

This document is a summary of the key points from the Local Authority policy which we are following.

Date Amended: November 2025

Aims

At Darland High School, we aim for very high attendance to reflect our prime focus on learning. We aim to ensure that all pupils benefit from effective education and are able to achieve their potential so that they are equipped to follow an appropriate learning pathway post-16.

In order to achieve this, we recognise that the school, parents/carers and students must work together in partnership, and that absence and lateness must be kept to a minimum.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of Head Teacher/ Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance:

- To be responsible for overall management and implementation of this policy ensuring it is accessible for stakeholders.
- To ensure the collection of accurate statistical data and develop efficient monitoring and evaluation systems.
- To report routinely to the school's governing body.
- Set attendance targets with the SIA's and governors.
- To introduce whole school and individual pupil strategies to promote regular attendance.
- To use discretion when receiving applications for holiday requests and to provide reasons to parents.
- Work closely with the Local Authority's Education Support Manager and nominated school ESW, and other support services such as Health Team, Counsellors and Social Services.
- To notify the local authority when a 'child is missing education' and follow the local authority's CME procedures.
- Ensure pupils are referred to the Education Social Worker when required.
- Support with any legal action brought as required, including either attending in person or nominating a senior member of staff to attend court as a witness in a trial if called.

Parents/Carers will:

- Ensure a good home routine is in place to prepare their child for the following school day (for example promoting a good bedtime routine, uniform ready, school bag packed and an early start in the morning including breakfast).
- To ensure their children attends school regularly and punctually.
- To notify the school if their child is unable to attend, on the first day of absence and regularly thereafter. Provide evidence for absences if requested. For example proof of medical appointments, dated prescriptions or a letter from a recognised medical service explaining periods of absence.
- To work with school and partner agencies to address any issues of irregular attendance of their children.

Students will:

- Attend regularly and arrive on time to each lesson.
- Inform school staff if there is any issue which may prevent regular or punctual attendance at school.

- To work with school staff and the ESW service to address any issues preventing punctual and regular attendance at school.

Class Teacher/Form Tutors:

- To carry out the statutory role of completing attendance registers twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010. The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately.
- Ensure absences are accounted for by ways of a note provided by parents/carers
- Follow up unaccounted reasons for absence and concerns raised to the Head of Year/Pastoral Manager
- To continue to raise the profile of attendance to all pupils.
- Mentoring of pupils with low attendance, having regular discussions with the pupils and parents. Highlighting any issues identified with Head of Year/Pastoral Manager

Responsibility of Admin Team/ Data Manager:

- To set up class registers at the beginning of the year and to provide the form tutor with an up-to-date class list including contact numbers
- To contact parent/carer if a student is absent from school / college course / other educational activity and to confirm reasons for absence if the school has not been informed
- To send out letters for unauthorised absence and lateness
- To receive telephone calls from parents/carers regarding non-attendance
- To provide punctuality and attendance data for pupil progress reports and as required by staff
- To ensure attendance and punctuality data is accurate by checking with staff, students and parents/carers.
- To record absences and late arrivals.
- To contact parent/carer if a pupil is absent to confirm the reasons for absence if the school have not been informed.
- To send out attendance letters.
- To work closely with Education Social Worker and support staff in school.
- To work closely with Senior leader with responsibility for attendance or Head Teacher and produce reports as required.
- To ensure transfer of CTF of pupils are completed in a timely manner and pupils are not removed from roll unnecessarily.

Responsibility of Education Social Work Service

- To complete visits to families and provide support in accordance with the process documented in the All Wales Attendance Framework.
- Facilitate Attendance improvement plans.
- Enforcing the Local Authorities statutory duties in relation to school attendance and taking legal action where appropriate. It is WCBC policy to prosecute all unpaid Fixed Penalty Notices. However the ESW does not take this action lightly and will endeavour to work and support parents, schools and pupils to improve attendance levels until all of these avenues have proved to be ineffective.
- The ESW service has the strategic responsibility for the writing and implementation of policies, operational procedures and codes of conduct in relation to school attendance.
- Will provide support and challenge to schools and families through analysing attendance data and targeting resources as appropriate.
- The ESW team are centrally based and schools referral via the ESW referral form.

