



The Federation of Ysgol Bryn Clwyd and Ysgol Gellifor ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Governing Body are ultimately responsible for the correct maintenance of the Admissions Register and of the Attendance Register. The latter is often described as a legal document. All registers are kept for seven years, however, since 2008 we have used electronic registers using SIMS and the information is readily available.

Both schools actively supports children's regular attendance at school and will work in partnership with parents to enable this to happen. Our aim is to maximise attendance and support parents in carrying out their responsibility to ensure that their children attend and stay at school and thus maximise the opportunity for learning. This policy outlines some of the issues relating to parents' responsibilities and the procedures that the school will adopt to support parents. "Parent" includes anyone who has a parental responsibility for a child or has care of him/her; eg: guardian. More specifically it is linked to WSCC guidance.

It addresses the two key concerns that:-

- If a child of compulsory school age is registered at school but fails to attend regularly without the school's approval or other good cause (as defined in Section 199 of the Education Act 1993) the parent is guilty of an offence.
- Only the school, not parents, can authorise absence and this is normally the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Parents Responsibility

- It is the parents' legal responsibility to allow their child(ren) maximum attendance at school. Parents should ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn. This features highly in our Home School Agreement. A record of attendance also features on the children's Annual Report to Parents.
- It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school of their child's absence on that day, by telephoning the school office. If a child does not arrive at school and a telephone call has not been received, our secretary phones home to ascertain reason for absence.
- Extended absence after the first day requires parents to contact the school to detail the reason for continued absence.



- Absences due to sickness need to be confirmed with a written note / email detailing the illness and if possible a doctors note. This information is then filled in school.

School Policy Authorised Absences

- There are two types of absences authorised or unauthorised. The school will authorise an absence for the following reasons: For absence other than for sickness, parents must seek the prior approval of the Headteacher. An application form is available from the office.
- "Authorised absences" are defined as:-
 - Medical / dental
 - Approved PE or sporting activity
 - Day of religious observance in the religious body to which the parents belong
 - Absence under licence issued by the Area Education Officer for a theatrical or other performance
 - Sickness

Term time holidays

The governing body has taken the decision that family holidays of no more than five school days duration in a school year may be requested however, it is at the discretion of the headteacher whether or not to authorise any absence. This permission must be sought by the parents in advance, holidays requested during National Tests will not be approved.

- Other than in exceptional circumstances, all other absences are "unauthorised"
- The attendance of children is to be monitored by class teachers and the secretary who checks all registers weekly and reports any problems to the Headteacher.
- Weekly attendance data is compiled and filed which allows early identification of persistent absenteeism.
- Whole school weekly attendance data is shared with parents in the school newsletter.
- The schools openly encourage an active partnership with parents and welcomes parents in to discuss any problem relating to attendance.
- Parents are made aware half termly of their child's attendance figure which is colour coded red, amber or green.



Other Issues

Parents do not have the right to remove a child (of compulsory age) for a holiday during school time. **Only the school**, through the Headteacher, can authorise such absence. The absence must be for a genuine holiday; a trip involving the parent in business is not permissible. Holidays during the term time are discouraged as they disrupt a child's education.

In **all** cases where parents wish to remove a child from school for a holiday in school time, written approval must be sought in advance by using the school absence request form. Absence on holiday which has not received prior written approval, or which exceeds an agreed period, will be deemed unauthorised.

Sessions times start at 8.55 am and children will be marked as "late" if they are not in their classes when the registers are called. A child is marked absent 30 minutes after the opening of registration. Attendance registers are completed accurately at the start of each morning and afternoon session and show if any absence is authorised or unauthorised. Children should not come in through the main entrance unless they are arriving late when they will sign in using the late book.

Children should not be in school prior to 8.45 am unless they are attending the breakfast club which starts at 8.00am. We expect parents to escort their children to school. Children should be picked up promptly at 3.05 pm or 3.15 pm unless they are attending an extra curricular club or after school club.

Where a child is absent without the school's prior approval, the absence will be treated as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is provided.

Triggers

Absent at call of register

If a child is not in school by 9.30am and no reason has been provided to school the school secretary will phone to make contact with the family to enquire into a reason for the absence.



If contact cannot be made the secretary will send home a letter asking for parents to ensure contact numbers are current and to make contact with the school.

If still no contact has been made from family the headteacher will speak to a family member when their child is collected.

Threshold of absence

If a child has 5 unauthorised absences in a term the family will be sent a letter asking them to attend a meeting with the headteacher to be able to discuss how the school can support attendance. Minutes will be recorded for items discussed and parents will be given a copy of the agreed actions.

If parents fail to attend this meeting or a child reaches 10 unauthorised absences in a term the ESW team may be contacted to support the school and family in addressing this poor attendance.

Lateness

If a child arrives late to school this will be recorded in the late book once a child has been recorded late 10 times in a term the family will be sent a letter asking them to attend a meeting with the headteacher to be able to discuss how the school can best support a prompt arrival to school. Minutes will be recorded for items discussed and parents will be given a copy of the agreed actions.

If parents fail to attend this meeting the ESW team may be contacted to support the school and family in addressing this issue.

Reintegration strategies for pupils following long term absence

Long term absence is considered to be anything more than 20 consecutive days of absence during school time. In this instance pupils would be encouraged to come on site after 3.15pm the day before they are due to start back in school to meet with their teacher and to familiarise themselves with the schools premises. On the day of return staff would be available for any support the child may need and staff would work to ensure that friendship groups can be re-



established. A lead member of staff would be available to the pupil if they had an issue that needed dealing with due to their long term absence.

Where a pupil has been granted authorised leave of absence for a holiday and fails to return within 10 school days after the holiday, and the school is satisfied that it is not due to sickness or any unavoidable cause, the pupil's name shall be deleted from the admission register.

Where a school has written notification that a pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school the pupil's name will be deleted from the register, a return will be made to the LEA within 10 school days.

Conclusion

We are confident that parents will appreciate that the school has a duty to put the above down in what may sound a very strict disciplinary policy. However, the Governors and Staff wish to make it quite clear that they will always do all they can to help any parents, who may need help, within the guidelines laid down by the Department for Education and Denbighshire County Council, on matters relating to attendance.

Presented to staff _____

Date _____

Signed _____

Presented to Governors _____

Signed _____

Next review _____