

**Children, Young People and Education Committee**  
**Request for information on Pupil attendance & training for school governors**  
**Response from: Conwy County Borough Council**



**Cyfarwyddwr Strategol Gwasanaethau Gofal Cymdeithasol ac Addysg**  
**Strategic Director of Social Care and Education Services**

*Jenny Williams*


**Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Addysg (Prif Swyddog Addysg)**  
**Head of Education Services (Chief Education Officer)**

*Dr Lowri Brown*

**Cyfeiriad Post / Postal Address:** Adran Addysg Blwch Post 1, CONWY, LL30 9GN / Education Department, PO Box 1, CONWY, LL30 9GN

Jayne Bryant  
Chair of the Children, Young People and  
Education Committee  
Welsh Parliament  
[SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales](mailto:SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales)

Gofynnwch am / Please ask for: **Dr Lowri Brown**

 **1492 574532**

 **Dr.lowri.brown@conwy.gov.uk**

Ein Cyf / Our Ref:

Eich Cyf / Your Ref:

Dyddiad / Date: **17/01/2022**

Annwyl Jayne Bryant,

**RE: School Attendance feedback to Senedd**

I refer to your letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> December in relation to monitoring school attendance and governor training and support.

**Monitoring Pupil attendance in Conwy**

Conwy Education Social Work Service have continued to apply a number of interventions and support strategies to support learners and their families with attendance during period of COVID restrictions. It has been imperative that the Service has maintained regular visual, telephone and email contact with families where learners have been classed as vulnerable, have found transition difficult and have struggled to re-engage with their education in order to monitor any changes for concern in the parents and/or children's presentation.

The points listed below reflect the operational strategies that have been undertaken, which have sat within wider strategic planning with Gold and Silver Command for Conwy Local Authority planning during COVID period.

- The development of Emotional Based School Attendance [EBSA] Guidance which will provide training to staff on EBSA and how to identify/support. This is alongside the design and development of a research EBSA programme, which incorporated 50 young people identifying the thoughts and worries of pupils during lockdown and how they felt about returning to school following lockdown.

- Welfare visitations to learners' homes have been undertaken throughout the pandemic. These have been completed through door step checks, garden meetings and in latter stages home visits inside homes. Door step checks assisted in our monitoring of vulnerable learners during school closure alongside supporting re-engagement for those whom found it difficult to return to an educational setting.
- Regular welfare walks and activities undertaken with learners
- Assisting schools and families to assess learner needs which resulted in bespoke integration packages based on identified needs.
- Encouraging families to work with school and Education Social Work Service where families have proposed to electively home educate in order to manage their child's anxieties around the return and school attendance
- Multi agency working with parents to offer effective support for managing learner and parental anxiety. We have jointly worked over the period with School Nurses, Conwy Family centres, Social Care, CAMHS and Conwy Youth Service.
- Joint working opportunities with local Youth Workers in supporting learners to re-engage in their community and offer opportunities for activities and continuous support.
- Participation in multi-agency meetings with schools to target hard to reach families and provide bespoke plans for re-engagement
- Maintaining connection with learners through a variety of methods digital, face to face, text, phone that met the learners preferred way of communication.
- Providing previous experience/knowledge and historical background to schools to help them make effective and informed judgements around individual cases where COVID posed increased risks due to health complications within the family.
- Utilising established relationships with families to make contact, inform and reassure of COVID measures within schools in order for parents to have an accurate, local picture of events in their area. Prior to each re-opening period identified list of families were contacted in order to ensure that discussion and information had been shared to support re-engagement
- Supporting school settings as a point of contact for vulnerable learners where additional support to engage in blended learning was required. This included making application for resources, grants, delivering dongles, laptops and paper packs and resources to families.
- Supporting schools to develop specialist resources to accommodate pupils with COVID anxiety who would/could not attend mainstream lessons. This included supporting with familiarisation sessions for learners outside of school hours, welfare and confidence checks.
- The development of the Pastoral Support Programme in Conwy with regard to children who did not return to school. This guided and supported schools through process of re-engaging learner incorporating registration, assessment and regular review of learners holistic and education needs.
- Attendance at the Vulnerable Learner's Operational Group to ensure families in need of support received a service.

## **Governor support in Conwy**

In order to support our School Governors, we offer a wide range of online training modules, comprising of:

- Safeguarding – Module 1 on HwB - with modules 2, 3 and 4 optional for completion;
- Online Safety for Governors
- GDPR
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)
- Modern Slavery and Adult Safeguarding
- Enhanced Safeguarding training for Designated Safeguarding Persons
- New Governor
- New Chair
- New Clerk
- Understanding Data
- The Effective Governing Body.

Governors Virtual Training sessions have been held - namely:

- School Complaints
- Finance
- Exclusions

All sessions have been very well attended, therefore we will be continuing to use the virtual training session process as a method to deliver training and aim to introduce two training aspects per term where possible.

A termly Governors Newsletter is produced and shared to keep Governors up to date with information and developments, which has been very well received.

A Governors Handbook has been produced which we hope will assist new Governors with their induction process and aid all Governors to fulfil their role and responsibilities in supporting their schools to ensure the best possible outcome for learners and staff in a practical and user-friendly way. The aim of the handbook is to accompany, not replace the WG School Governors' guide to the law.

In order to assist Headteachers and Governing Bodies, a new policy and document platform for Conwy schools has been developed on TEAMS where Headteachers and School Business Managers have access to three folders consisting of 'Statutory Policies', 'Non-statutory Policies' and 'Other Documents'. The platform will continue to be populated over time to also include Welsh Government documents. A Statutory and Non Statutory Policy List has been developed for Headteachers/Clerks to update accordingly and keep abreast of its adopting cycle. This will ensure that Governing Bodies have a current policy in place in case a dispute arises (e.g. Complaint, Child Protection, and Redundancy).

We will continue to encourage Governors to take up Estyn's lay inspector training programme as part of our next Governors Newsletter as well as through our communication around re-scheduling meetings of the Governors Association virtually. We also re-iterate the message at virtual training sessions when they take place.

In relation to our attendance monitoring processes I have included relevant and key documentation as appendices which clearly demonstrates our approach here in Conwy LA in monitoring attendance and supporting learners, their families and schools.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



**Dr Lowri Vaughan Brown**  
**Prif Swyddog Addysg/Chief Education Officer**  
**Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Addysg/ Head of Education Services**

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ymateb i unrhyw ohebiaeth yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd hyn yn arwain at unrhyw oedi. Gwnewch yn siŵr fod unrhyw ohebiaeth wedi'i labelu'n glir gydag enw, teitl ac/ neu enw llawn yr Adran fel y nodir uchod.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh. We will respond to any correspondence in Welsh which will not lead to a delay. Please ensure any correspondence is clearly labelled with the name, title and/or full name of the department as detailed above.