Governing Body:

- Review and approve the attendance policy as necessary.
- Receive reports from the Head Teacher on a routine basis.
- Ensure a lead governor for attendance is appointed.

Attendance and punctuality targets

The overall weekly attendance at Darland High School is consistently over 90%. The school aims to increase attendance to 91% and to improve punctuality. Various measures will be taken in order to attain this including celebrating good attendance, introducing rewards and incentives for good attendance, implementing late detentions and by discussing concerns with parents/carers. The School will implement and use Classcharts Parent App to inform parents/carers of up-to-date attendance figures.

Authorised/Unauthorised Absences

Absence may be authorised for illness, school visits, attending interviews, for religious reasons or exclusions. Also other circumstances that are unavoidable e.g. serious emergency, bereavement. The decision on whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised lies with the school.

Class registers are taken by teachers in am registration. If a child arrives after this time, they must report to the reception, where they will be given a late mark. Should a child fail to appear in school without a valid reason, before 10:15, they will be registered absent for that morning.

Holidays in term time for students are discouraged. Although the headteacher does have the discretion to grant up to a maximum of 10 days holiday in any academic year, **it is Darland High School policy not to authorise holidays during the school term.** The School reserves the right to recommend to the Local Authority, that parents who ignore the School's refusal to authorise holiday absences, a Fixed Term Penalty Notice.

Fixed Penalty Notices.

Fixed penalty notices may be issued to parents/carers in cases of unauthorised absence, where there has been a failure to secure their child's regular attendance or whereabouts and an unwillingness to take responsibility for doing so, for example where the parent/carer has:

- Failed to engage with any voluntary or supportive measures proposed
- Failed to make adequate arrangements for the whereabouts of their child.

Penalty notices may be considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

- At least 10 sessions (5 school days) are lost due to unauthorised absence during the current term. These need not be consecutive.
- Persistent lateness (after the registration has closed and an unauthorised absence is created). Persistent lateness in this instance is defined as equalling or exceeding 10 occasions in any one term. NB. Am and pm count as separate absences.
- Any other cases which would constitute truancy.

The penalty 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 of the notice. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 42 day period the LA may prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies or withdraw the notice.

Fixed penalty notices will be issued only after several attempts to engage with parents/carers to offer support have been made and there has been a failure to engage in the support offered.

Parents need to be aware that although they may provide a reason for an absence, it is the School which makes the decision as to whether or not these reasons constitute an authorised absence.

Promoting Attendance and Punctuality

We aim to promote attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- Clear expectations explained on admission
- Not authorising holidays for students.
- Regular analysis of attendance data
- Early intervention with parents/carers of children causing concern because of low attendance or poor punctuality through standard letters and discussion of situation
- Making students aware of the importance of good attendance to school and the way in which this links to future choices, e.g, college applications, employment etc
- Placing students who arrive late in the Late Detention
- Placing students who truant in After School Detention



Darland High School
Ysgol Uwchradd Darland

Application for Leave during term time.

By law, the school is required to ensure that all our pupils receive full time education. Our target as a school, is to reduce the number of learning days lost through authorised absence, in order that the school achieves an attendance rate of 95% (around the median for schools of our type). We urge all parents to consider carefully the impact on the learning of their child, before deciding to take them on holiday during term time, since the time lost from lessons can, in some cases, never be made up.

The government has delegated the decision of whether holidays can be authorised (up to a maximum of ten school days in any one year) to the Headteacher. Therefore permission for authorised holiday leave rests at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting under the guidance of the School's Attendance Policy. This policy clearly states the following:

It is Darland High School policy not to authorise holidays during the school term.

Should parents persist in taking a child on holiday when the application for this has been refused by the school, the absence will be marked 'unauthorised' and may result in a Fixed Term Penalty issued by the Local Authority.

Name of pupil _____ Form _____

Dates of leave.

Day and date of first day of absence from school. _____

Day and date of last day of absence from school. _____

Total number of school days absent _____

Brief explanation of reason why leave is being applied for.

Signed _____ Print Name _____

School Response. Original to be placed in Student's file, copy to be sent to parent.

Attendance % for last two terms _____ and _____.

Approved _____ Refused _____

Reason given for refusal _____

Headteacher's signature _____ Date _____.

Code entered on Classcharts/Bromcom _____