

## PA11 Head of Primary School

Senedd Cymru

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

Absenoldeb Disgyblion

Ymateb gan Pennaeth yr Ysgol Gynradd

Welsh Parliament

Children, Young People and Education Committee

Pupil absence

Evidence from Head of Primary School

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Record your views against the inquiry's terms of reference, which have been grouped into 5 themes.

### 1. Reasons

Attendance has been affected directly and indirectly by the Covid pandemic.

All pupils have had absence marks due to the pandemic.

Many pupils have been absent as a result of being ill themselves, or because they were told to isolate, by law. In addition to this, most pupils have been unable to attend school due to a parent or carer being infected, or by having symptoms.

Non-covid related absenteeism has risen, with parents also using suspected covid illness as an excuse not to send children in.

FSM pupils and non-FSM pupils are affected, but FSM pupils attendance has been affected more.

### 2. Risks and consequences

Pupils have lost considerable amounts of learning time.

Pupils have spent long periods of time in the family home, often with parents who may be unwell or unable to support their child's learning.

Pupils have not developed the communication and social skills as well as physical skills in such a way as they did pre-covid.

### 3. Impact

Progress of individual learners has been hampered by poorer attendance.

### 4. Effectiveness of policies

Although parents do engage fairly well with the pupil absence policy, many have decided that time with their precious children has taken priority.

Up until recently we were asked not to send letters or organise meetings with staff. We are now beginning to strengthen up our absence concerns and reactions.

### 5. Other

The Educational Welfare Officer is very supportive and has been back in touch with parents.

Recently we have been allocated an attendance support worker in our area, who is already active in contacting parents / guardians.

As a school, pupil absence has affected the progress of learners in many ways - actual missed school, bereavement and pupil wellbeing. All of these are now being addressed to the best of our ability.

Staff absence has also affected pupil progress.

