

**Policy No:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LLANDAFF CITY CHURCH IN WALES PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**POLICY FOR: Attendance**

**Mission Statement:**

**A Christian Community: Thinking, Learning, Caring**

**Equalities statement:**

Attendance at school and punctuality applies to all children irrespective of the 9 protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010. Excellent attendance and punctuality is important to all.

With respect to families who may require, additional support or adaptations made to ensure improved attendance and punctuality, we expect home and school to work closely together, utilising the support of the Local Authority Attendance and Educational Welfare Teams.

**The Governing Body and all members of school staff at Llandaff City Church in Wales Primary School strongly believe in the positive encouragement of excellent punctuality and attendance of all. This will be achieved through a whole school approach to reinforcing the benefits of regularly attending school.**

## **1. Introduction and aims**

1.1 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 feelings of frustration and unhappiness. As a Church in Wales school, we seek to provide a Christian environment in which all young people can flourish as a member of a happy, caring and safe community. It is our goal that each of our pupils attends school regularly and on time, making the most of the opportunities available to them.

1.2 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. This 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 expectation that every pupil achieves over 95% attendance.

1.3 At Llandaff City we aim 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.

## **2. Rights, responsibilities and roles**

2.1 The Attendance Policy has its basis 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.

2.2 Schools are 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.

2.3 Parents are required under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that their child receives effective full-time education.

2.4 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.

2.5 The Attendance Policy is written to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and in the understanding of life based on the Christian faith as taught by the doctrines of the Church in Wales.

2.6 At Llandaff City we aim to work in partnership with young people, parents and families so that pupils can benefit from the educational opportunities provided to them at school. Key members of staff include:

- Head Teacher
- Inclusion Manager/Deputy Head Teacher
- School Bursar
- School Administrator

With Governors also key to ensuring the implementation and review of this policy.

2.7 This framework operates in conjunction with Cardiff Local Authority's 'Five Step System of Attendance Management'.

### **3. Procedures**

#### *Registration procedures*

3.1 To ensure accuracy and consistency, all pupils are registered electronically via the Capita School Information Management System (SIMS). Note: These are checked daily and inputted onto SIMS on the last working day of each school week by administration staff.

3.2 Pupils are registered within the first ten minutes of each morning and afternoon session. Pupils' attendance is therefore recorded on two occasions during the school day.

3.3 Teachers and Supply Teachers are each provided with a manual entry registration sheet for each school week, and are required to record present as (/) and leave any absences blank. No pupil may be left with a 'missing' mark, and gaps are filled in by administration staff who then transfer reasons for absence onto SIMS.

3.4 In instances of lateness, administration staff are required to alter the absent (N) mark to the late (L) mark. The degree of lateness may be recorded using the appropriate function within SIMS.

### *Categorisation of absence*

3.5 Teachers, Cover Supervisors and Supply Teachers are permitted to use the following registration codes only: Present (/), absent (N) and late (L).

3.6 Administration staff and teachers/supply teachers use the following codes as set out by the Welsh Government 2010:

B	Educated off-site
D	Dual-registered
P	Approved sporting activity
V	Educational visit
J	Interview
W	Work experience
C	Other authorised circumstance
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)
H	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Illness
M	Medical appointment
S	Study leave
E	Excluded
R	Religious observance
T	Traveller absence
O	Other unauthorised circumstance
G	Family holiday (not agreed)
U	Late (after registration closed)

Where pupils are not required to attend school the additional codes X, Y, Z and # may be used.

### *Procedures for absence and lateness*

3.7 Parents are asked to contact the school by telephone on the first day of their child's absence. This should be undertaken by 9.30am.

3.8 Should a pupil be absent from school without explanation, a text message will be sent to parents asking them to make contact with the school. If the parents doesn't respond to the text message within an hour a member of the administration team will telephone all emergency contacts until such time as a reason for absence can be gained. If no contact can be made the Attendance Officer is informed.

3.9 Should the school be unable to ascertain the reason for absence, a letter will be sent to parents seeking explanation

*Authorisation of absence (including holidays and Child Performances / sporting activities)*

3.10 Absences may only be approved by the Head teacher or Deputy Head Teacher. It is expected that both will exercise caution in the authorisation of any absence and parents must seek to provide the school with a full picture of the reasons leading to their child's absence.

