

Ysgol Aberconwy



Pupil Attendance Policy

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THIS POLICY HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

Signed:

Date: 08/03/2022

Governor Link: CR

Review due date: 01/03/2025

LT Link: ADH

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

General

Parents or guardians of pupils of compulsory school age have a legal duty to ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education by attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996).

Under the provisions of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Pupil Registration Regulations 1995 the school must keep an attendance register. Electronic records are kept.

The school is registered with the Information Commissioner under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Aim

The school is committed to a positive policy of encouraging pupils to attend school regularly. The school will work with parents and pupils to secure this aim.

The other purpose of this attendance policy is to ensure that there is an efficient system, known to all, for ensuring that pupils who should be attending the school have registered twice daily, or a reason for non-attendance is known to the school.

Taking the Register

Pupils' of compulsory school age must have their attendance registered twice per day. It is the practice of this school to register ALL pupils (including those over compulsory school age).

The register must be updated twice daily at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. In addition all teaching staff must check that the pupils who should attend each lesson do so.

The register must record whether the pupil is present, absent, or attending an approved educational activity.

An 'approved educational activity' is defined as:

- a. One taking place off the school premises.
- b. Approved by a person authorised by the governing body or the Head.
- c. Supervised by a person approved by the governing body or Head.
- d. Of an educational nature, including work experience, field trips and educational visits, interviews with prospective employers, or for a place in Higher or Further Education.
- e. Link courses where pupils attend an FE college for part of their time, or franchised pupils receiving part of their education off-site at another location while remaining on roll and under school supervision (e.g. sick children being taught at home), or attending approved sporting activity.

When a pupil of compulsory school age is absent it must be marked as an 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence.

The nature of the approved education activity (for a pupil of compulsory school age).

All Tutor Group registers will be closed twenty minutes after the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Assign a Link governor to review procedures / action plans in consultation with the Assistant Head Teacher Pastoral (AHT Pastoral), Attendance Officer (AO) and Education Welfare Officer (EWO)
- approve the policy and any proposed changes
- receive reports from the Head
- review the working of the policy in the light of the Head's report
- ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the school, and is known by the parents

The Head will:

- set attendance targets as part of the development plan and target-setting process
- monitor progress
- ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the school
- determine, in collaboration with the AHT Pastoral or Head of Year (HoY), whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the school's official form, or absences which have taken place for which no request was made
- notify parents as appropriate that if a pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence
- initiate with appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance
- liaise with the LA over persistent absentees
- liaise with the LA and police when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school
- make an annual report with statistics to the governing body

The AHT Pastoral will:

Line Manage Heads of Year and oversee the day to day running of Y Porth and operations of Year Mentors regarding pastoral concerns including attendance. Specifically:

- oversee the attendance arrangements
- work with HoY's and Year Mentors (YM) to ensure the efficient running of the system
- make periodic checks of the registers to monitor pupil absence
- make regular checks on absence notes and the reasons for absence
- ensure that unaccounted for absences are followed up
- deal with issues of inadequate registering
- arrange appropriate training for staff
- keep the Head informed of the progress of the policy
- advise the Head on any strategies that could be initiated or improved

The Attendance Officer (AO) will:

Oversee the attendance marks for all year groups. Specifically:

- provide graphs to promote attendance across the school (forms)
- provide trend information weekly and half termly for Form Tutors and YM's
- allocate the attendance codes, with YM's, to ensure consistency
- work with AHT Pastoral to analyse attendance data

- provide summary attendance reports for WG and County as required

Heads of Year (HoY) & Year Mentors (YM) will:

Heads of Year will monitor attendance, liaise with Year Mentors and intervene if necessary. Heads of Year will work with their Form Tutors to analyse attendance and intervene with pupils in their Year. Heads of Year will ensure consistency regarding Form tutors promoting the importance of attendance with their forms.

Year Mentors will phone parents/guardians for every pupil on their first day of absence. They will also phone parents on subsequent days if needed. Year Mentors will input specific attendance codes. Year Mentors are a crucial link with parents and pupils in ensuring pupils attend school regularly.

HoY's and YM will;

- ensure that all pupil absences are noted and absence notes received from parents
- ensure that all registers are completed and handed to the school office at the end of each term
- make regular checks on the efficiency of the registering
- make regular checks on absence notes
- ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with
- contact parents over pupil absences where appropriate
- make reports to the AHT Pastoral on the efficiency of the system
- liaise with the AHT Pastoral over training needs
- follow the school's procedures

Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) will:

deliver an attendance assembly for each year group at the start of the year. The EWO is the last resort for the school to utilise and this is explained in the procedures section of this booklet. Specifically:

- Work with AHT to maintain and develop processes, ensure they are in place and that they are robust.
- Monitor student attendance generally and advise HoY's and YM's of strategies
- Work with students at 80% or less attendance
- Work with parents of students at 80% or less attendance
- Carry out home visits as necessary
- Carry out all attendance related referrals to other agencies
- Deliver an annual assembly on attendance to all year groups

Form Tutors (FT) will:

challenge pupils for absence notes and record pupils as absent O (not authorised); / \ (present) or late (L). Notes and other codes are entered by the Attendance Officer or Year Mentors. Form tutors will speak to each pupil regarding their % attendance and their targets. Specifically;

- ensure that pupils are registered accurately
- ensure that pupils bring absence notes
- follow up cases of unaccounted for absence or unacceptable notes
- keep the YM / HoY informed of any signs of suspected truancy

- inform the YM / HoY of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences

Classroom Teachers (CT) will:

- take an accurate register of their class at the start of each lesson
- check the attendance of pupils at their lessons
- inform the YM of the names of pupils who are absent without notification

Pupils are required to:

- attend regularly unless they are ill or have an authorised absence ('Attending regularly' means registering before the attendance register is closed for the session)
- if possible inform the school of their absence on the first day on non-attendance
- bring an explanatory note on the day of return to school
- discuss with the tutor any planned absences well in advance (e.g. a family holiday)
- make any request for leave of absence on the school's official leave of absence form

Parents are required to:

- send their child to school on time
- notify the school if their son / daughter is unable to attend in the morning of absence
- provide notes or medical evidence to explain absences
- avoid taking their child out of school for shopping trips, holidays, visiting relatives or routine dentist / doctor's visits
- work with the school to ensure their child's attendance stays above the minimum target of 95%

Guidance**Inspection**

The AO will ensure that the school Admission and Attendance Registers are available for inspection by registered inspectors and by LEA officers.

Leave of Absence

Leave can be granted only by the Head on recommendation from the HoY. Parents will be expected to use the school's official leave of absence request form.

Holidays

The school does not authorise any holidays during school / term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any pupil going on holiday during term time will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Where a pupil has more than 5 days unauthorised absence in any one term parents can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN).

Short Term Leave

The school can legally grant short term leave for family reasons. It is for the Head to determine the reasonableness.

Where a pupil becomes pregnant leave will be given of no more than 18 weeks after which the absence would be unauthorised. The school will do all it can to support the pupils remaining in school as long as possible. **(See Circular 10/99 and Appendix 5 : Reasons for Absence)**

Dental and medical appointments are valid reasons for missing registration and constitute authorised absence. If the pupil leaves for an appointment after registering no absence needs to be recorded.

The school may, exceptionally, sanction limited absence for young carers until other arrangements can be made. The Head will set a time limit for such absences in consultation with the DH and Guidance Manager. The Head may also seek advice from the LA or appropriate agency before coming to a decision.

Religious Observance

There is no legislation or regulation or DfES guidance on this matter. The Head will review each application reasonably in consultation with the AHT Pastoral and / or Hoy and the parents. The school expects advance notice, since religious festivals are likely to be fixed well ahead.

Distance from School

A pupil will not have failed to attend regularly if the parent can prove that the school is not within walking distance (defined as two miles for children under 8 and three miles for children over 8), in each case measured by the nearest available route, and where the LA has not made suitable arrangements for:

- transport
- boarding
- changing to another school nearer to the home

Where there are such occurrences the Head will consult with the LA, and the Chair of Governors as appropriate.

Taking a Pupils off the Register

Only the Head may authorise the taking of a pupil's name off the register in accordance with the current Regulations

Monitoring and Review

The Head will review the working of the policy with the AHT Pastoral and Leadership Group and make at least annual reports to the governing body.

Appendix 1 : Ongoing Processes

Categories referred to below are identified, derived and amended every 8 weeks as a result of the Pastoral Data Packs. The HoY / AHT meet with HT every 8 weeks to assess this information and to review progress.

Key People: Form tutors, Year mentors, Heads of Year, EWO, AO, HT

- Category 1: 90-100% Form tutor. Head of Year intervenes if pupils show significant % reduction in a term.
- Category 2: 86-89% Head of Year.
- Category 3: 80-85% Year mentor. Attendance panels called by HoY and Year mentor in consultation. Leadership representative, parent(s), pupil, HoY, Year mentor and EWO to attend when possible.
- Category 4: Below 80% - EWO.
- AHT meet with Heads of Year to discuss interventions.
- AHT assigned for additional support if necessary.

Key Tasks:

- Heads of Year and Year mentors will work intensively to intervene with pupils in these categories, but they also have overall responsibility for the attendance in their year group. Consequently, there will be close collaboration between all parties.
- Heads of Year are responsible for ensuring and monitoring that Form tutors are addressing attendance thoroughly.
- Letter system will continue to follow flow charts and trigger points. These will commence after the first 5 weeks of the first half term.
- Attendance panels will be convened at the discretion of each Head of Year for pupils who hit the 85% trigger (depending on individual circumstances). A standard letter will be triggered by the Head of Year and sent by the Year mentor. The point of the meeting is to prevent deterioration and prosecution and work with families. Head of Year and Year mentor can book the Conference room / strategy room depending on numbers and inform all people involved. At this meeting a 'contract' of attendance could be drawn up, outlining what the parent, pupil and school will do to improve attendance. This could be signed by all parties and copies given to parent / pupil.
- AO will produce weekly data for key people (same as currently done: Form tables and graphs for display to promote competition.)
- Alongside interims, AO will produce SIMS information as requested by key people previously named. Each person can then mentor more holistically using academic and attendance data.
- Category 1 students who show significant decline during a term should be identified by the Head of Year and Form tutor and receive intervention.
- All key people to record interventions / mentoring on SIMS.

- At the end of each half term AO to provide each Head of Year and AHT with a summative breakdown of Gender %, FSM v Non FSM %. Each Head of Year can then meet with AHT at their next LM meeting to talk through the data and the interventions for their year group.
- Weekly Head of Year / Form tutors meeting should address attendance / punctuality concerns.

Appendix 2 : Authorised Absence Flow Chart

Appendix 3 : Unauthorised Absence Flow Chart

Appendix 4 : FPN Procedure Flow Chart

Appendix 5 : Parental Prosecution Flow Chart

Appendix 6 : ESO Flow Chart