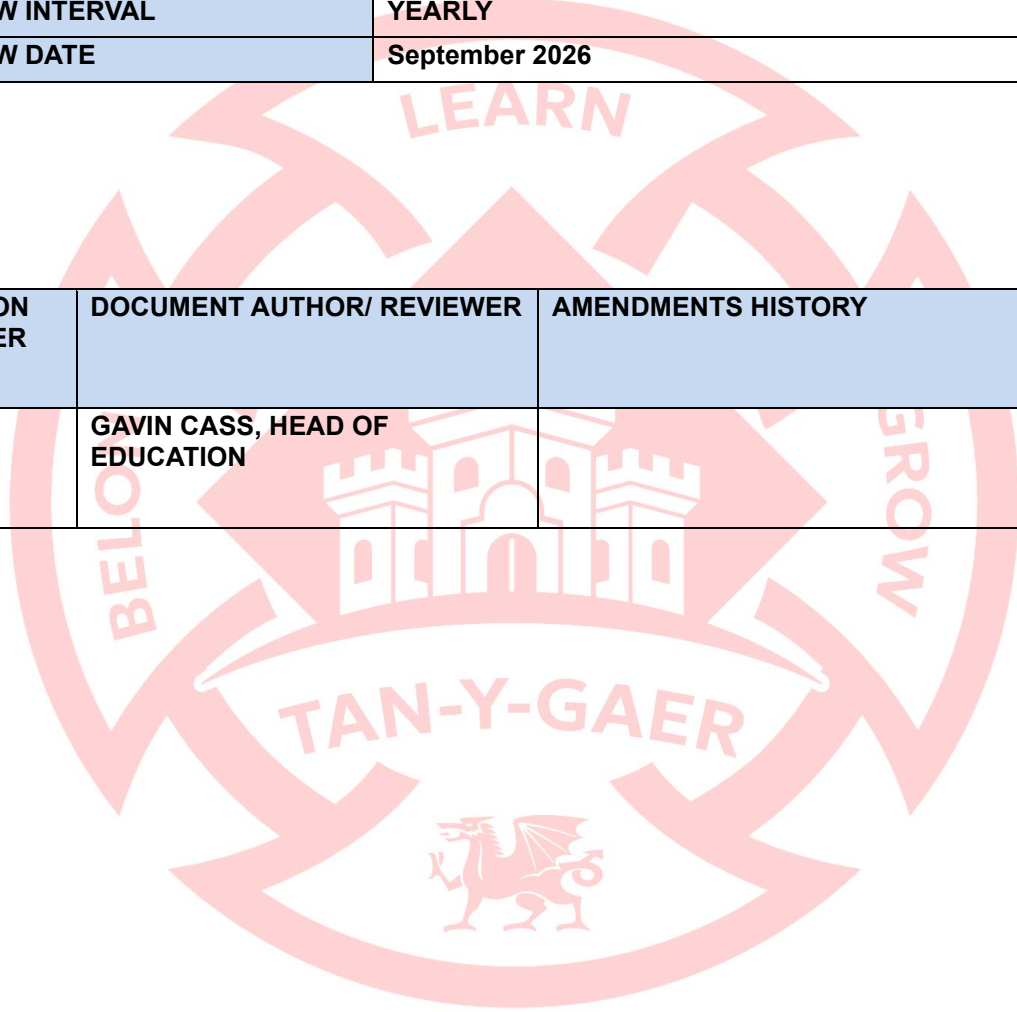


# Attendance and Engagement Policy

DOCUMENT DETAILS	
VERSION NUMBER	1
RESPONSIBLE LEAD	GAVIN CASS, HEAD OF EDUCATION
DOCUMENT AUTHOR	GAVIN CASS, HEAD OF EDUCATION
APPROVED BY	NATALIE FLETCHER – REGISTERED PERSON
APPROVAL DATE	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
REVIEW INTERVAL	YEARLY
REVIEW DATE	September 2026

VERSION NUMBER	DOCUMENT AUTHOR/ REVIEWER	AMENDMENTS HISTORY
1	GAVIN CASS, HEAD OF EDUCATION	



## Statement of Intent

Ysgol Tan y Gaer recognises that regular attendance and positive engagement in education are essential for learners' wellbeing, progress, and long-term outcomes. For many of our pupils, past trauma, disrupted education, additional learning needs and adverse experiences have created barriers to consistent attendance.

Our approach to attendance is therefore relational, restorative and supportive. We focus on building trust, reducing anxiety and creating safe, predictable routines that enable pupils to **belong, learn, and grow**.