3.11 The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 give schools discretionary power to grant leave for the purpose of a family holiday during term time, But 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. All requests must be on the school "Exceptional Leave / Holiday Absence" request form and in advance of any planned holidays.

Holidays will not be approved during the following times of the school year:

The first school week in September.

During the half term which follows the Easter holiday – a traditional time where National Testing and formal Teacher Assessments will take place.

3.12 When assessing requests for leave for holidays, the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will consider:

- The time of year of the proposed trip;
- The length and purpose of the holiday;
- The duration of the holiday and its impact on continuity of learning;
- The circumstances of the family and wishes of the parents; and
- The overall attendance pattern of the child.

Llandaff City is committed to establishing a culture for all pupils whereby absence from school becomes the exception and not the norm. Therefore the school will reasonably expect parents to demonstrate that circumstances prevent the holiday from being taken outside of term time before granting permission to withdraw their child from school.

3.13 When assessing requests for leave for attendance for non school based activities such as sporting events, film, TV, advert and performances in general, the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will consider:

- The time of year of the proposed activity;
- The length and purpose of the activity;
- The duration of the activity and its impact on continuity of learning;
- Whether the company / organisation undertaking the activity have put their request formally in writing to the school in advance of the activity – using the Child Performance and Activities License form where applicable.

- Whether the company / organisation undertaking the activity are able to provide education as part of the absence from school. \*
- The overall attendance pattern of the child.

\*Where an activity is supported by tuition, registers will be usually be marked as B. (Evidence of the tuition will be required). Where education is not provided the absence will count towards the maximum 10 days of authorised absence that the Headteacher is allowed to authorise in one academic year and as such will be marked as C – if approve, or G if not agreed. Where the activity is linked to taking part in sporting activities the register will be marked as P.

#### **4. Intervention**

4.1 Llandaff City recognise the important role that parents play in promoting good school attendance. The school therefore seeks to provide professional, quality information and advice, communicated frequently by text message, parents' evenings, school reports and through the weekly newsletter to parents.

4.2 Llandaff City operates a 'same day contact' scheme in an attempt to prevent prolonged absence and encourage pupils to return to school promptly.

4.3 The Attendance Officer may undertake a 'late at the gates' drop in check, in an attempt to discourage lateness and identify pupils who are persistently late for school.

4.4 Class Teachers closely monitor attendance and report all concerns to a member of the Attendance Team.

4.5 The Educational Welfare Service and South Wales Police, conducts regular 'truancy sweeps' in Cardiff City Centre and throughout the east side of the city.

4.6 Where concerns are raised by parents or staff about a pupil's school attendance, an Attendance Officer will make a home visit to discuss the matter in an environment which many families find comforting. During the home visit the Attendance Officer provides information and advice and seeks to support the pupil in returning to school.

4.7 When a pupil has been absent for an extended period, they are welcomed positively on their return. Where children are absent for a considerable period of time, due to illness, contact will be made by the school to the child's home.

4.8 The Attendance Officers work closely with all schools in the Bishop of Llandaff Cluster. The Attendance Officers also ensures that attendance and punctuality is given a high priority throughout the duration of pupils' compulsory education.

4.9 Good attendance is celebrated at the end of each term as part of the school's 'celebration assembly'. Certificates are given to those students achieving 100% attendance and above the school's annual attendance target. Attendance figures are shared with parents each week in the Deputy Headteacher's newsletter.

#### *Hierarchy of sanctions*

4.10 Llandaff City is a Christian and caring school which always seek 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 4.11);
- Advise them that a referral has been made to the Educational Welfare Service (see 4.12).

4.11(i) 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;
- The police have regularly found a pupil to be absent from school without an acceptable reason.

4.11(ii) 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*).

4.12 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; or
- A pattern of truancy is persisting.

4.13 Llandaff City 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.

## **5. Monitoring and evaluation**

5.1 Class Teachers are responsible for maintaining accurate attendance records for each pupil. Registration data is recorded using SIMS by the school administration team.

5.2 Attendance Officers are required by the Headteacher to produce detailed accounts pertaining to the attendance of pupils upon request. This is achieved by publishing reports from both SIMS.

5.3 Attendance data is reviewed at the end of each term by the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body – as provided in the Head Teacher's report to Governors. Data is also analysed annually and included in the SER.

Approved by Governors on:     /   / '16

\_\_\_\_\_ signed: Mrs A James (Head Teacher)

\_\_\_\_\_ signed: Mr David Oliver (Chair of Governors)