



# Fitzalan Primary Schools Cluster Pupil Attendance Policy

## Equality Statement

This policy has been written and agreed by the Headteachers of the Fitzalan Primary Schools Cluster in order to promote consistency in attendance for all children.

We do not discriminate (either directly or indirectly) against anyone on the grounds of their gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, religion, ability, disability, sexual orientation or any aspect of their social/cultural background. Furthermore, the school community is committed to countering all forms of racial prejudice and discrimination. All complaints procedures are practices are designed to be free of bias, prejudice and discrimination

## 1. Mission statement

The Fitzalan Primary Schools Cluster is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcomed and are committed to the fundamental principle that early intervention and partnership working is crucial in ensuring the attendance, protection and wellbeing of all children.

The school will follow the [All Wales Child Safeguarding procedures](#) and local protocols in relation to specific and identifiable wellbeing issues that prevent a child from accessing education, or where there are safeguarding concerns.

For a pupil to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to education law and guidance and our school attendance policy is written to reflect this legislation and the guidance produced by the Welsh Government. For information relating to this legislation and guidance, see **Appendix 2**.

The legislation makes provision for a school day which is to be divided into two sessions with a lunch break in the middle and to be available for 190 days in any school year. Registration will take place at the start of the morning session and following the last lunch period.

The Cluster will review its systems for improving attendance on an annual basis to ensure that it is achieving its set goals and targets as identified by the Governors, local authority, Consortium and the Welsh Government.

This policy will contain the procedures that the school will use to work towards meeting its attendance targets, as set by the local authority.

## 2. Promoting attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents, carers and pupils.

We will ensure that our pupils are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them, both now and in the future; we may offer rewards for classes who have high levels of school attendance.

We will use a variety of strategies to intervene at an early stage to encourage improved attendance of individual pupils and assist to overcome any barriers that may be preventing the expected level of attendance. These strategies may be school-based, or may be implemented jointly with other partners to ensure the most appropriate support for the individual and their family.

The home school agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and carers and our expectations of what they will need to do to ensure pupils achieve good attendance. These expectations, and potential consequences of not meeting the expectations, will be regularly communicated to parents throughout the academic year in various ways such as text messages, the school website, newsletters and at parents' evenings.

## 3. School procedures

Any pupil who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period will have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the head teacher, or a member of staff acting on their behalf, can authorise absence.

If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unexplained (N code) and promptly followed up by the school as part of its early intervention and safeguarding strategies. This will be in the form of a text message, telephone call or letter to the parent or carer to enquire about the whereabouts of the pupil. If no reason is given or the reason given is not reasonable, the pupil will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (O code).

The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Welsh Government's All Wales Attendance Framework as in Appendix 1.

#### **4. Punctuality**

Each school regularly reminds parents of their obligation to ensure their children attend punctually. Children are expected to be in school on time and will incur a late mark if not. In accordance with Welsh Government guidance, any pupil arriving 30 minutes after the start time will receive an unauthorised mark (U) unless there is an acceptable reason given eg taxi is late. Where absence is due to a medical appointment, this will be coded as M.

Late codes are used to identify and track patterns of poor punctuality. This results in parents being informed and reminded of their legal obligation to ensure their child attends on time. In circumstances where lateness becomes a serious concern a referral is made to the School Attendance Officer.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the 30 minute registration period will be coded as late (L code).

Children are also registered in the afternoons. The same process for lateness will apply as above.

In the event of ten or more late arrivals, the school will contact the parent. See flow chart below.

Parents and carers are reminded that the local authority may issue a fixed penalty notice for persistent lateness after the close of the register in accordance with the local authority's Code of Conduct for the Issuing of Fixed penalty Notice for Non-School Attendance, if the number of unauthorised absences or lates (O or U codes) is 10 sessions or greater in the current term.

#### **5. First day absence**

Parents and carers are reminded that they should contact the school by 9:00am if their child is not able to attend school on that day. Parents and carers must state the **full** reason for the child's non-attendance (not just "feeling unwell") and indicate the likely date they will return to school. Parents/carers should be prepared for members of the school staff to ask questions about the pupil's condition, the patterns or trends in their absences and any treatment they may be receiving.

If a parent or carer does not contact the school, staff will endeavour to ascertain the specific reason for non-attendance as soon as possible on the first day of absence, after both morning and afternoon registration. This may include a telephone call, texting service, a home visit from a member of the attendance team. Once the specific information is received, the register will be amended to reflect the appropriate absence code (see **Appendix 1** for the types of code).