We are committed to working in partnership with pupils, families, carers and placing authorities to remove barriers to attendance and to promote meaningful participation in learning.

## Legal and Guidance Framework

This policy operates in accordance with:

- Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024
- Education Act 1996
- Welsh Government: *Keeping learners safe*
- Wales Safeguarding Procedures
- Welsh Government Attendance Guidance
- Curriculum for Wales Framework
- Equality Act 2010

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Relationship Policy
- ALN Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- TAC / PEP / IDP Procedures

## Principles Underpinning Attendance at Ysgol Tan y Gaer

Our attendance practice is guided by the following principles:

Attendance is a **safeguarding issue**

Attendance is a **wellbeing issue**

Attendance is a **systems responsibility**, not solely a family issue

Behaviour is communication

Connection comes before compliance

Progress is measured through **engagement as well as presence**

We recognise that for some learners, gradual reintegration and flexible pathways represent success.

## **Definition of Attendance and Engagement**

### **Attendance**

Attendance refers to a pupil's physical presence at school or an authorised off-site educational activity.

### **Engagement**

Engagement includes:

- Participation in learning
- Emotional availability
- Regulation and readiness
- Willingness to attempt tasks
- Attendance at therapeutic and enrichment activities

Where appropriate, structured off-site provision, outreach learning, or blended learning may form part of a planned attendance pathway.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Head of Education**

Will:

- Oversee attendance strategy
- Ensure compliance with statutory duties
- Liaise with placing authorities
- Review attendance patterns
- Allocate resources to support re-engagement
- Monitor attendance and engagement data
- Lead early intervention
- Coordinate multi-agency responses
- Maintain records
- Report concerns to safeguarding leads

### **Teaching and Support Staff**

Will:

- Promote positive routines
- Build strong relationships
- Identify early signs of disengagement
- Record attendance accurately
- Implement re-engagement strategies

### **Pupils**

Will be supported to:

- Attend regularly
- Communicate worries
- Participate in planning
- Celebrate progress

## **Parents, Carers and Placing Authorities**

Will:

- Support attendance plans
- Share relevant information
- Engage with reviews
- Participate in reintegration planning

## **Recording Attendance**

- Attendance is recorded daily using the school's management system
- Registers are completed at the start of each session
- Off-site activities are recorded as present where appropriate
- Therapeutic and outreach sessions are logged

Records are retained in line with data protection requirements.

## **Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

### **Authorised Absence**

May include:

- Illness (verified where appropriate)
- Medical appointments
- Mental health needs (agreed plan)
- Approved reintegration programmes
- Exceptional circumstances

### **Unauthorised Absence**

May include:

- Absence without explanation
- Refusal to attend without engagement
- Avoidable lateness
- Unapproved leave

Each case is considered individually.

## **Responding to Absence**

### **Day 1 Response**

If a pupil is absent without prior agreement:

- Contact is made with carers/placement by 10am
- Welfare checks are initiated where needed
- Concerns are logged

### **Ongoing Absence**

Where patterns emerge:

- Key worker involvement
- Review of support plans

- TAC / PEP / IDP updates
- Multi-agency meetings
- Individual attendance plans

### **Early Intervention and Support**

Support may include:

- Adjusted start times
- Part-time timetables (time-limited and reviewed)
- Transition support
- Therapeutic input
- Sensory regulation programmes
- Transport support
- Outreach provision

All interventions are documented and reviewed.

### **Reintegration and Flexible Pathways**

Where attendance is disrupted, the school will implement structured reintegration plans including:

- Gradual increases in attendance
- Safe spaces
- Named key adults
- Blended learning where appropriate
- Vocational and community learning

Plans are reviewed at least half-termly.

### **Safeguarding and Attendance**

Poor attendance is treated as a safeguarding indicator.

The school will:

- Monitor vulnerable pupils closely
- Escalate concerns through safeguarding procedures
- Make referrals where necessary
- Share information appropriately

### **Medical, Mental Health, and Emotional Barriers**

The school recognises:

- Anxiety-based school avoidance
- Trauma responses
- Attachment difficulties
- Neurodivergence
- Chronic health conditions

Support plans will reflect professional advice and pupil voice.

### **Use of Legal Interventions**

Formal legal sanctions are a last resort.

The school prioritises:

- Supportive intervention
- Partnership working
- Restorative approaches

Where necessary, concerns will be escalated to the Local Authority.

### **Data protection and Information Sharing**

Attendance data will be:

- Stored securely
- Shared on a need-to-know basis
- Used proportionately
- Reported to placing authorities

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance trends
- Review cohort patterns
- Evaluate interventions
- Report to Directors
- Adjust provision