**CYFEIRIAD I'R GWASANAETH GWAITH CYMDEITHASOL ADDYSG  
REFERRAL TO EDUCATION SOCIAL WORK SERVICE**

Dyddiad % Presenoldeb (6 wythnos diweddaraf)  
**Date**..... **% Attendance (previous 6 weeks)**.....

Enw'r Disgybl <b>Name of Pupil</b>	Ysgol <b>School</b>
Dyddiad Geni <b>Date of Birth</b>	Bl/Yr
Enw'r rhiant/gwarcheidwad <b>Name of parent/guardian</b>	
Cyfeiriad <b>Address</b>	
Ffôn Mobile: <b>Tel</b>	

<b>Tarddiad Ethnic Origin</b>	P.a.e.a.h. <b>L.a.c</b>  Ia/Yes Na/No	<b>Datganiad Statement</b>  Ia/Yes Na/No	<b>Cofrestr G.P C.P. Register</b>  Ia/Yes Na/No	<b>Iaith Language English</b>
Paeah = Plentyn a edrychir ar eu hôl      G.P. = Gwarchod Plant <b>LAC = Looked After Child      C.P. = Child Protection</b>				

Rheswm am y Cyfeiriad / Reason for Referral	
Unrhyw risg hysbus I weithiwr/Any known risk to worker	
Ymglymiad asiantau eraill / Other agencies involved	
Strategaethau a ddefnyddiwyd gan yr Ysgol (gweler drosodd) / Strategies used by the school (see over)	
<b>Telephone calls (dates)</b>	
<b>Letter 1 (date)</b>	<b>Letter 2 (date)</b>
<b>Issues identified at meeting</b>	
Cyfeiriwyd gan / Referred by	Swydd / Post

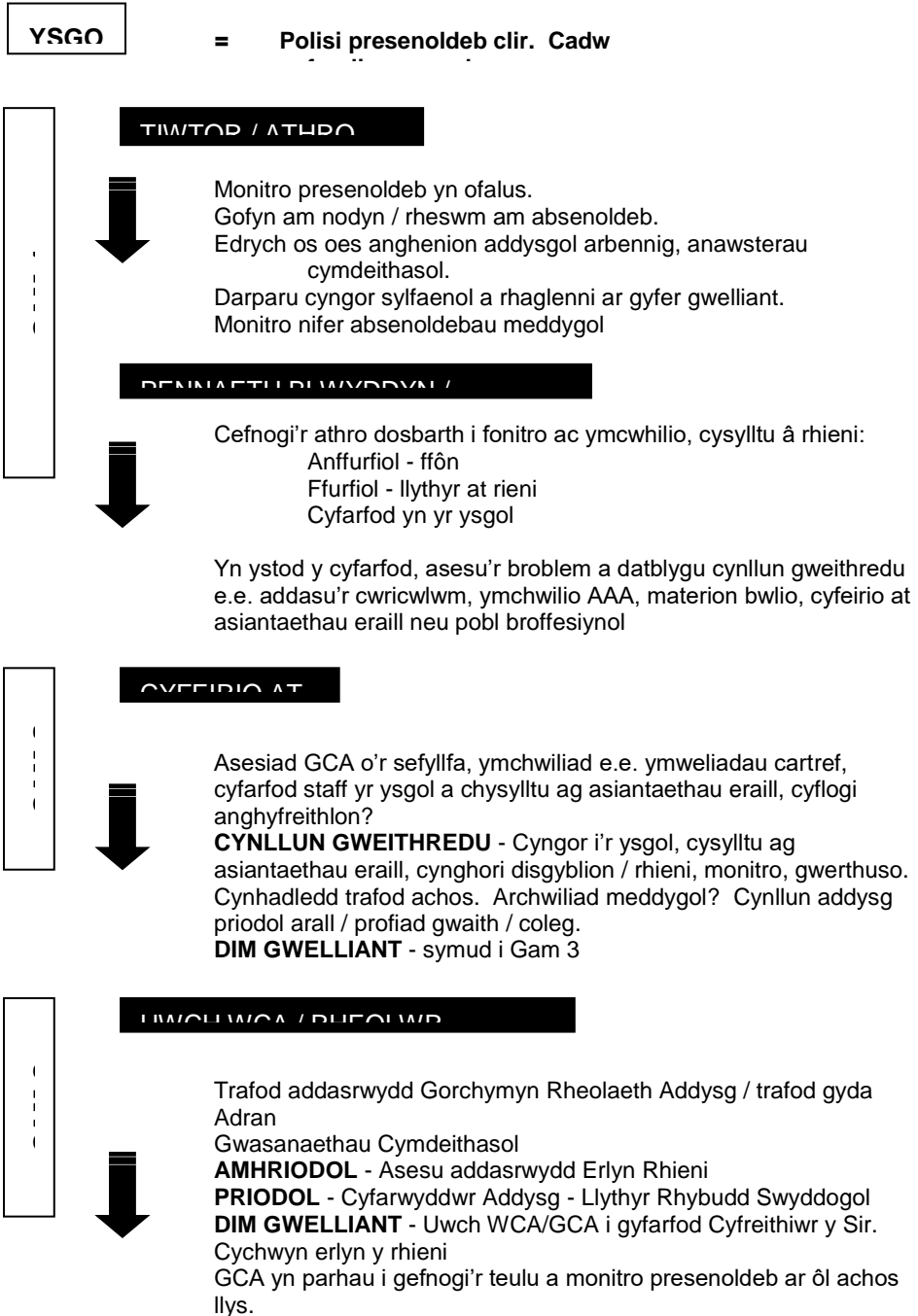
Ymateb/Response  Referral accepted (please input tick box)  Referral declined (please input tick box)  Reason .....  Llofnod/ Signature	Dyddiad <b>Date</b>
--	------------------------