Priority will be given to children who are deemed to be particularly vulnerable, e.g. those known to Children's Services or are looked after (CLA). The social worker and local authority's Education Welfare Service will be notified of unexplained absences of five days or more, which will be reduced to only 24

hours if the pupil is on the child protection register, who may conduct an unscheduled home visit to determine if the pupil is safe and well.

Any learner may be subject to a visit from the School Attendance Officer where the school has any concern around attendance, or lack of contact from parents. These visits are intended to offer the right support to overcome any barriers to attending schools.

## **6. Absence notes and supporting evidence**

Notes received from parents explaining the reason for the absence will be kept on file in line with school retention policies. Parents and carers are aware that only the head teacher or their representative can authorise an absence and that further information such as a letter/appointment card from a GP or consultant may be required to support reasons given for absence.

## **7. Medical and illness absences**

The school appreciates that there are times a pupil has to attend a medical appointment during the school day. In these instances, a copy of the hospital appointment letter should be provided to the school **prior** to appointment date to inform the school of the set scheduled time. This, however, does not apply to routine GP or dental appointments, which can and should be arranged for times outside of the school day.

If a pupil is repeatedly absent due to illness, the school may request supporting evidence that the pupil is receiving the necessary medical treatment. An appointment card, consultant letter, photograph of prescription medication, would all suffice as medical evidence. Without the necessary evidence, the school may notify the parent or carer that all future absences will be unauthorised until the necessary medical evidence has been provided. See flow chart below.

## **8. Continuing and frequent absence**

Within the school it is the responsibility of the class teacher and/or attendance team to be aware of and bring attention to the head teacher (or person to whom they have delegated responsibility for attendance), any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem as soon as possible. This may involve inviting the parents/ carers and the pupil into school for a meeting. However, should this absence persist the procedures listed in the flow chart (**Appendix 3**) will be followed.

For unauthorised absences of 10 sessions or more in a school term (5 school days, there are two sessions in a day, morning and afternoon), the local authority may issue a fixed penalty notice in accordance with the local authority's Code of Conduct.

## **9. Persistent absence**

Welsh Government defines persistent absence as pupils whose absence level is more than 10% (less than 90% attendance). These families will be offered support to return to full attendance. This may include a referral to the Education Welfare Service, as well as external services, for additional support for the pupil and their family.

If the pupil and family do not engage, court action may be taken against the main parent(s) or carer(s) via the Education Welfare Service.

## **10. Absence related to discrimination**

A pupil's absence from school may be due to bullying, which can take many forms and can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect, for example, ignoring a pupil or not talking to them. Some of this bullying may be discriminatory.

Each school will monitor and report all discriminatory incidents each term and if the reason for a pupil's absence is related to any of the above issues, we will take action to deal with the situation.

## **11. Leave of absence/holidays in term time**

Given the need to ensure high attendance, leave of absence during term time is actively discouraged as it negatively impacts on the pupil's ability to engage with the full curriculum. Parents and carers **do not have the automatic right to withdraw their children from school for an extended leave/family holiday** and will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement.

Headteachers have been requested by the LA not to authorise requests for a holiday in term-time unless the pupil's attendance in the previous academic year was 92%. If the pupils' attendance was 92% during the previous academic year, 5 authorised days of absence may be given (H code). All other days of absence will be unauthorised (G code).

In all normal circumstances, notification that the pupil intends to take extended leave, or a holiday, should be made to the school at least one month in advance. In the case of exceptional circumstances (e.g. family bereavement) families are still required to contact the school to request leave of absence. Forms to request a leave of absence form can be obtained from the school office.

A leave of absence form is a notification which states leave of absence and return date, reason and family contact details, and it must be agreed and signed by the parent/guardian and the Deputy Headteacher/Headteacher. Failure to do so, or the non-return by the agreed date, places the child at risk of losing their school place. The home/ school contract does **not** constitute permission from the school to take a holiday. The following information is shared with parents/carer if they would like to take their child out of school for an extended leave/holiday:

- 1. Any family holidays will not be authorised.*
- 2. If your child is absent for 5 days or more (due to a holiday), you may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice from Cardiff Council (£60 per child).*
- 3. If your child is absent for more than 20 school days (due to a holiday), they will be removed from the school roll and will lose their place at School – you will then need to re-apply for a school place. There is no guarantee that a place will still be available.*

## **12. Fixed Penalty Notices for Non-Attendance at School (see Appendix 4)**

The school may request the local authority to issue fixed penalty notices where a parent/carer has failed to secure their child's regular attendance at school. A penalty notice can be requested against one of the following criteria:

1. Where there is a minimum of 10 unauthorised sessions (5 school days) in the current term (these do not need to be consecutive, or in the same term) which may or may not include pupils who are persistently arriving after the close of the registration period (registers are kept open for thirty minutes);
2. Where a parent(s)/carer(s) refuses to engage with a school in the interest of improving their child's school attendance levels;
3. Where a pupil is repeatedly caught truanting in public places during school hours (Police can request a penalty notice be issued for this offence);

4. Where a holiday in term time has been requested but has been unauthorised.

To comply with [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2013](#), Fitzalan Primary Schools Cluster will operate in accordance with the local authority's Code of Conduct for fixed penalty notices for regular non-attendance at school. It remains the discretion of the head teacher to authorise absences in line with The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 attendance codes and supplementary guidance provided by the local authority.

Each pupil's absence will be considered on its own merits and if appropriate, a fixed penalty notice may be requested to encourage improved future attendance. If a pupil's attendance is significantly low, a referral to the Education Welfare Service may be considered as an alternative to requesting a penalty notice.

### **13. Reintegration**

If the pupil has been absent for a considerable period of time, due to exceptional circumstances eg hospital admission, a reintegration plan may be introduced.

### **14, Religious Festivals Guidance**

The school follows guidance from the LA and Welsh Government School attendance and religious festivals guidance 2023 (latest guidance available)

### **14. Roles and responsibilities**

Fitzalan Primary Cluster Schools are aware that ensuring regular school attendance is a demanding area of work that depends on establishing and utilising close working relationships between parents/carers, pupils, schools, the local authority and other professionals who work with children.

A key part of any successful working relationship is a clear understanding of each person's role and responsibilities, and as such the following sets out to clarify the roles and responsibilities for those people engaged with tackling absence issues.

#### 14.1 The Parent/Carer

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the parent/carer is responsible for ensuring that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education that is suitable to their child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have. This can be by regular attendance at school, alternative provision or by elective home education (the parent can choose to provide education for their child).

During the school admission meeting, a member of staff will explain to parents their responsibilities with regard to regular and punctual attendance, the organisation of the school day and the importance of punctuality. The responsibility of parents to report children's absence from school is also explained at the initial interview and is also stated in the school prospectus.

A commitment to regular and punctual attendance is contained in the Home-School Agreement, which is offered to all new parents to sign when their child is admitted to school. The categories of authorised and unauthorised absences are discussed with parents, i.e. absence can be authorised for illness, medical or dental appointments, or religious festivals, but not for days off to celebrate birthdays, trips to the hairdresser, or shopping.

Parents are asked to inform the school on the first morning of an absence and/ or to send in a note of explanation on the child's return to school. In addition to the expectation that parents should contact the

school, the school administration officers operate a policy of phoning the home with regard to first day absence

### 14.2 The School

Schools are required under the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 to take an attendance register twice a day; at the **start** of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The accuracy of the register is important in order to support any statutory interventions that may be required. It should be noted that it is an offence not to maintain accurate registers.

The school monitors individual attendance rates regularly and this may be daily, weekly or half-termly depending on the needs of the child. See flow chart below.

Schools will routinely share registration certificates with parents at Parents' Evenings. When discussing issues with attendance the registration certificate will be printed off and shared.

The school attendance team is responsible for the strategic management of attendance across the school. They will scrutinise the data regularly on a fortnightly basis, monitor trends and patterns across cohort of pupils, and evaluate interventions for their impact and effectiveness and direct resources for the best possible outcome. The attendance lead will present the data to the Headteacher regularly and to Governing Body on a termly basis for scrutiny.

Class Teachers will be responsible for completing the session registers fully and accurately during every registration. This practice ensures good safeguarding processes, enabling the school to know where every pupil is at the start of all sessions and for school clerks/office managers to commence the 'first day response' process if the pupil is not present. SIMS notes fields should be used to ensure that the additional details relating to the absence are captured and retained on file.

The school's **Administration Officers** are responsible for the daily operational attendance duties. They will ensure that all registers have been completed by the classroom teachers on a daily basis and if not will escalate this to the Head Teacher or Deputy Headteacher for action. They will undertake the 'first day response' each morning for those pupils whose families have not made contact. They will collate the supporting evidence, and chase any outstanding forms, absence notes, holiday request forms etc. The officers will compile the data in preparation for analysis by the attendance lead and help support referrals to the Education Welfare Service.

