

# Maesteg Primary Cluster Attendance Approach

## Cwmfelin Primary School



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# Why does attendance matter?

Children of school-age who are registered at a school must, by law, attend school regularly. Regular attendance is important, not only because it is the law, but because it is the best way of ensuring children make the most of the educational opportunities available to them.

By law, parents and guardians of children from age 5 to 16 who are registered at a school, are required to make sure that they attend regularly and on time.

Parents and guardians do not have the right to remove children from school for e.g. a family holiday, a shopping trip or even a dental appointment – there are 175 non-school days in a year, and just 190 where children are required to be in class.

Requests to take children out of school during term time can be made to headteachers but may only be approved in very exceptional circumstances - anything less than full school attendance is going to affect a child's progress.

Being on time and punctual is also important to ensure that your child is present in class when key learning is taking place.



# Attendance is a National Priority

Attendance is a priority for Welsh Government and the Local Authority. At Cwmfelin Primary School, attendance and punctuality is also a school priority and features within our School Improvement Plan. Attendance is Target 2 on the Bridgend CBC Strategic Plan for 2023 -2026.

Attendance over the last few years has been significantly lower than pre Covid but we are steadily starting to see an improvement.

| Academic Year         | Cwmfelin Primary | Bridgend LA |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------|
| 2018-2019 (Pre Covid) | 95.1%            | 94.8%       |
| 2019-2020             | 94.9%            |             |
| 2020-2021             | 93.7%            |             |
| 2021-2022             | 89.6%            | 86.5%       |
| 2022-2023             | 91.2%            |             |
| 2023-2024             | 92.9%            |             |

This year Cwmfelin has set the target of increasing whole school attendance by 2.1% to 95%.

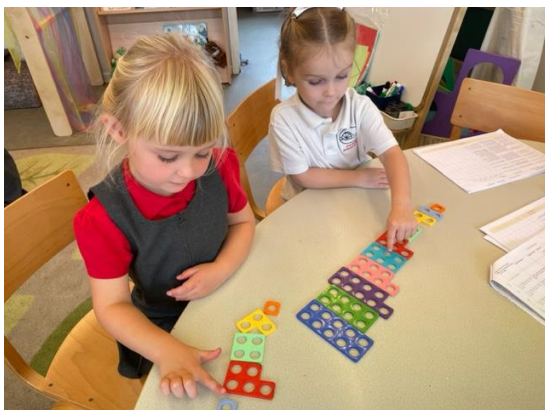
We can only achieve this with your support and this booklet aims to share the school and Local Authority processes and actions in order to raise levels of attendance. This will mean a return to the Fixed Penalty Notice system issued by the local authority.

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# Role of Education Welfare Service

The Education Welfare Officer for Cwmfelin Primary School is Niki Jenkins. She regularly meets us in school to monitor and discuss attendance. She works with us to support families to improve attendance and punctuality. We also access support from a Family Engagement Officer (Mrs. Sophie Richards) who helps to support families in our school.



Bridgend County Borough Council is committed to maximising the potential of all pupils who attend schools in order to give them the best chance of success. Parents/carers can support the regular and punctual attendance of their children by:

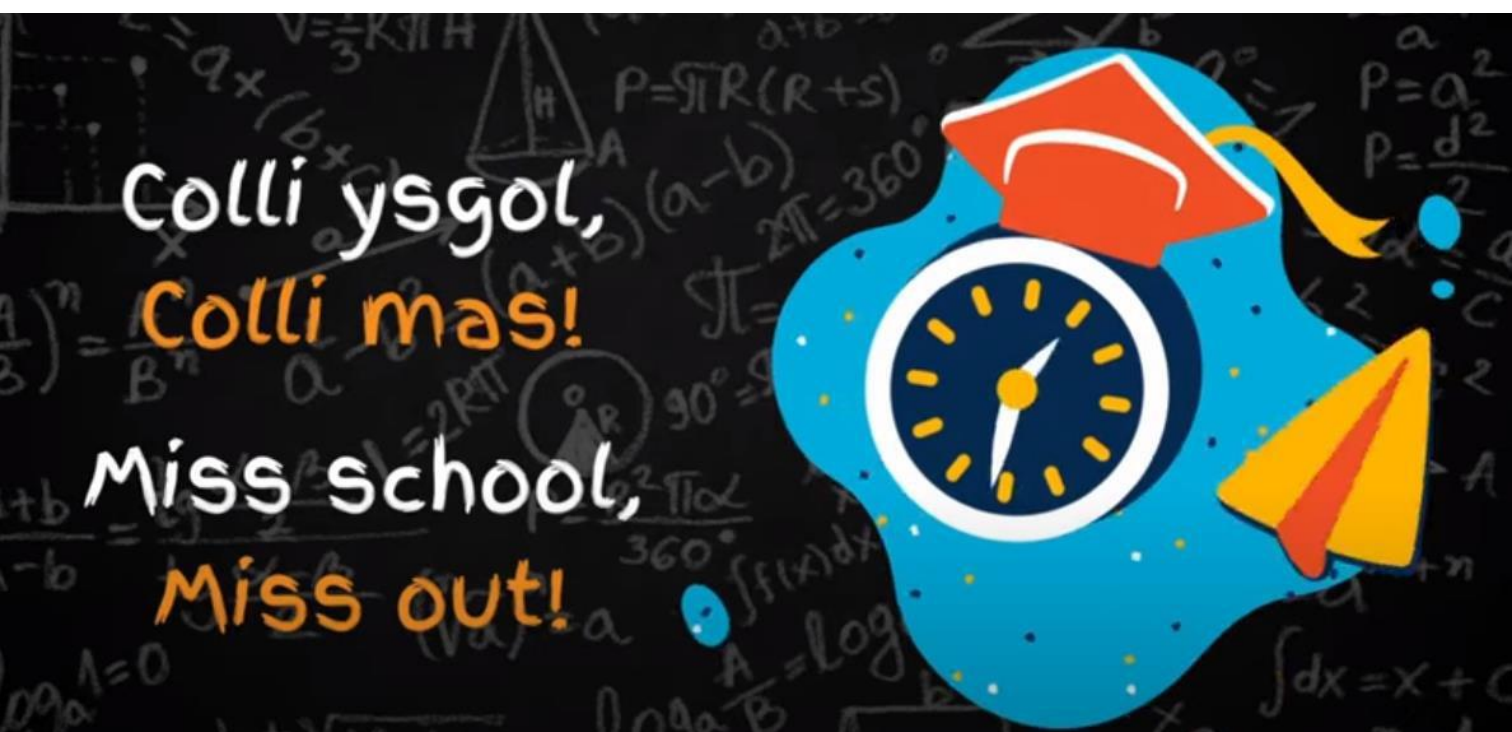
- ✓ ensuring that their child arrives at school on time
- ✓ ensuring that their child only misses school for reasons which are unavoidable or justified, such as illness or days of religious observance
- ✓ notifying the school as soon as possible of any absence and confirm this in writing when the child returns to school
- ✓ not booking family holidays during term-time
- ✓ talking to the school if they are concerned that their child may be reluctant to attend





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**BCBC Attendance Video**  
**Miss School, Miss Out!**  
**Colli Ysgol, Colli Mas!**



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# Term time requests for authorised absence

Research suggests that there is a link between a child's regular attendance at school and how well they achieve.

Attendance across the whole of Wales has dropped following the pandemic and Welsh Government, Local Authorities and Schools are trying to raise attendance to give children the greatest opportunity to reach their full potential.

Headteachers have the discretion to authorise term time requests for authorised absences up to 10 sessions. A number of factors are taken into account when deciding whether to authorise term time requests for authorised absence.