αβχδε

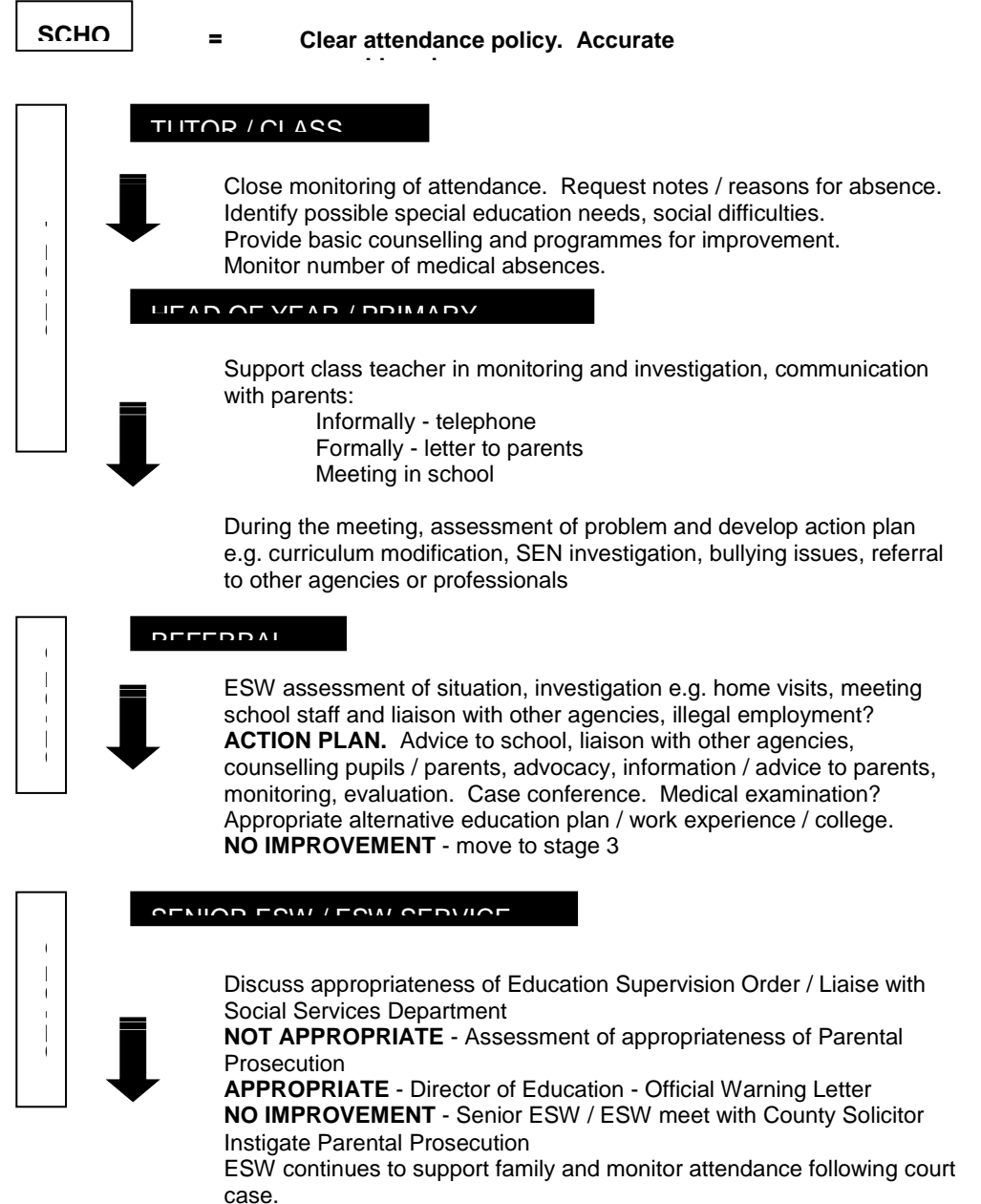
**GWASANAETH CYMDEITHASOL ADDYSG**  
**EDUCATION SOCIAL WORK SERVICE**

--	--

**GWASANAETH GWAITH CYMDEITHASOL ADDYSG CONWY  
PRESENOLDEB YSGOL - CANLLAWIAU YMYRRAETH**



**CONWY EDUCATION SOCIAL WORK SERVICE  
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE - GUIDANCE FOR INTERVENTION**



αβχδε

**GWASANAETH CYMDEITHASOL ADDYSG**  
**EDUCATION SOCIAL WORK SERVICE**



# School Attendance Policy

[Insert school name]

Delete and  
replace with  
school logo

Approved by:

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by:

## Contents

### 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- The School will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.
- If there are problems that affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and effectively as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupils to full attendance at all times.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the All Wales Attendance Framework. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Inclusion and Pupil Support Guidance 27/2006
- Revised behaviour and attendance action plan (2011)
- Welsh Government – All Wales Attendance Analysis Framework (2012)
- National Assembly for Wales' Children and Young People Committee's Inquiry into Behaviour and Attendance in Schools (2013) and Welsh Governments response
- Welsh Governments Guidance on penalty notices for regular non-attendance at school 2013
- National review of behaviour and attendance (NBAR) (2008) and resulting NBAR Action plan

- Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010
- Education Act 1996
- Keeping Learners Safe Guidance 2021

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 Whole School

A Whole School Attendance Policy is one that requires commitment from all staff employed within the School, together with governors, parents, pupils and the officers of the Local Authority.

A Whole School Approach to attendance relates to a wide range of other school issues including punctuality, behaviour, mental health, emotionally based school refusal, additional learning needs behaviour management, anti-bullying schemes, equal opportunities, rewards and incentives, re-integration of absentees, curricular differentiation, school-home relationships and the role of the Education Social Work Service and Social Inclusion Service (see section 9).

Our school wants to encourage and promote good attendance in as many ways and for as many of our learners as possible, taking into account the balance of appropriate measures to address the needs of those children who find it difficult to attend in certain circumstances e.g. medical issues, young carers, gypsy/traveller families, emotional based school avoidance (EBSA). With this in mind early intervention with learners who experience poor school attendance is vital. We will be vigilant to early indicators and employ a thorough assessment that includes a plan of do and review cycle, placing the child at the heart of the intervention.

Our school has a framework on which to build our individual Whole School Attendance Policy which is highlighted within this policy.

### 3.2 The Local Authority

Will provide a collaboration of support, guidance, and consultancy to all schools, focusing resources on those schools with the most identifiable needs.

Develop a range of performance indicators and subsequent setting of realistic yet challenging targets using the Core Data Set.

Provision at school level to support individual pupils who experience difficulties in attending school regularly, assessing and working with parents/carers and other agencies to achieve improvement and commitment to the pupils' education (where there is an SLA in place).

Provision of assessing and providing/recommending equitable support to parents, balancing assistance with insistence to ensure that all parents meet their legal responsibilities in relation to school attendance.