In order to request a fixed penalty notice, the school will monitor the individual attendance patterns of their pupils. If trends are identified that match the criteria stated in the local authority's Code of Conduct, a school has the opportunity to make a formal request to the local authority to issue a penalty notice.

### 14.3 The Education Welfare Service (EWS)

The principal function of the Education Welfare Service is to improve attendance in all schools and alternative education provisions across the local authority by supporting pupils and their families to overcome their barriers to engagement.

The service provides support to schools, pupils and their families to ensure regular attendance and address any difficulties relating to absenteeism. The Education Welfare Service works collaboratively with a range of support services and agencies and provides an essential link between home and school to ensure that pupils benefit from the educational opportunities available to them.

The service acts on behalf of the authority in its statutory enforcement capacity and is responsible for a number of related duties that include:

- the regulating and issuing of child employment and performance licenses for school age children and young people, and their chaperones;
- to investigate, locate and track children who are referred as “Children Missing from Education”;
- to oversee the education needs of vulnerable pupils e.g. Gypsy Traveller families;
- to work in partnership with the Police in the arrangement and coordination of formal truancy operations in accordance with Crime and Disorder legislation.

#### 14.4 The Police

The Police take a fundamental role in Truancy Sweep initiatives. Police officers should be made aware of categories of children who may have a justifiable cause to be out and about during school hours, especially home-educated children and excluded pupils. The police should also be made aware of other relevant information such as school hours, school holidays, training days, and whether the area is frequented by children from other areas with different school holidays.

The police should be given names and known movement patterns of children known to be persistent non-attendees and, where appropriate their address.

It is recommended in the ‘All Wales Attendance Framework’ that the police officers operating the power to approach young people do so in uniform (due to child safeguarding concerns) and where practicable are accompanied by an education representative such as an EWO, who will be able to check the school status of the young person concerned.

Where appropriate the British Transport Police are brought into discussions in respect of problems, involving pupils congregating on the rail network.

During Truancy Sweeps there may be occasional cases in which suspected truants refuse to comply. In such cases, if the police officer has reasonable grounds for believing that the child or young person is absent from school without authority, the power under section 16 and section 8 will enable the officer to use such reasonable force as is necessary in the circumstances. Similarly, once the child is returned to the Designated Central Location or School where the suspected truants refuse to comply, the police officer has reasonable grounds for believing that the child or young person is absent from school without authority, the power under section 117 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 enables an officer to use such reasonable force as is necessary in the circumstances.

As part of the local authority’s Code of Conduct for tackling non-attendance at school, Police are able to request an FPN be issued to a pupil’s family if they are found in a public place during school hours (truanting).

### **15. Attendance initiatives**

The school and local authority will work closely together to raise the awareness of school attendance, promote good attendance and tackle unauthorised absence.

The school will work with the Education Welfare Service to undertake local authority initiatives such as the Wellbeing Response Visits, Meet and Greet sessions and target groups.

### **16. Categorisation of absence**

All pupils who are on role but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

- ☐ Authorised Absence
- ☐ Unauthorised Absence
- ☐ Approved Educational Activity

#### *Unauthorised absence*

These codes are for those sessions where pupils were absent and no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

#### *Authorised absence*

These codes are for those sessions where pupils are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid. Evidence may be requested to support the reason given (e.g. medical evidence, appointment cards, etc.)

#### *Approved educational activity*

These codes cover types of supervised educational activity undertaken off the school site but with the approval of the school and/or the LA, where the session has been supervised by an approved tutor.

This would include:

- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education at another venue
- Education arranged by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

### **17. Dual Registration**

Pupils who attend another school or unit will be dually registered at both venues. The enrolment status within the management information system (MIS) indicates the main place of education and which the subsidiary is. An example would be a pupil registered at this school but attending EOTAS provision or a pupil referral unit for certain days each week. The main school will be whichever the child attends for more than 50% of their time. The other will be the subsidiary.

The school or provision where the child is expected to attend is responsible for accurately recording the pupil's attendance and chasing up non-attendance. School will liaise with the other education provider on a daily basis in order to identify pupils who are absent for the session and mark the register accordingly.

### **18. Retention of records**

Computer registers are preserved as electronic back-up copies. Attendance regulations stipulate that attendance records should be retained for at least three years; however, it is good practice to extend this period in line with the education record retention schedule.

### **19. Register checks**

The local authority will formally check the school registers on a termly basis to ensure there is compliance with the national legislation. It should be noted that registers are legal documents, and it is an offence not to maintain accurate records.

