

Ysgol Penyffordd



Polisi Presenoldeb Attendance Policy

Cariad at ddysg.
A love of learning.

Raising standards and attainment in our school lies at the heart of what we are trying to achieve. In working together to enable all the children in our care to realise their full potential, regular, punctual attendance with high standards of pupil behaviour are vital.

Raising standards and tackling under-achievement is now a key priority of all schools and the link to attendance is backed up by evidence from Estyn. This evidence has shown that pupils at schools with low attendance under-perform in exams. This of course, is self-evident. If a child is not in school on a regular basis then he/she will not have been taught the full programme of study.

The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

AIMS

- To ensure the school is a safe and caring environment for children
- To ensure that children enjoy learning
- To create a culture of good attendance and punctuality
- To demonstrate to pupils, parents and staff that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school
- To maintain and improve good communication with parents in relation to regular attendance and punctuality
- To maintain a good working relationship with the Education Social Worker (IWO)

With this in mind we have set out the following procedures regarding attendance.

Marking of Registers

Ysgol Penyffordd uses an electronic registration system. Class teachers mark the children who are present during registration time each morning. Attendance registers should be completed no later than 9.05 am for the morning session (after this point a pupil will receive a late mark) and 1.05 pm for the afternoon session.

All staff should use the appropriate codes for recording absence. Rates of authorised and unauthorised absences are reported to the governors on a regular basis.

In order to ensure the health and safety of our pupils, the school secretary will contact parents on the first day of absence if no contact has been made (i.e. verbal message from an adult, note, phone call or e mail).

Late children

The school actively discourages late arrival. Pupils arriving late can often miss important information at the start of the day and disrupt the learning of the class. Parents are made aware that children feel very uncomfortable entering the classroom after everyone else is settled. If children arrive in school after the side gates are locked at 8.55am a parent must sign in using the EntrySign screen and they will be recorded in the register as late.

Where teachers are concerned about a child arriving late on a regular basis they share their concern with the head or deputy. The pattern is monitored and the teacher then head teacher will speak to parents about their concern. A late report is produced with absence reports by the secretary every half term and monitored by the head teacher to look for patterns of persistent lateness. If this lateness persists, the school may refer the case to the IWO (Inclusion Welfare Officer).

Authorised and unauthorised absence.

The law requires that pupils attend school regularly. When a pupil is absent, the register must indicate whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance or whether an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences should be treated as unauthorised.

At Ysgol Penyffordd we define unauthorised absence as instances when no explanation is offered for a child's absence (see p.39, N.A.W. Circular 3/99):

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil... to be away or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences must be treated as unauthorised.

Parents may 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 a teacher is unsure as to whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised they should consult the head teacher.

Appropriate explanations for absence should only be accepted through a letter, phone call, email or conversation with a guardian/parent. Messages relayed through other children are not acceptable.

If an explanation has not been forthcoming a week after the absence, a letter will go home requesting an explanation.

Continued unauthorised absence should be brought to the attention of the headteacher and ultimately the I.W.O. for further action.

Holidays in Term Time

In term time parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils for holidays. Each request for a holiday absence is considered individually.

Whilst we do not condone taking a child on holiday during term time (especially if the absence is in excess of 10 school days per year), there is no legal redress and in such cases it is school policy for discussion to take place between class teachers and parents in order to set work to be completed during the period of absence (as appropriate to the age of the child).

Excluded Pupils

Where a pupil has been temporarily excluded he or she remains on the school roll. This is treated as an authorised absence. If a pupil is excluded permanently his/her absence is treated as authorised until after review. Once the exclusion is confirmed he or she is taken off the school roll.

Monitoring of attendance

The first step in monitoring attendance should be the class teachers, who are best placed to monitor lateness or recognise patterns of absence for individuals. Our Pastoral Support teacher monitors absence weekly and identifies anyone falling below 90% and will alert the Headteacher. Following this, we specifically track children below 85% and put action into place. Parents are spoken to and a letter will be sent to them. Safeguarding will be considered in every individual case.

Communication

In order for us to maintain and improve our attendance figures, it is vital that we have the full co-operation of pupils and parents.

We will communicate the overall (yearly) attendance figures through the prospectus and the Annual Governors' Report to Parents. For individual children, attendance rates will be recorded on pupils' annual reports. Appropriate holiday forms requesting a child's absence from school can be obtained from the school secretary.

Awareness of attendance issues may also be raised through:

- Weekly meeting with Pastoral Support Assistant.
-
- Discussion of specific pupil attendance at parent/teacher meetings.
- Presentation of certificates half termly showing good attendance.
- Letters home advising parents of any difficulties regarding lateness or unauthorised absences.

Signed by chair of governors on behalf of the governing body:

Date approved: _____
(by full governing body)

Date of review: _____