Development of effective multi-agency working practices at school level in order to facilitate early intervention and sustained and improving levels of attainment of pupils.

Developing the policy and practice for promoting school attendance, Conwy Education Services will recognise the national context and central government priorities and balance this with the need to respond to the local context and particular priorities in Conwy.

Has the responsibility of enabling pupils and parents/carers who experience difficulty in maintaining regular or punctual attendance at school, and to enforce attendance where appropriate through legal

proceedings. In Conwy, these tasks are undertaken by the Educational Social Work Service, although other services will regularly offer significant input in the process.

The Local Authority lead officer with responsibility for the development of school attendance policy and practice is the Education Social Work Service Manager, with input as necessary from the Senior Leadership Team.

### **3.3 The Governing Body**

The Governing Body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Head-teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

*If you have a link Governor for attendance, or a committee responsible for attendance, add details of their role in the monitoring of pupil attendance.*

### **3.4 The Head-teacher**

The Head-teacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Authorises the issuing of FPN warning letters and FPN's by the Local Authority.
- Agrees to any applications made by LA in respect of Education Supervision Orders.
- Ensures accurate signed attendance certificates and data for any parental prosecutions.
- Obligated under the Education Pupil registration (Wales) Regulation 2010 to notify the LA of pupil absence.
- Ensures there are established processes and procedures in place to improve attendance and enough time is allocated to allow staff to deal with the complexities of non-school attendance related matters.

### **3.5 [Class teachers/form tutors/attendance officer] – change to whomever it is in your school**

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the head-teacher.
- Works with the \* to tackle persistent absence.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Advises the head-teacher when the threshold for a fixed penalty notice warning letter has been reached and monitors pupil attendance following the issuing of the fixed penalty warning letter.

### **3.6 [Class teachers/form tutors]**

[Class teachers/form tutors] are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

### **3.7 School [admin/office] staff**

School [admin/office] staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

### **3.8 Parents/Carers**

- Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends the School regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- Parents/carers are responsible for informing the school by letter, telephone, or a personal visit of the reason for any absence on the first morning of that absence.
- Parents/Carers can expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's progress.
- Parents/Carers to be aware of letters from school which the child brings home.
- Parents/Carers to attend Parents evening and other events.
- Parents/Carers to ensure that their child completes his/her homework and has a good school routine.
- Parents/carers to avoid booking holidays during term time, unless it is regarded by the head-teacher as exceptional circumstances.
- Contact the school promptly if they have any concerns that their child is reluctant to attend school, and work with the school to address any issues at an early stage

### 3.9 Learners

- Learners will ensure that they attend school regularly and on time.
- Learners will attend all lessons punctually.
- Learners will be listened to and respected.
- Learners will have individual records of attendance/punctuality acknowledged by the school.
- Learners will be treated as individuals and their voice heard when addressing issues of non-school attendance and a plan of action to support them implemented.

## Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

**See appendix 1 for copy of the Welsh Government attendance codes.**

Learners must arrive in school by [time] on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at [time] and will be kept open until [time]. The register for the second session will be taken at [time] and will be kept open until [time].

Any learner arriving after above times will be recorded as unauthorised.

## 4.2 Unplanned absence

The learners's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by [time] or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

*Add details of notification procedures for your school.*

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Where absence is authorised, the school will remain vigilant to emerging patterns of non-attendance and seek to address reasons as a priority

## 4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

*Add details of notification procedures for your school.*

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

## 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Add details of how your school identifies and responds to ongoing punctuality issues. Could include something like below:

*A learners's punctuality for school is a legal requirement (Inclusion & Pupil Support Welsh Government Circular 47/2006) and the parents/carers of a pupil who is persistently late after registration closes are guilty of an offence under the Education Act 1996 and could be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court, or issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice for the unauthorised absences.*

*A careful balance needs to be struck between being too punitive and too accepting of a pupil's lateness. Once the reasons for lateness have been established, the school, parents and pupils need to work in partnership to resolve difficulties. Where the home situation makes it difficult for the pupil to arrive on time, the school may need to refer the case to the Education Social Work Service or Social Services for further investigation.*

## 4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by [add details of how and when your school will do this]
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

## 4.6 Reporting to parents

Explain when and how your school reports to parents on their child's attendance record. For example - annually in the written end-of-year report, or via a termly written report.

# 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

## 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The head-teacher will only grant a leave of absence to learners during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the head-teacher's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as [add your school's definition here].

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

You can add further examples here, for example:

- Other possible 'exceptional circumstances' where the [headteacher/head of school] may grant term-time holiday
- Study leave
- Flexi-schooling requests – your schools can add details of their procedures for requesting and deciding on this

## 5.2 Holidays in term time

See separate policy in relation to holidays in term-time, extended overseas visits and policy for Looked after Children

## 5.3 Reducing persistent absence

Explain your school's procedures for targeting unauthorised absence. For example – meetings, letters, closer monitoring.

See **appendix 2 and 3** for flow-chart example of trigger points which could be used by the school in cases of authorised and/or unauthorised absence.

## 5.4 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a head-teacher, local authority officer or the police, in Conwy these are issued by Education Services.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

**Under** Section 136 of the Education Act, 1996, (*Ref.3*), parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that their children receive suitable full-time education, whether by regular school attendance or otherwise. In most cases, children become registered pupils at a school. Parents/carers therefore hold the prime responsibility for ensuring that their children attend school regularly and punctually, and that they are ready and able to learn both physically and emotionally. It is also parents' responsibility to inform schools of a child's absence as soon as possible and to provide further information as required as previously cited. . For the purposes of education legislation the definition of parent/carer is set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996. 'Parent means all natural parents/carers, whether they are married or not; it includes any person who although not a parent, has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a child or young person, and any person who although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person. Having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Explain your school's strategies for rewarding and improving attendance (**see appendix 4 for more examples**)
- See Welsh Government Guidance for ideas.
- Use an attendance support plan (**appendix 5**) for any reintegration plan

## 7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a [daily/weekly/monthly] basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

If the pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school each day their child is ill, state it here.

If a pupil's absence goes above [number] days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continue to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

There are clear protocols in place for addressing persistent absence. See separate Local Authority protocol for intervention.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the WG's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Governing Body.

Explain how your school collects and stores attendance data, and how it may be used for internal purposes. For example, to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

### Appendix 6 – suggested letters to be used

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or Welsh Government is updated, and as a minimum [insert frequency] by [name/job title of individual]. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Our school hold a great deal of information about attendance which will be used for strategic planning and effective liaison with the ESW Service to manage attendance issues more effectively. We use weekly sampling of data for specific sessions which are helpful in highlighting regular patterns of non-attendance and may reveal for example, an association with certain subjects, teachers or teaching groups. Such analysis can draw attention to the deterioration or improvement in the attendance of individual learners and helps us to target intervention more selectively and help establish the causes of absence before they become entrenched.

The school will also undertake an annual audit of its attendance data, a key feature of which enables us to record key actions and areas for improvement. The audit forms part of the work of the LA to address areas identified within the School Improvement Plan and the support it will receive in this process.

The audit tool addresses;



- Analysing attendance data
- Examining existing procedures
- Inspecting attendance-related documentation
- Assessing communication with parents
- Considering strategies used to promote attendance
- Evaluating the response to Local Authority enquiries
- Identify training needs in the school

## 9. Links with other policies, procedures and protocols

This policy links to the following documents:

- School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- School Behaviour Policy
- School Anti Bullying Policy
- School Attendance Procedure
- School Attendance Policy: Coronavirus Addendum
- LA Attendance Protocol
- EBSA protocol
- Additional Learning Needs
- Equal opportunities
- Elective Home Educating
- Looked After Children
- Children Missing Education

### 9.1 - CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

All agencies have a clear role to play in helping to trace children who go missing from schools in Conwy or who go missing from schools from other authorities, and who may have moved into Conwy

Parents/carers can support the smooth transition of their children's education provision between Conwy and other Local Authorities, where a move is required for any reason, by notifying the child's registered school.

Schools are expected to follow corresponding procedures in relation to those learners who are removed from school by their parents without a named-school destination being provided and confirmed and following the CME (children missing education) procedures.

### 9.2 - SAFEGUARDING

We take safeguarding as paramount in our school. Please see separate safeguarding policy. There is a clear link with safeguarding and attendance which requires us to know where our learners are at any time during the school day. This therefore requires accurate recording of attendance registers, communication from parents and outside providers to clarify where any non-attenders may be. We will follow robust safeguarding processes in ensuring this takes places and responding to any advice, support, guidance and recording mechanisms as necessary.

### 9.3 - ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

Parents or carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that their child receives a suitable education and some choose to discharge this duty by electing to home educate.

Schools must ensure that they receive the request to home educate in writing from the parents or a person with parental responsibility. On receipt of this notification, a copy must be sent by the school to the local Authority within 10 working days on the EHE referral form. If a child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs they cannot be removed from the school roll without the consent of the Local Authority Statementing Officer.

Parents will need to provide evidence to the Local Authority as to how they propose to undertake EHE.

For further information please refer to Conwy Education Services guidance on educating your child at home.

#### **9.4 - BULLYING/ANTIBULLYING STRATEGIES**

Many learners do not attend because they are afraid of bullying or behaviour which may frighten or alarm them. Our school will consider this possibility when investigating individual cases of poor attendance and will promptly address the problem by adopting procedures and practices in a whole-school approach to bullying following the Welsh Government's Rights, Respect, Equality Guidance

#### **9.5 – Looked After Children**

Our School alongside the Local Authority is committed to securing the best possible educational outcomes for 'Looked After Children' (LAC). It believes that regular, punctual, uninterrupted attendance at school is vital to help ensure that Looked After Children are able to make the most of the educational opportunities which are available to them. (add in here anything else that you do in relation to LAC)

## **Appendix 1: KEY TO ATTENDANCE CODES (currently under review)**

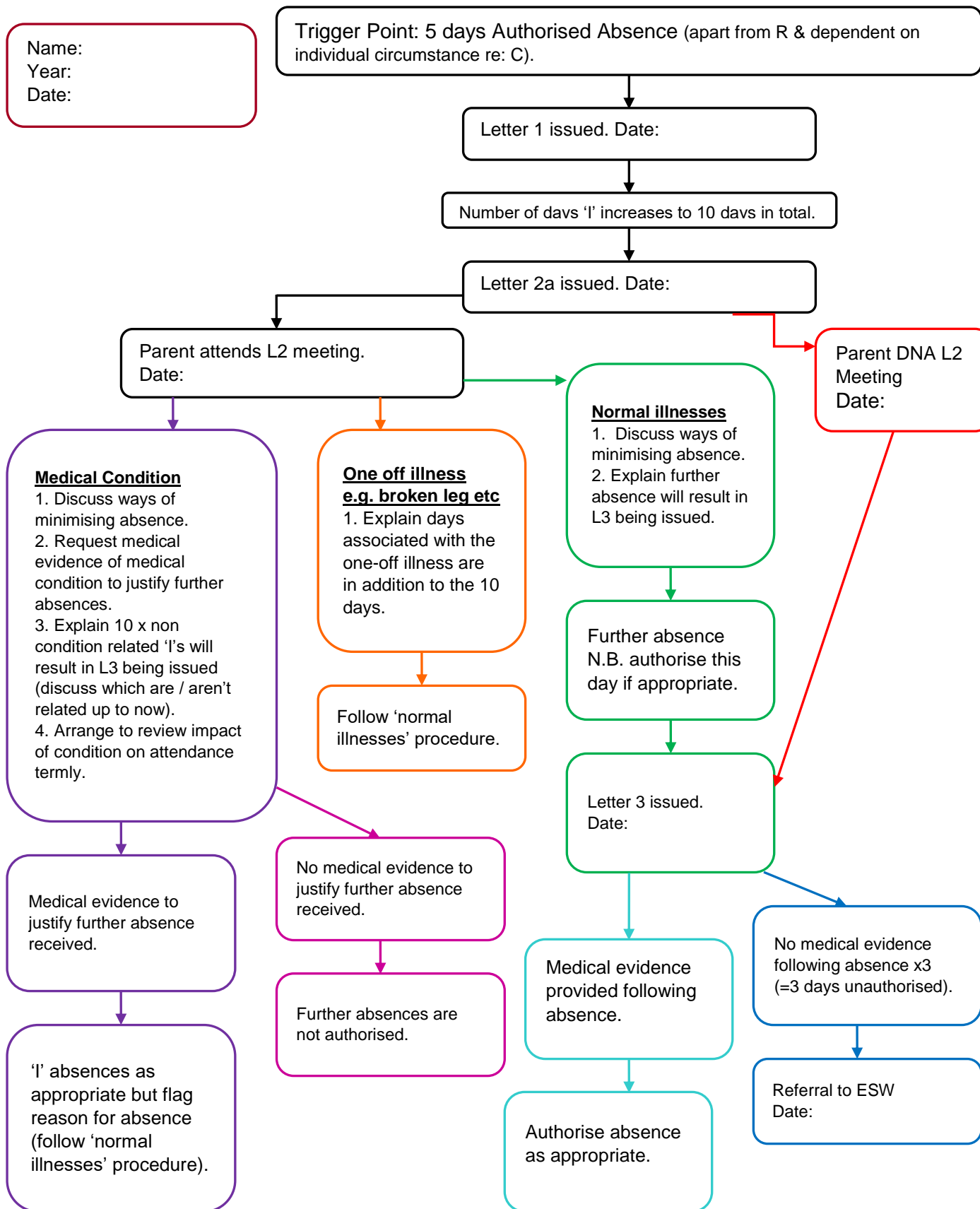
The recommended codes are grouped under the following 5 statistical categories:

- present;
- approved educational activity (treated as present);
- authorised absence;
- unauthorised absence;
- not required to attend.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Statistical category</b>
<b>A</b>	Present at registration	present
<b>L</b>	Late but arrived before the register closed	present
<b>B</b>	Educated off-site (not dual registration)	present
<b>D</b>	Dual registered (ie present at another school)	approved educational activity
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	approved educational activity
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	approved educational activity
<b>J</b>	Interview	approved educational activity
<b>W</b>	Work Experience (not work based training)	approved educational activity
<b>C</b>	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	authorised absence
<b>F</b>	Agreed extended family holiday	authorised absence
<b>H</b>	Agreed family holiday	authorised absence
	Illness	authorised absence
<b>M</b>	Medical or dental appointment	authorised absence
<b>S</b>	Study Leave	authorised absence
<b>E</b>	Excluded but no alternative provision made	authorised absence
<b>R</b>	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	authorised absence

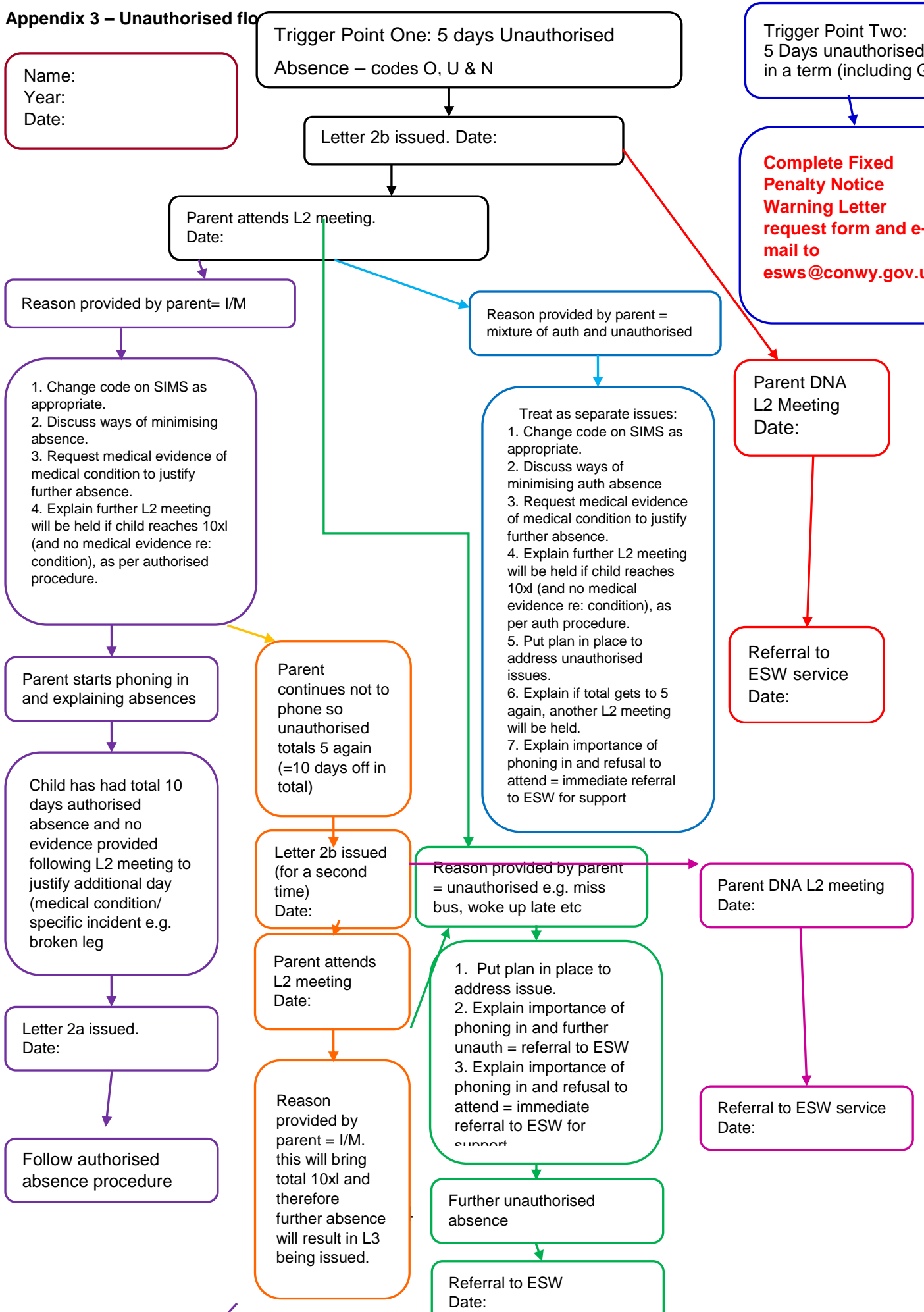
<b>N</b> No reason for the absence provided yet	unauthorised absence
<b>O</b> Other unauthorised (not covered by other codes or descriptions)	unauthorised absence
<b>G</b> Family holiday (not agreed or sessions in excess of agreement)	unauthorised absence
<b>U</b> Late and arrived after the register closed	unauthorised absence
<b>X</b> Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school- age pupils	not required to attend
<b>Y</b> Partial and forced closure	not required to attend
<b>Z</b> Pupil not on roll yet	not required to attend
<b>#</b> School closed to all pupils	not required to attend

Appendix 2 – Authorised flow-chart



# Appendix 4

## Appendix 3 – Unauthorised flow









## Appendix 4

### STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The school's commitment to achieving high levels of attendance should be explicit and clear to pupils, staff and parents. This is achieved by;

- Learners are to be constantly reminded of the importance and value of good attendance and punctuality.
- All staff are aware of correct registration codes for late arrivals which are consistently utilised
- We ensure that the classroom experience is positive and enriching
- All staff are trained on the appropriate use of registration codes – this training should be undertaken regularly
- The curriculum will be monitored and developed flexibly to meet the needs of all learners
- Look at alternative curriculum for learners who are hard to engage
- Attendance statistics and individual lesson attendance statistics will be collected and used to inform pastoral and curriculum practices and identify patterns of absence and problem areas.
- The Form Tutor/Head of Year will promptly investigate all issues that may lead to pupil absence.
- Plan an annual attendance week to focus on attendance issues – with awards, activities, and parental involvement.
- Identify pupils at risk of poor attendance before they transfer to another class, group or school and devise ways of supporting them.
- Include attendance targets in the induction programme for all new staff and in particular for newly qualified teachers.
- Discuss individual attendance targets with all learners
- Parents will be kept regularly and fully informed of all concerns around attendance and punctuality.
- Learners whose attendance falls beneath 90% will be set targets for improvement. The Form Tutor/Head of Year will regularly review these targets.
- The school will write to parents of learners whose attendance is a cause for concern every half term
- Parents, learners and staff need to be regularly reminded of the types of absence that are recognised as authorised and unauthorised displayed in the school foyer.
- Regular, structured meetings will be held with the school's ESW/EWO in order to identify and support those pupils whose attendance/punctuality is causing concern.
- Primary & Secondary Schools set out clear guidelines regarding authorising holidays during term time (see section on holidays during term time above)

- Engage School Council/pupils views regarding the importance of regular attendance and how this can be improved
- Strengthen links with outside agencies that assist in supporting families
- Comply with pupil registration regulations with families that withdraw pupils to educate at home, and when removing pupils from the school roll
- Evaluate strategies to improve attendance in a robust manner and evaluate their effectiveness
- Utilising School Attendance Panels Ensure that opportunities to reward attendance are scheduled into the school calendar.
- Use the school web-site to promote the school's performance in school attendance weekly.
- Use the media to promote good attendance at your school
- Work closely with the governing body of the school and provide updates in governor meetings relating to attendance.
- Use the Attendance Audit to evaluate your school systems yearly.
- Use reward systems to celebrate success for pupils and inform parents
- Ensure all schools staff are alert to and trained on identifying issues around bullying, safeguarding and the needs of vulnerable groups ( i.e. Young Carers, Looked after Children, Gypsy Travellers, Safeguarding issues including those pupils on the Child Protection Register, or Children in Need of Support)
- Ensuring staff do not promote other methods of educating learners when this would not be conducive or indeed ethical to do so eg (encouraging EHE)
- Utilising Education Services School Attendance Self Evaluation Audit Tool that looks at areas such as :-

-  Strategic Management
-  The Attendance Policy
-  Managing Attendance
-  Collection and Analysis of Data
-  Communication
-  Safeguarding

### **Attendance Facts**

- If a Child has 100% attendance in school, they will be able to make the best of all the opportunities available to them;
- Children who have very good attendance are more likely to gain 5 or more A-C GCSEs or equivalent qualifications;
- 91.1% attendance equates to missing 17 days of school in one year. Missing 17 days a year also means dropping 1 GCSE grade (on average);



- Children with poor attendance are less likely to gain 5 A\* - C GCSEs;
- 82.1% attendance equates to missing 34 days of school in one year;
- Poor attendance will have a serious impact on education, work ethic and life chances;
- A Child who ends the school year with only 90% attendance will have missed four complete weeks of school;
- 90% over 5 years at secondary school equates to half a school year;
- Under 92% Missing more than 3 weeks of education;
- 95% Missing in excess of two weeks of education;

## Appendix 5

### Attendance Support Plan (ASP)

Date of meeting	Name	Date of Birth	
School	Year group/class	Attendance %	Punctuality
What are the specific issues impacting upon school attendance in each of following areas?			
School	Home	Community	
Strengths			
Record actions/services to address specific issues identified above. Record by whom and by when. Build on strengths. Record also if support offered but declined with reasons and if no service available to meet identified need			
School	Home	Community	

Signature of school staff	Signature of parent/carer	Signature of pupil
Date of review meeting		

## Appendix 5 – letters

### Letter 1 - primary

Name

Address

Date

Dear parents

**Re: NAME OF PUPIL's Attendance**

NAME OF PUPIL's attendance is currently \*%. This means that NAME OF PUPIL has missed NUMBER OF DAYS days of school, this is a cause for concern. You have informed us that pupil's absences are due to medical reasons or other authorised absence.

Poor attendance can impact negatively on academic achievement as well as social relationships. I urge you to ensure that pupil attends school regularly and takes the necessary steps to catch up on work missed.

If the medical condition or other authorised absence is likely to be ongoing or if there are any other issues that are preventing Pupil from attending school regularly and on time, you may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence in order for further absences to be authorised. If you would like to discuss this further please contact the School on the above number.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

**Letter 1 - secondary**

Name

Address

Date

Dear parents

**Re: PUPIL NAME's Attendance**

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor attendance on a regular basis and identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We are therefore writing to you due to your child's current level of attendance.

Overall School Attendance	*%
Of which Authorised Absence is	*% / * Days
Of which unauthorised Absence is	*% / * Days

This means that PUPIL NAME has missed TOTAL NUMBER OF DAYS days school.

Your child's absence will have an impact on his education and on the education of the class. Recent studies indicate that pupils who are consistently absent are more likely to under achieve academically, they find it harder to make and keep friends, are more likely to breach the law and will miss opportunities in further education and employment.

We would like to discuss this matter with you and a meeting has been arranged. At this meeting we would like to give you the opportunity to discuss any issues which are preventing your child from attending school regularly and agree on a plan to work together to improve your child's attendance. The meeting will take place on: **DATE & TIME**.

If you are unable to attend this meeting please contact the Guidance Mentor on the number above to arrange a more convenient time. Failure to attend the meeting or contact us within one week to arrange another time then the matter will be considered as you failing to work with us to improve your child's attendance, and you will be requested to provide medical evidence for any future absences.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

**Letter 2a – illness (primary)**

Name

Address

Date

Dear Parent / Guardian

**Re: PUPIL NAME's Attendance**

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor attendance on a regular basis and identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We are therefore writing to you due to your child's current level of attendance.

Overall School Attendance	*%
Of which Authorised Absence is	*% / * Days
Of which unauthorised Absence is	*% / * Days

This means that PUPIL NAME has missed TOTAL NUMBER OF DAYS days school.

Your child's absence will have an impact on his education and on the education of the class. Recent studies indicate that pupils who are consistently absent are more likely to under achieve academically, they find it harder to make and keep friends, are more likely to breach the law and will miss opportunities in further education and employment.

We would like to discuss this matter with you and a meeting has been arranged. At this meeting we would like to give you the opportunity to discuss any issues which are preventing your child from attending school regularly and agree on a plan to work together to improve your child's attendance. The meeting will take place on: **DATE & TIME.**

If you are unable to attend this meeting please contact the Guidance Mentor on the number above to arrange a more convenient time. Failure to attend the meeting or contact us within one week to arrange another time then the matter will be considered as you failing to work with us to improve your child's attendance, and you will be requested to provide medical evidence for any future absences.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

**Letter 2A – illness - secondary**

Name

Address

Date

**Re: NAME OF LEARNERS's Attendance**

NAME OF Learner's attendance is currently \*%. This means that NAME OF LEARNER has missed NUMBER OF DAYS days of school, this is a cause for concern. You have informed us that the absences are due to medical reasons or other authorised absence.

Poor attendance can impact negatively on academic achievement as well as social relationships. I urge you to ensure that LEARNER attends school regularly and takes the necessary steps to catch up on work missed.

If the medical condition or other authorised absence is likely to be ongoing or if there are any other issues that are preventing LEARNER from attending school regularly and on time, you may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence in order for further absences to be authorised. If you would like to discuss this further please contact the Guidance Mentor on the above number.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

**Letter 2b – unauthorised - primary**

Name

Address

Date

Dear Parent / Guardian

**Re: PUPIL NAME's Attendance**

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor attendance on a regular basis and identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We are therefore writing to you due to your child's current level of attendance.

Overall School Attendance	*%
Of which authorised absence is	*% / * Days
Of which unauthorised absence is	*% / * Days

This means that PUPIL NAME has missed TOTAL NUMBER OF DAYS days school. Continuation of this pattern of unauthorised absence could result in you being issued with a fixed penalty notice under The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013.

Your child's absence will have an impact on his education and on the education of the class. Recent studies indicate that pupils who are consistently absent are more likely to under achieve academically, they find it harder to make and keep friends, are more likely to breach the law and will miss opportunities in further education and employment.

We would like to discuss this matter with you and a meeting has been arranged. At this meeting we would like to give you the opportunity to discuss any issues which are preventing your child from attending school regularly and agree on a plan to work together to improve your child's attendance. The meeting will take place on: **DATE & TIME.**

If you are unable to attend this meeting please contact the School Office on the number above to arrange a more convenient time. Failure to attend the meeting or contact us within one week to arrange another time will be considered as you failing to work with us to improve your child's attendance and the matter will be referred to the Education Social Work Service.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

**Letter 2b – authorised - secondary**

**Name**

Address

Date

Dear Parent / Guardian

**Re: PUPIL NAME's Attendance**

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor attendance on a regular basis and identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We are therefore writing to you due to your child's current level of attendance.

Overall School Attendance	*%
Of which Authorised Absence is	*% / * Days
Of which unauthorised Absence is	*% / * Days

This means that PUPIL NAME has missed TOTAL NUMBER OF DAYS days school. Continuation of this pattern of unauthorised absence could result in you being issued with a fixed penalty notice under The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013 (as per leaflet distributed December 2014).

The table below highlights the impact of absence for one school year.

School Year Attendance	Number of days	Number of weeks	Number of lessons
90%	19	4	95
80%	38	8	190
70%	57	11.5	285

Your child's absence will have an impact on his education and on the education of the class. Recent studies indicate that pupils who are consistently absent are more likely to under achieve academically, they find it harder to make and keep friends, are more likely to breach the law and will miss opportunities in further education and employment.

We would like to discuss this matter with you and a meeting has been arranged with PUPIL NAME's Guidance Mentor. At this meeting we would like to give you the opportunity to discuss any issues which are preventing Pupil from attending school regularly and agree on a plan to work together to improve your child's attendance. The meeting will take place on: **DATE & TIME.**



If you are unable to attend this meeting please contact the Guidance Mentor on the number above to arrange a more convenient time.

Failure to attend the meeting or contact us within one week to arrange another time will be considered as you failing to work with us to improve your child's attendance and the matter will be referred to the Education Social Work Service.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

**Letter 3 Unauthorised - primary**

**Name**

Address

Date

Dear Parent / Guardian

**Re: PUPIL NAME's Attendance**

Concern regarding PUPIL NAME's attendance is ongoing despite attempts to work with you to improve the situation. Your child has already missed 10 days and missing a further day of school will result in him failing to achieve the target level of attendance set by the Welsh Government which is 94%. It is noted that the reason provided for the majority of PUPIL NAME's absences is linked to illness and/or medical reasons.

Due to the level of illness and/or medical absence, I must ask that if any further absence occurs where the reason is illness and/or medical reasons, medical evidence must be received by the school. Some examples of evidence that could be used are: prescriptions, appointment cards, doctor's notes, etc.

If this evidence is not supplied when your child returns after an illness or medical absence, your child's absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. It is the school's policy to refer the matter to the Education Social Work Service if a pupil has three days unauthorised absence following this letter.

We would appreciate your support to ensure PUPIL NAME's attendance improves.

Yours sincerely

**Letter 3 – unauthorised - secondary**

**Name**

Address

Date

Dear Parent / Guardian

**Re: PUPIL NAME's Attendance**

Concern regarding PUPIL NAME's attendance is ongoing despite attempts to work with you to improve the situation. As previously highlighted to you, 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 19 days of school per year, your child has already missed 10 days and missing a further day of school will result in him failing to achieve the target level of attendance set by the Welsh Government which is 94%. It is noted that the reason provided for the majority of PUPIL NAME's absences is linked to illness and/or medical reasons.

Due to the level of illness and/or medical absence, I must ask that if any further absence occurs where the reason is illness and/or medical reasons, medical evidence must be received by the school. Some examples of evidence that could be used are: prescriptions, appointment cards, doctor's notes, etc.

If this evidence is not supplied when your child returns after an illness or medical absence, your child's absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. It is the school's policy to refer the matter to the Education Social Work Service if a pupil has three days unauthorised absence following this letter.

We would appreciate your support to ensure PUPIL NAME's attendance improves.

Yours sincerely