## 20. Attendance targets

The head teacher will present the attendance data in each of the termly reports to the Governing body for the figures to be scrutinised against the attainment data, and Welsh wide attendance figures. The Governors will have the opportunity to challenge the data alongside the practices for managing attendance, in order to tackle the overall absence rates across the school and within specific cohorts of learners.

## 21. Strategic Action Plan

Each school will produce an action plan to show how the school will set about achieving its attendance targets. This will include the school's aims for its vulnerable groups of learners, how it intends to close the gaps between the FSM and non-FSM pupils' attendance, the operational management of attendance, the strategic management of attendance including the evaluation of impact of interventions etc.

This action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and will be used to inform the School Improvement Plan.

<b>Date of policy implementation:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2025
<b>GB member/staff responsible for policy review:</b>	Primary Cluster Head teachers School's Governing Bodies
<b>Policy will be reviewed annually.</b>	

## APPENDIX 1

### The registration system

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorized absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

## APPENDIX 2

### Legislation and guidance

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) to any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent means natural parents and includes any person who has parental responsibility or has day to day care of the child.

Section 444 1, 1(a) and (ZA) contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school or alternative provision arranged by the Local Authority.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013 set out the framework for the operation of the Fixed Penalty Notice scheme.

The Equalities Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

### Registers and admission.

- ☐ The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010
- ☐ The Education (School Day and School Year) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006

### Attendance targets

- ☐ The Education (School Performance and Unauthorised Absence Targets) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006.

### Guidance documents relating to attendance

- All Wales Child Safeguarding Procedures
- Keeping Learners safe
- Belonging, engaging and participating – Guidance on improving learner engagement and attendance
- The All Wales Attendance Framework
- The National Assembly for Wales Circular 47/2006 Inclusion and Pupil Support.
- Consortium's Attendance Strategy
- Local Code of Conduct relating to the Fixed Penalty Notice scheme
- Welsh Government Guidance on penalty notices for regular non-attendance at school
- Welsh Government Guidance on attendance codes

Code Use for Common Courses and Activities

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<b>EXCEPTIONS</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>SIMS Notes Field Exemplar</b>
Music Exams	B	Music Exam. Letter provided & copied

Speech & Language Therapy	B	SALT Letter provided & Copied
Asthma Clinic	M	Asthma Clinic. Appointment card copied
Physiotherapy	M	Physiotherapy Appointment card copied
Sporting Tours	C	Tour (E.g. Rugby) and date. Evidence copied
Football Academy (With classroom learning)	B	E.g. Cardiff Academy with classroom. Letter copied
Football Academy (Without Classroom learning)	C	E.g. Swansea Academy. Letter copied
Club & National Competitions	P	Activity / Competition, Place and Date. Letter copied
Overseas Trips through Competitions	P	Activity / Competition, Place and Date. Letter copied
Travelling Time to Competitions (With letter from the Club)	C	Travelling to (Place Name) for competition . Letter copied
E-learning where there is an agreed package with the L.A	B	E-learning. Evidence Letter copied.
Child Performance	C	Child Performance. Evidence with L.A.

**\* Any evidence provided to support code usage must be retained by school**

### **APPENDIX 3: 5 Step Flow Chart**

#### **Attendance 5 Step Approach- Flow Chart of Actions**

<b>Stage 1- 100%-93%</b>
No action
<b>Stage 2- below 93% for 6 weeks</b>

School's attendance lead (SAL) to discuss with parent if parent responds to letter	Stage 1 letter	SAL monitors progress since initial pupil discussion. Once 93%+, no further action.		
<b>Stage 3a- below 90%</b>				
Invite parents into meeting with SAL.	If parents fail to attend, SAL to telephone home to explore barriers.	Medical evidence letter sent SAL refers to School Nurse		
SAL will issue FPN- 10 unauthorised sessions Y/N	FPN-10 unauthorised lates (U codes) Y/N	FPN holiday- Y/N	FPN referral form sent	FPN certificate sent at end of monitoring
<b>Stage 3b- below 85% and majority Unauthorised Absence</b>				
Referral to SAO-school to generate SAO referral. 1 <sup>st</sup> announced home visit explore barriers- set target for improvement. Consider referrals to support agencies- use assessment form	SAL - continues to discuss at link meetings with SAO, review SAO referral form for actions		SAO review home visit	
SAO - FPN- 10 unauthorised sessions Y/N	FPN-10 unauthorised lates ( U codes) Y/N	FPN holiday- Y/N	FPN referral form sent	FPN sent at end of monitoring
<b>Stage 4- below 80%</b>				
SAO makes 2 <sup>nd</sup> announced visit, review progress, continue to explore barriers. Use other forms of communication- text/class charts/telephone	SAL/SAO consider if referrals to any other agencies needed		SAO discusses case with link EWO	
FPN- 10 unauthorised sessions Y/N	FPN-10 unauthorised lates ( U codes) Y/N	FPN holiday- Y/N	FPN referral form sent	FPN sent at end of monitoring
<b>Stage 5- below 75%</b>				
SAO ensures referral criteria met. Refer case to EWS.		SAO/EWS continue to communicate. EWS to feedback contact to SAO		

**Punctuality.** All pupils are required to be in school on time. 10 lates will result in a letter. If there is no improvement, a meeting will be held to discuss the impact of late arrival on the child. SAL to complete Significant late arrival of more than 30 minutes may result in a request for a FPN. SAL to complete, discuss with SAO.

**APPENDIX 4: Fixed Penalty Notices for non-attendance at school (subject to change. Schools will follow the latest guidance)**

Reducing unauthorised absence from school is a key priority nationally and locally because missing school damages a pupil's attainment levels, disrupts school routines and the learning of others. Truancy can also leave a pupil vulnerable to anti-social behaviour and youth crime.

Penalty Notices supplement the existing sanctions currently available under Section 444, Education Act 1996 or Section 36, the Children's Act 1989 to enforce attendance at school where appropriate.

### **What is a Fixed Penalty Notice?**

Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and the absences are classed as unauthorised (absences without a valid reason).

Depending on circumstances such cases may result in prosecution under the Education Act 1996.

A Fixed Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in court. Payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice enables parents/carers to discharge what is potentially the liability for a criminal conviction.

### **What are the costs?**

An FPN is £60 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 28 days (but within 42 days of receipt). If the FPN is not paid in full by the end of the 42 days the local authority must either:

- prosecute parents/carers in the usual way using Section 444(1) and (1A) of the Education Act 1996); or
- withdraw the FPN (in limited circumstances as set out in this Code of Conduct).

It will be the responsibility of the school to request that the EWS to issue an FPN and those requests will only be considered where there is proven evidence of unauthorised absence due to the following circumstances:

- where there is a minimum of 10 unauthorised sessions (5 school days), which do not need to be consecutive;
- pupils persistently arriving late after the close of the registration period, i.e. more than 10 sessions with a U code within each term;
- where parents/carers have failed to engage with the school, the SAO or the EWS in attempts to improve attendance but where court sanctions have not been instigated;
- a period of absence from school due to a holiday which is an unauthorised absence; or
- a pupil has regularly come to the attention of the police during school hours and is absent from school without an acceptable reason.

We never take such action lightly and would far rather work with parents/carers to improve attendance without having to resort to enforcement action. Attendance is regarded as highly important and we will use our powers if this is found to be the only way of getting a child to attend school.

### **Procedure for issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice**

Once the EWS receive a request, they will:

- send a formal written warning to the parent/carer notifying them that they may receive a FPN and why;
- set a period of 15 days to allow the parent/carer to respond. During the 15-day period the pupil must not have any unauthorised absences from school;
- at the end of the 15 days, all facts considered to be appropriate, issue a penalty notice via first-class post.

### **When are they used?**

Where a school requests that FPN be issued as a response to a period of unauthorised holiday absence, the formal warning letter and 15-day improvement period will not apply.

### **Is there an appeal process?**

No. There is no statutory right to appeal once a notice has been issued. If you consider that a notice has been wrongly issued to you, you can make representation for it to be withdrawn. If it is not withdrawn, you must pay the penalty or you may be prosecuted for failing to ensure your child's attendance at school.

## **How do I pay?**

You need to be aware that payment in part of by instalments is not an option with penalty notices. You can pay online, to do this you will need your FPN number (starting with SNA), your debit or credit card or you can pay by cheque. All payments by cheque must be sent with your name, address and your Fixed Penalty Notice number on the reverse of your payment to:

Cardiff Council  
PO Box 9000  
Cardiff  
CF10 3WD

Cheques should be crossed and made payable to Cardiff Council.

Post-dated cheques are not accepted.

Please do not send cash by post.

To pay in person, which will be a cash payment only you pay at the following address:

Education Welfare Service,  
Room 422,  
County Hall,  
Atlantic Wharf,  
Cardiff,  
CF10 4UW