance for each class on a weekly basis
- Ensure that parents are regularly made aware of their child's attendance and the impact this has on their learning

The parent/carer will

- Ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually
- Notify the school on the first day of their child's absence. They may do this by phone, letter or in person
- If an absence is known in advance, e.g. a dental or medical appointment, parents must inform the school beforehand
- Make every effort to arrange holidays outside of term time

- Contact the school if they have any concerns or queries regarding their child's attendance
- Provide medical evidence for absence following formal notification of this requirement e.g. where pupil attendance is referred to SAO/EWO or being monitored for Fixed Penalty Notice

Promoting regular attendance with pupils

- Class attendance percentages are shared weekly with the children in assembly
- All classes achieving attendance of 95%+ receive an award (a trophy or Early Bird.
- Children with 100% attendance are presented with certificates in termly Merit Assemblies
- At the end of the year children with 100% attendance for the whole period are presented with a prize.

Keeping people up to date

- Parents are kept informed of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality through displays, newsletters, slips home and the School Prospectus
- The expectation of regular attendance and punctuality forms part of the Home/School Agreement with parents
- The Headteacher will report on attendance to Governors each term

A Graduated Response

Windsor Clive Primary is a caring school and always seeks to resolve matters of poor attendance through effective partnership working with parents. On the rare occasion that the school is unable to elicit in parents the support deemed necessary to encourage pupils to attend school, sanctions may be used. In the first instance, parents may receive letters which:

- Request reasons for their child's absence;
- Request medical evidence for their child's absence;
- Express concern about their child's absence and offer advice and support;
- Advise them about their child's lateness and ask for their help in getting their child to school on time;
- Advise them that the school has taken the decision not to authorise an absence;

- Advise them that an Attendance Officer intends to visit their home;
- Advise them of their legal responsibilities to ensure their child attends school regularly;
- Advise them that they are at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice (see below);
- Advise them that a referral has been made to the Educational Welfare Service

In some circumstances, the school may request that the Educational Welfare Service issue parents/carers with a Fixed Penalty Notice under The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013. A warning letter will first be sent if:

- There have been 10 unauthorised sessions within one school term;
- A child has been late (after registration has closed) on 10 occasions within one school term;
- Parents/carers have failed to engage in attempts to improve attendance;

A Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued if:

- There is one further unauthorised absence within 15 school days of a warning letter having been issued;
- An unauthorised holiday is taken during term time (*note that no warning letter will be received*).

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;
- A period of entrenched non-attendance has become established;
- There is a lack of parental cooperation in ensuring a child's regular attendance;

Windsor Clive 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.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Review

There will be an annual review of this policy by the full governing body.

Date of policy approval: May 2025

Date of policy review: May 2026

Signed: _____ (Chairperson of Governing
Body)

Alex McInch

Signed: _____ (Headteacher)

Kim Fisher