Factors include:

- ✓ Attendance in the previous academic year
- ✓ Number of absences this academic year
- ✓ Number of unauthorised late marks this academic year
- ✓ EWO involvement
  
- ✓ As a rule, Primary schools in the Maesteg Cluster may authorise term time requests but each decision will be taken on a case by case basis. You will be required to complete a Holiday in term time request form and will receive notification of the outcome. Please submit your holiday request as soon as possible so that advance notice can be given.





### **Holiday in term time request – Maesteg Cluster Primary Schools**

***The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 give schools discretionary power to grant leave for the purpose of an annual family holiday during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school for a holiday and, in law, must apply for permission in advance.***

***All Wales Attendance Framework (2011)***

#### **Section A**

To be completed by the Parent/Carer at least 2 weeks in advance.

| <b>Name(s) of Child(ren)</b> | <b>Year Group</b> | <b>Class Teacher</b> | <b>Mobile Contact Telephone Number</b> |
|------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1.                           |                   |                      |                                        |
| 2.                           |                   |                      |                                        |
| 3.                           |                   |                      |                                        |
| 4.                           |                   |                      |                                        |

Holiday dates: (including possibility of late flight arrivals if possible)

From: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

(NB – This is for child protection reasons ensuring all our children are safeguarded)

#### **Declaration:**

I understand that this holiday request may be authorised or not authorised, and the headteacher will use his/her discretion in making the decision based on my child's circumstances. If the headteacher does not authorise this holiday, this may lead to a request for a Fixed Penalty Notice to the Local Authority Lead EWO which will be determined in line with the school's attendance policy. (Please ask for a copy at school or find one on the school's website)

**'Parents should not expect, or be led to expect, that schools will agree to family holidays during term time.'**

***All Wales Attendance Framework (2011)***

Parent/Carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Section B

To be completed by the head teacher within at least 1 week from the request.

### Reasons for Unauthorising

| Reason for Unauthorising                                          | Tick - applicable |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Previous academic year's attendance – see attached certificate |                   |
| 2. Number of absences this academic year                          |                   |
| 3. Number of unauthorised late marks this academic year           |                   |
| 4. Previous involvement with EWO                                  |                   |
| 5. Other                                                          |                   |

Explanation for the reason being other:

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### Reasons for authorising

| Reason for authorising                                                    | Tick - applicable |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Previous/current academic year's attendance – see attached certificate |                   |
| 2. Compassionate reasons                                                  |                   |
| 3. Other                                                                  |                   |

### Total amount of sessions/days authorised/unauthorised

|                                           | Sessions | Days |
|-------------------------------------------|----------|------|
| Total Authorised                          |          |      |
| Total Unauthorised                        |          |      |
|                                           |          |      |
| Total Number of Sessions / Days Requested |          |      |

I, as headteacher, authorise/unauthorise (\* delete) the following holiday request for the reasons specified above.

Please see attached attendance registration certificate.

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_

Headteacher

A copy will be retained on file for our records.

# Attend to Achieve Letters

We issue ‘Attend to Achieve’ letters to all families each term, to inform you of your child’s current attendance. You will receive a letter with the corresponding colour, according to your child’s attendance levels.

The percentage range for each colour band is:

| Red       | Amber    | Green   | Purple |
|-----------|----------|---------|--------|
| Below 92% | 92% -97% | 97%-99% | 100%   |

Three times a year we will send a letter with your child’s current percentage.

- Letter 1 will be sent at the end of the Autumn Term
- Letter 2 at Easter
- Letter 3 at Whitsun

A final ‘Attend to Achieve’ banding will be included within the end of year academic reports.



# MISS SCHOOL, MISS OUT!

“Attending school every day is important for our learning, wellbeing, achievement, and overall development”

Research shows that missing out on just 17 days of school will cause a drop in grade across all subjects at GCSE level. The higher your school attendance rate, the higher you will achieve.

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[www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-education/school-attendance/](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-education/school-attendance/)



Attend to achieve!



Make everyday count



Miss school, Miss out!

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol



