



Attendance Policy

Policy reviewed: *Summer 2020*
Policy valid until: *Summer 2021*
Policy owned by: *The Headteacher*

Headteacher: _____

For and on behalf of the Governing Body: _____

Policy status

Recommended/Optional with Annual Review

Consultation

This policy was established and reviewed by the all school staff in consultation with the Governing Body.

Purpose

- To raise standards in our school is a key priority of our school - standards of attainment, behaviour, personal and social skills and attendance.
- So that our pupils realise their full potential, regular and punctual attendance is vital.
- Pupils with low attendance under-perform - if a child is not in school on a regular basis, they will have 'gaps' in their knowledge.
- Governors and staff recognise that our school should strive to achieve as close to the 100% figure as is practicable given the co-operation of all parties involved - pupils, parents, staff and ESWs.

Roles and responsibilities of Curriculum Leader/Headteacher

- Consider applications for holidays within term time, in liaison with the Chair of the Governing Body
 - Each request will be considered on an individual basis and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, following the scrutiny of the pupil's attendance (minimum of 94% required)
 - No holidays will be authorised in September so as to protect "transition time"
 - No holidays will be authorised during National Testing periods (usually May)
 - 4 weeks notice of request for holidays must be given
 - Up to a maximum of 10 days will be granted in an academic year
- Ensure registers are completed correctly by teaching staff
- Monitor any attendance that falls below 94%
- Analyse data produced using SIMS on a half-termly basis
- Present attendance information to governors for consideration at meetings of the Governing Body
- Administer letters home advising parents of any difficulties regarding lateness or unauthorised absences
- Meet regularly with the ESW to flag up and discuss any pupil attendance problems
- Make requests, if need be, for Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) to be issued by Conwy Local Authority in the case of continued poor attendance or punctuality
- Liaise with and offer support to families and parents experiencing difficulties getting their children to school
- Refer families and parents on to external agencies who can help with their child's attendance
- Liaise with feeder infants school and secondary school to encourage and maintain good attendance and punctuality
- Emphasise and make high profile the importance of being in school so as not to miss important work and activities
- Reward good attendance across the school, through the use of praise, attendance medals and rewards

Roles and responsibilities of Classteachers

- Register their class using the SIMS system at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions
- Close their register at 9:25am and 1:05pm respectively
- Use the appropriate codes for recording absences (see Appendix A)
- Record the times of arrival and reasons for lateness
- Notify the school office of any absent children by 9:25am using Class Absences book
- Keep letters giving explanations for absence (these should be dated by the classteacher)
- Discuss specific pupil attendance concerns at parent - teacher meetings
- Communicate attendance figures to parents through annual reports to parents
- Foster a positive attitude to school and attendance amongst their class

Roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body

- Consider and analyse attendance data presented at meetings of the Governing Body
- Question the data and the interpretation of the data
- Support the Headteacher and staff in their efforts to improve punctuality and attendance at Ysgol Maes Owen
- Communicate attendance figures through the Annual General Report to Parents

Roles and responsibilities of Parents and Guardians

- Notify the school by telephone for the reason for their child's absence *that day*

- Request holiday absence using the School Holiday Request Form, available from the school office
- Hand in School Holiday Request Forms, in good time (4 weeks notice) to the school
- Provide a letter stating a reason for their child's absence on the day their child returns to school if no phone call has been made to school.
- Ensure their child arrives in school on time every day
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality

Implementation

• **Marking of Attendance Registers**

- The register must be completed daily at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Gaps should not be left for children who might be late or who are known to be arriving later in the session. The register must stand as a record of those children who were present in school at the time of marking.
- The attendance register should be completed no later than 9.25 a.m. for the morning session and 1.05 pm for the afternoon session. Those children arriving in class once the children have been settled and the register started should be considered as being late L
- Pupils arriving after 9:25, when registers have "closed" should be marked as U
- Absences should be noted in the Class Absence file which should be sent to the school office at 9:25

• **Children Arriving Late**

- Doors onto the yard close just after 8:55am, children arriving late must enter the school building through the school office
- Children will be signed in by the Office Administrator
- On arriving in class, class teachers must mark the time of the child's arrival on the register
- Where a pattern for lateness becomes apparent, the teacher should notify the Attendance Co-ordinator or Headteacher who will then be able to closer analyse the register and print out an attendance record from SIMS
- Initial action should be to encourage the child to get to class on time
- If the above action does not have the desired effect then a letter will be sent home explaining and clarifying the situation
- If the problem continues the ESW will be contacted and a request may be made for a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) to Conwy Local Authority.

• **End of the school day**

- Any pupils who need to be picked up at the end of the day by a specific person, should ensure that a "Special Arrangements for the Collection of Children" form has been filled in and handed to the school office.
- This form also outlines who is not allowed to pick up a pupil – legal documentation must be shown to the office to prove this
- Pupils will not be allowed to be picked up by anyone under the age of 14

• **Authorised and Unauthorised Absences**

- An authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance, or when an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences should be treated as unauthorised.
- Parents can not authorise absence through letters or messages etc. only schools can do this. If school staff have reason to doubt that an explanation for absence is genuine, the absence should be treated as unauthorised.
- When an absence does not fit into the criteria set or a member of staff considers the explanation to be false, the register should be marked for an unauthorised absence (shown by "O").
- When a teacher is unsure as to whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised they should consult the Headteacher or Attendance Co-ordinator.
- Appropriate explanations should only be accepted through a letter or when a parent speaks to the class teacher directly. Whilst phone messages are important in order that we may know that an absent child is safe, we still need a written explanation. Messages relayed through other children are not acceptable.
- If, on a child's return to school, a letter is not provided, the absence will remain as unauthorised using the code letter 'N' (No reason yet provided for absence)
- Continued unauthorised absence should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher, Attendance Co-ordinator and ultimately the ESW for further action.
- Decisions to involve the ESW service in cases will be made after discussion with the class-teacher and due consideration of the surrounding circumstances e.g. levels of attendance in previous years, attitude of the parents, reasons being given for absence, etc.
- Letters/forms giving explanations for absence should be dated and kept in teacher's attendance folders
- When a parent requests authorisation for term-time leave for their child, a School Holiday Form should be sent out for them to complete. The returned form is then given to the Headteacher for consideration with

the Chair of the Governing Body as to whether the absence will be authorised or not. Factors considered are:

- Each request will be considered on an individual basis and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, following the scrutiny of the pupil's attendance (minimum of 93% required)
- No holidays will be authorised in September so as to protect "transition time"
- No holidays will be authorised during National Testing periods (usually May)
- 4 weeks notice of request for holidays must be given
- Up to a minimum of 10 days will be granted in an academic year
- Parents will be informed by the Headteacher if their request for an authorised has been declined, the school office administrator will contact the parent if the holiday is authorised.
- The signed form is then copied and kept with a copy being sent back to the parents to inform them of the decision.
- During the month of May, holidays will not be authorised due to end of Key Stage assessments and National Testing

Equal Opportunities

All children and their families will be treated in the same way. The education and welfare of the child will come first in any decisions made.

Arrangements for policy monitoring and evaluation

- The policy will be reviewed and amended annually
- Clarification and discussion of the policy and procedures will be an agenda item for the first staff meeting of the new academic year.
- The policy will be reviewed and approved at the first meeting of the Governing Body of the academic year.