



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

School attendance and religious festivals guidance 2025 and 2026

Audience

The entire teaching workforce, government and national partners, including regional education consortia, local authorities and governing bodies.

Action required

None – for information only.

Further information

Enquiries about this document should be directed to:

Supporting Access to Education

Education Directorate

Welsh Government

Cathays Park

Cardiff

CF10 3NQ

E-mail: CMIA.SATE@gov.wales

 [@WG_Education](#)

 [Facebook/EducationWales](#)

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

OGL

Digital ISBN 978-1-83625-942-8
© Crown copyright March 2025
WG51100

Contents

<u>Welsh Government attendance guidance</u>	2
<u>Days of religious observance 2025</u>	3
<u>Days of religious observance 2026</u>	8
<u>Additional useful information</u>	12
<u>Wales Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education and Religion, Values and Ethics (WASACRE)</u>	1
<u>WASACRE best practice advice</u>	2
<u>Annex 1 – Religious Festival events 2025 in chronological order</u>	4
<u>Annex 2 – Religious Festival events 2026 in chronological order</u>	11

Welsh Government attendance guidance

This document provides overarching guidelines, which head teachers may use in determining whether to grant an authorised absence for learners.

Parents and carers are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. Only head teachers, and not parents or carers, can authorise an absence. Schools must consider whether the reason for absence is reasonable before doing so.

In Wales, the pattern of the school year takes account of most of the western Christian festivals and holy days. Important days of religious observance in the calendars of other religious traditions and denominations, however, often fall in term time and specifically on school days.

The Welsh Government guidance on attendance, registration practices and codes can be found [here](#).

The following advice is provided for religious observance:

Brief Description – Religious observance

Statistical Meaning – Authorised absence

Physical Meaning – Out for whole session

Legal Meaning – Absent

Use – Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals.

Parents [or carers] should be encouraged to give advance notice.

This is interpreted to mean that if the parent or carer's religious organisation sets the day as a religious festival then the school must authorise the absence.

Where appropriate, religious bodies have confirmed if the day is not set apart there is no requirement for the school to approve the absence. Additional holidays and days off linked to the religious festival but not “exclusively set aside for religious observance” by the religious body are not marked using Code R.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2010](#).

Days of religious observance 2025

The following table **only** includes dates set aside for religious observance for 2025, which fall on a standard school day (i.e. Monday to Friday including school holidays). Other dates acknowledged as dates set aside for religious observance for 2025, which fall over a weekend are not included in the below table but, for reference, are included in Annex 1

	Spring Term 2025	Summer Term 2025	Autumn Term 2025
Baha'i	Ayyám-i-Há – 26/02/2025 - 01/03/2025 Naw Rúz – 20/03/2025 Ninth day of Ridvan – 29/04/2025	Twelfth / Last day of Ridvan – 02/05/2025 Declaration of the Báb – 23/05/2025 Ascension of Baha'u'llah – 28/05/2025 Martyrdom of the Báb – 09/07/2025	Twin Holy Days – (births of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb – 22/10/2025 & 23/10/2025 Day of the Covenant – 25/11/2025 Ascension of Abdu'l-Bahá – 27/11/2025
Buddhist	Chinese New Year – 29/01/2025 Nirvana Day – 15/02/2025 Losar (Tibetan New Year) – 28/02/2025 - 03/02/2025	Visakha Puja / Buddha Day – 12/05/2025 Asalha Puja – 10/07/2025	Loy Krathong – 05/11/2025 Bodhi Day – 08/12/2025

Christian	Epiphany – 06/01/2025 Orthodox Christmas Day – 07/01/2025 Western Lent – 05/03/2025 – 18/04/2025 Good Friday – 18/04/2025 Orthodox Lent – 03/03/2025 – 18/04/2025 Orthodox Good Friday – 18/04/2025		Western Christmas Day – 25/12/2025
Hindu	Maha Shivarati – 26/02/2025 Holi – 14/03/2025 Navaratri – 30/03/2025 – 07/04/2025	Krishna Janmashtami – 26/08/2025 Ganesh Chaturthi / Vinayaka Chaturthi – 27/08/2025	Durga Puja – 28/09/2025 – 02/10/2025
Islam / Muslim	Imam Ali – 14/01/2025 Maba'ath (The Prophet's Ascension) – 27/01/2025 Promised Savior Day – 14/02/2025	Muharram/ Hijra/ Islamic New Year – 26/06/2025	Mawlid an Nabi/ Eid Milad un-Nabi/ Prophet's Birthday – 05/09/2025

	Ramadan – 28/02/2025 – 30/03/2025 Martyrdom of Imam Ali Ibn Aboutaleb – 21/03/2025 Eid-al-Fitr – 30/03/2025		
Jainism	Mahavir Jayanti – 10/04/2025	Paryushana Parvarambha – 21/08/2025 – 28/08/2025	Jain New Year – 21/10/2025
Judaism	Purim – 13/03/2025 – 14/03/2025 Pesach / Passover – 12/04/2025 – 20/04/2025	Shavuot – 01/06/2025 - 03/06/2025	Rosh Hashanah - 22/09/2025 – 24/09/2025 Yom Kippur – 02/10/2025 Sukkot – 06/10/2025 – 13/10/2025 Shemini Atzeret - 13/10/2025 – 15/10/2025 Simchat Torah – 14/10/2025 – 15/10/2025 Chanukah 14/12/2025 – 22/12/2025
Sikh	Lohri (Maghi) – 13/01/2025	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan – 16/06/2025	Installation of the Guru Granth Sahib – 20/10/2025

	Guru Gobind Singh Jayant – 17/01/2025 Hola Mohalla – 14/03/2025 – 16/03/2025 Vaisakhi – 14/04/2025		Guru Nanak Dev Ji Jayanti – 05/11/2025 Guru Tegh Bahadur Martyrdom Day – 24/11/2025
--	---	--	---

Dates set aside for religious observance, which fall on a weekend in 2025.

	Spring Term 2025	Summer Term 2025	Autumn Term 2025
Baha'i	World Religion Day – 19/01/2025 Ayyám-i-Há – 26/02/2025 - 01/03/2025 First day of Ridvan – 20/04/2025		
Buddhist	Losar (Tibetan New Year) – 28/02/2025 - 03/02/2025		
Christian	Western & Eastern Easter Day – 20/04/2025 Western & Eastern Pentecost – 08/06/2025		

Hindu	Vasant Panchami – 02/02/2025 Ram Navami – 06/04/2025 Hunuman Jayanti – 11/04/2025 – 13/04/2025 Navaratri – 30/03/2025 – 07/04/2025		Durga Puja – 28/09/2025 – 02/10/2025 Diwali – 21/10/2025 Vikram New Year – 02/11/2025
Islam / Muslim	Shehzadi Bibi Sayyeda Fatima Zehra – 25/01/2025 Ramadan – 28/02/2025 – 30/03/2025	Eid-al-Adha – 07/06/2025 Eid-al-Ghadir – 14/06/2025 – 15/06/2025 Ashura – 05/07/2025 – 06/07/2025	
Jainism			Diwali – 21/10/2025
Judaism	Pesach / Passover – 12/04/2025 – 20/04/2025	Tish’a’B’av – 02/08/2025 - 03/08/2025	Sukkot – 06/10/2025 – 13/10/2025 Chanukah 14/12/2025 – 22/12/2025

Sikh	Hola Mohalla – 14/03/2025 – 16/03/2025		Diwali – 21/10/2025
-------------	---	--	----------------------------

Days of religious observance 2026

	Spring Term 2026	Summer Term 2026
Baha'i	Ayyám-i-Há – 25/02/2026 - 29/02/2026 Naw Rúz – 20/03/2026 Ninth day of Ridvan – 29/04/2026	Twelfth / Last day of Ridvan – 02/05/2026 Declaration of the Báb – 23/05/2026 Ascension of Baha'u'llah – 28/05/2026 Martyrdom of the Báb – 09/07/2026
Buddhist	Chinese New Year – 17/02/2026 Nirvana Day – 15/02/2026 Losar (Tibetan New Year) – 18/02/2026 - 20/02/2026	Visakha Puja / Buddha Day – 24/05/2026 Asalha Puja – 29/07/2026
Christian	Epiphany – 06/01/2026 Orthodox Christmas Day – 07/01/2026 Western Lent – 18/02/2026 – 03/04/2026 Good Friday – 03/04/2026	

	Orthodox Lent – 23/02/2026 – 10/04/2026 Orthodox Good Friday – 10/04/2026	
Hindu	Vasant Panchami – 23/01/2026 Holi – 04/03/2026 Ram Navami – 27/03/2026 Hunuman Jayanti – 01/04/2026 – 02/04/2026	
Islam / Muslim	Maba'ath (The Prophet's Ascension) – 16/01/2026 Promised Savior Day – 03/02/2026 Ramadan – 17/02/2026 – 18/03/2026 Martyrdom of Imam Ali Ibn Aboutaleb – 11/03/2026 Eid-al-Fitr – 21/03/2026	Eid-al-Adha – 27/05/2026 Eid-al-Ghadir – 03/06/2026 Muharram / Hijra / Islamic New Year – 16/06/2026 Ashura – 25/06/2026 – 26/06/2025
Jainism	Mahavir Jayanti – 31/03/2026	
Judaism	Purim – 02/03/2026 – 03/03/2026	Shavuot – 21/05/2026 – 23/05/2026

	Pesach / Passover – 01/04/2026 – 09/04/2026	
Sikh	Guru Gobind Singh Jayant – 06/01/2026 Lohri (Maghi) – 13/01/2026 Hola Mohalla – 04/03/2026 – 06/03/2026 Vaisakhi – 14/04/2026 Martyrdom of Guru Arjan – 16/06/2026	

Dates set aside for religious observance, which fall on a weekend in 2026.

	Spring Term 2026	Summer Term 2026
Baha'i	World Religion Day – 18/01/2026 Ayyám-i-Há – 25/02/2026 - 29/02/2026 First day of Ridvan – 20/04/2026	
Buddhist		
Christian	Western Easter Day – 05/04/2026	Western Pentecost – 24/05/2026

	Eastern Easter Day – 12/04/2026;	Eastern Pentecost – 31/05/2026
Hindu	Maha Shivarati – 15/02/2026	
Islam / Muslim	Imam Ali – 03/01/2026 Ramadan – 17/02/2026 – 18/03/2026	
Jainism		
Judaism	Pesach / Passover – 01/04/2026 – 09/04/2026	Shavuot – 21/05/2026 – 23/05/2026
Sikh		

Additional useful information

There are many different kinds of calendars being actively used around the world; they generally fall into three categories:

- The **solar** calendar is concerned with the Sun, or, more precisely, is based on the Earth's rotation around the Sun. The Gregorian calendar, which is the most widely used calendar in the world today is a solar calendar based on a 365-day¹ common year divided into twelve months of irregular lengths.
- **Lunar**² calendars are based on the rotation of the Moon around Earth and are used mainly for religious and cultural purposes,
- **Lunisolar or solilunar** calendars combine the two kinds and are solar calendars with dates indicating the Moon phase. They are used mainly for religious and cultural purposes.

For this reason dates set aside for religious observance in some religions may vary geographically and year on year.

¹ However, nearly every four years is a leap year, when one extra – or intercalary – day, is added on 29 February, making the leap year in the Gregorian calendar 366 days long.

² Dates may vary as a lunar month can be 29 or 30 days long

Wales Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education and Religion, Values and Ethics (WASACRE)

WASACRE is the umbrella organisation for Standing Advisory Councils (SACs) across Wales.

The Welsh Government supports the following WASACRE advice:

- Any application made by a parent for their child to receive an authorised absence for religious observance is treated with sensitivity and considered carefully and fairly
- Absence should only be authorised for a date '*exclusively set apart by the religious body*'
- If a date has not been '*exclusively set apart*' by the relevant religious body, it is suggested that the head teacher enquires whether the learner/s can fulfil their religious observance outside of school hours
- If a festival falls on a weekend or during a school holiday, absence taken on a school day for that festival should not be authorised
- Similarly, absence taken on a school day either side of a festival that has been '*exclusively set apart*' by the relevant religious body should not be authorised (in such situations parents should apply for a leave of absence instead).

It is important to note that within some religious traditions, observance varies between different denominations and communities. Whilst one festival might be considered relatively minor within a particular community, therefore not requiring absence from school, the same festival may be celebrated as a holy day of major significance within a different community from the same religious tradition and might require, with authorisation, absence from school.

Also, the level of observance will differ amongst families within the same religious tradition or community and some children, despite growing up within a particular faith community, might prefer to attend school on festival days, whilst others may not.

Therefore, whilst head teachers must ensure that requests are genuine and reasonable, they are advised to maintain open and honest dialogue with the families to cover their individual circumstances and contact their local SAC for support if needed.

Furthermore, the lunar nature of Islamic calendar and the different authorities that Muslims rely on for the announcement of the start and end of Ramadan, means that there is the potential for Muslim learners in the same school to start/ finish the fasting month and celebrate Eid a day before or after each other. In practical terms, this means that Muslim learners in the same school may also be requesting absence for the Eid day(s) on different dates.

Head teachers should also be mindful that the nature of the moon-sighting means that it is only the night before Eid that Muslim families may know that Eid is the following day. As such, parents and carers may be able to give advance notice to school of the approximate dates of Ramadan (in particular), but stress that it may differ by a day either side of the dates appearing in this guidance.

WASACRE best practice advice

WASACRE would consider it good practice for schools to:

- learn and understand the diversity of their communities with regards to a child's faith/belief.
- Encourage parents and carers to give the school as much notice as possible of a proposed absence and be willing to discuss with the teachers how their child/children will catch up on work missed
- make appropriate provision for the needs of children who outwardly show or have a faith/belief that requires them to perform specific rituals on a regular basis throughout the year. For example, by allocating a prayer room, or a quiet place. There may also be a need for some children to have access to a private washing facility, and having these facilities in school would enable children to remain on school site without the need for regular absences
- Reach out to their local faith based communities and to remain in regular contact and dialogue with them throughout the year. This will enable schools to develop mutually beneficial relationships with local faith communities that will promote and open up opportunities for good quality learning experiences for the children and support head teachers in determining whether to grant an authorised absence for religious observance for learners in their school
- Be aware of the religious communities represented in their locality and take reasonable steps to ensure, whenever possible, that events in the school diary do not clash with days of significant religious importance for their learners and their families.

Useful Websites:

<https://orsl.usc.edu/life/calendar/>

<https://www.bahai.org/calendar>

<https://www.yja.org/jaincalendar>

<https://icalendars.co.uk/religion/>

<https://www.sikhnet.com/>

<https://www.chabad.org/jewish/>

<https://www.drikpanchang.com/calendars/hindu/>

<https://www.islamic-relief.org.uk/islamic-calendar/>

<https://handfulofleaves.life/buddhist-calendar>

Annex 1 – Religious Festival events 2025 in chronological order

Date (chronological order)	Event	Religion	Academic Term 2025
January			
13/01/2025	Lohri (Maghi)	Sikh	Spring term
06/01/2025	Epiphany	Christianity	Spring term
07/01/2025	Orthodox Christmas Day	Christianity	Spring term
14/01/2025	Imam Ali	Islam / Muslim	Spring term
17/01/2025	Guru Gobind Singh Jayant	Sikh	Spring term
19/01/2025	World Religion Day	Baha'i	Spring Term
25/01/2025	Shehzadi Bibi Sayyeda Fatima Zehra	Islam / Muslim	Spring term
27/01/2025	Maba'ath (The Prophet's Ascension)	Islam / Muslim	Spring term
29/01/2025	Chinese New year	Buddhism	Spring term
February			

02/02/2025	Vasant Panchami	Hinduism	Spring term
15/02/2025	Nirvana Day	Buddhism	Spring term
26/02/2025	Maha Shivarati	Hinduism	Spring term
26/02/2025 – 01/03/2025	Ayyám-i-Há	Baha'i	Spring Term
28/02/2025 - 03/02/2025	Losar (Tibetan New year)	Buddhism	Spring term
28/02/2025 – 30/03/2025	Ramadan	Islam / Muslim	Spring term
March			
03/03/2025 – 18/05/2025	Orthodox Lent	Christianity	Spring term
05/03/2025 – 18/04/2025	Western Lent	Christianity	Spring term
13/03/2025 – 14/03/2025	Purim	Judaism	Spring term
14/03/2025	Holi	Hinduism	Spring term
14/03/2025 – 16/03/2025	Hola Mohalla	Sikh	Spring term

20/03/2025	Naw Rûz	Bahá'í	Spring term
21/03/2025	Martyrdom of Imam Ali Ibn Aboutaleb	Islam / Muslim	Spring term
30/03/2025	Eid-al-Fitr	Islam / Muslim	Spring term
30/03/2025 – 07/04/2025	Navaratri	Hinduism	Spring term
April			
06/04/2025	Ram Navami	Hinduism	Spring term
10/04/2025	Mahavir Jayanti	Jainism	Spring term
11/04/2025 – 13/04/2025	Hunuman Jayanti	Hinduism	Spring term
12/04/2025 – 20/04/2025	Pesach/ Passover	Judaism	Spring term
14/04/2025	Vaisakhi	Sikh	Spring term
18/04/2025	Western Good Friday	Christianity	Spring term
18/04/2025	Orthodox Good Friday	Christianity	Spring term

20/04/2025	First Day of Ridvan	Bahá'í	Spring term
20/04/2025	Western & Orthodox Easter Day	Christianity	Spring term
29/04/2025	Ninth Day of Ridvan	Bahá'í	Spring term
May			
02/05/2025	Twelfth / Last day of Ridvan	Bahá'í	Summer term
12/05/2025	Visakha Puja / Buddha Day	Buddhism	Summer term
28/05/2025	Ascension of Baha'u'llah	Baha'i	Summer term
June			
01/06/2025 -03/06/2025	Shavuot	Judaism	Summer term
07/06/2025	Eid-al-Adha	Islam / Muslim	Summer term
08/06/2025	Western & Eastern Pentecost	Christianity	Spring term
14/06/2025 – 15/06/2025	Eid-al-Ghadir	Islam / Muslim	Summer term

16/06/2025	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan	Sikh	Summer term
26/06/2025	Muharram / Hijra / Islamic New Year	Islam/ Muslim	Summer term
July			
05/07/2025 – 06/07/2025	Ashura	Islam / Muslim	Summer term
09/07/2024	Martyrdom of the Báb	Bahá'í	Summer term
10/07/2025	Asalha Puja	Buddhism	Summer term
August			
02/08/2025 – 03/08/2025	Tish'a'B'av	Judaism	Summer term
21/08/2025 – 28/08/2025	Paryushana Parvarambha	Jainism	Summer term
26/08/2025	Krishna Janmashtami	Hinduism	Summer term
27/08/2025	Ganesh Chaturthi / Vinayaka Chaturthi	Hinduism	Autumn term

September			
05/09/2025	Mawlid an Nabi / Eid Milad un-Nabi / Prophet's Birthday	Islam / Muslim	Autumn term
22/09/2025 – 24/09/2025	Rosh Hashanah	Judaism	Autumn term
28/09/2025 – 02/10/2025	Durga Puja	Hinduism	Autumn term
October			
02/10/2025	Yom Kippur	Judaism	Autumn term
06/10/2025 – 13/10/2025	Sukkot	Judaism	Autumn term
21/10/2025	Jain New Year	Jainism	Autumn term
13/10/2025 – 15/10/2025	Shemini Atzeret	Judaism	Autumn term
14/10/2025 – 15/10/2025	Simchat Torah	Judaism	Autumn term
20/10/2025	Installation of the Guru Granth Sahib	Sikh	Autumn term
21/10/2025	Diwali	Sikh/ Hinduism/ Jainism	Autumn term
22/10/2025 & 23/10/2025	Twin Holy Days – (births of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb	Baha'i	Autumn term

November			
02/11/2025	Vikram New Year	Hinduism	Autumn term
05/11/2025	Guru Nanak Dev Ji Jayanti	Sikh	Autumn term
05/11/2025	Loy Krathong	Buddhism	Autumn term
24/11/2025	Guru Tegh Bahadur Martyrdom Day	Sikh	Autumn term
27/11/2025	Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá	Bahá'í	Autumn term
December			
08/12/2025	Bodhi Day	Buddhism	Autumn term
14/12/2025 – 22/12/2025	Chanukah	Judaism	Autumn term
25/12/2025	Western Christmas Day	Christianity	Autumn term

Annex 2 – Religious Festival events 2026 in chronological order

Date (chronological order)	Event	Religion	Academic Term 2025
January			
06/01/2026	Guru Gobind Singh Jayant	Sikh	Spring term
06/01/2026	Epiphany	Christianity	Spring term
07/01/2026	Orthodox Christmas Day	Christianity	Spring term
13/01/2025	Lohri (Maghi)	Sikh	Spring term
18/01/2026	World Religion Day	Baha'i	Spring Term
23/01/2026	Vasant Panchami	Hinduism	Spring term
February			
15/02/2026	Nirvana Day	Buddhism	Spring term
17/02/2026	Chinese New year	Buddhism	Spring term
10/02/2026 – 09/03/2026	Ramadan	Islam / Muslim	Spring term

18/02/2026 - 20/02/2026	Losar (Tibetan New year)	Buddhism	Spring term
18/02/2026 – 03/04/2026	Western Lent	Christianity	Spring term
23/02/2026 – 10/04/2026	Orthodox Lent	Christianity	Spring term
25/02/2026 – 29/02/2026	Ayyám-i-Há	Baha'i	Spring Term
March			
02/03/2026 – 03/03/2026	Purim	Judaism	Spring term
04/03/2026	Holi	Hinduism	Spring Term
04/03/2026 – 06/03/2026	Hola Mohalla	Sikh	Spring term
21/03/2025	Martyrdom of Imam Ali Ibn Aboutaleb	Islam / Muslim	Spring term
19/03/2026 -27/03/2026	Navaratri	Hinduism	Spring Term
20/03/2026	Naw Rûz	Bahá'í	Spring term
31/03/2026	Mahavir Jayanti	Jainism	Spring term
April			
01/04/2026 – 09/04/2026	Pesach/ Passover	Judaism	Spring term

03/04/2026	Western Good Friday	Christianity	Spring term
05/04/2026	Western Easter Day	Christianity	Spring term
10/04/2026	Orthodox Good Friday	Christianity	Spring term
12/04/2026	Orthodox Easter Day	Christianity	Spring term
14/04/2026	Vaisakhi / Khalsa Divas	Sikh	Spring term
17/04/2024	Ram Navami	Hinduism	Spring term
20/04/2026	First Day of Ridvan	Bahá'í	Spring term
01/04/2026 – 02/04/2026	Hunuman Jayanti	Hinduism	Spring term
29/04/2026	Ninth Day of Ridvan	Bahá'í	Spring term
May			
02/05/2026	Twelfth / Last day of Ridvan	Bahá'í	Summer term
21/05/2026 – 23/05/2026	Shavuot	Judaism	Summer term

24/05/2026	Visakha Puja / Buddha Day	Buddhism	Summer term
24/05/2026	Western Pentecost	Christianity	Spring term
29/05/2026	Ascension of Baha'u'llah	Baha'i	Summer term
31/05/2026	Orthodox Pentecost	Christianity	Spring term
June			
16/06/2026	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan	Sikh	Summer term
16/06/2024 – 20/06/2024	Eid-al-Adha	Islam / Muslim	Summer term
July			
07/07/2024	Muharram / Hijra / Islamic New Year	Islam/ Muslim	Summer term
09/07/2026	Martyrdom of the Báb	Bahá'í	Summer term
28/07/2024	Ashura	Islam / Muslim	Summer term
29/07/2026	Asalha Puja	Buddhism	Summer term

