

# ATTENDANCE POLICY YSGOL GYFUN GŴYR

## **Preface**

Ensuring pupil attendance is a priority in our school. Consistent attendance is a must if our pupils are to reach their full potential. Inconsistent attendance undermines the educational process, limits the opportunities available to pupils, and promotes anti-social attitudes and behaviour. Our aim, therefore, is to form a close partnership between parents and the school.

The school has set an **attendance target of 95%**. Pupils are regularly reminded of this target and encouraged as individuals to aim to achieve this target

## **Requests from parents for term-time absence for holidays**

The local authority fully supports the national campaign to increase school attendance, recognising the essential link between attendance and achievement. From attendance data to date, it is already obvious that the strategy, which involves encouraging parents not to take holidays during term-time, has led to a substantial improvement in school attendance throughout the City and County of Swansea.

Therefore, the local authority intends to continue with this strategy as part of its campaign to increase school attendance. Although requests are considered on an individual basis, the headteacher will not permit absence for holidays during the school term, except in outstanding circumstances. As a result, term-time absences for holidays will be recoded as unauthorised absence.

## **Consortium Letter to parents - Holidays/Absence during term time**

*Dear Parent/Guardian*

*Holidays/Absence during Term Time*

*This letter is going out to all our parents to provide information about a change in policy in relation to holidays in term time.*

*In Wales we want all of our pupils to achieve success, so it is important that parents do their best to support pupils in attending school for the full 190 days in an academic year, as stated in the Education (School Day and School Year) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006.*

*Under the Education Act (1996), it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that their son/daughter attends school.*

*Regular school attendance is vital and missing school can have a significant impact on achievement over the school year, as outlined below.*

Attendance 95-100%	The best chance of success	Your child is taking full advantage of all learning opportunities.
Attendance 90-95%	Absent for at least 2 weeks of learning	Satisfactory. Your child may need to spend time copying up.
Attendance 85-90%	Absent for at least 4 weeks of learning	Your child could be at risk of underachieving and needs additional support from you to copy up.
Attendance 80-85%	Absent for at least 5 ½ weeks of learning	Your child's poor attendance has a significant effect on learning.
Attendance below 80%	Absent for at least 7 ½ weeks of learning	Your child is missing out on a wide and balanced education. You are at risk of prosecution.

*To support our drive to increase pupil attendance a decision has been taken by our Regional Education Consortium, that no absences due to holidays during term times will be authorised by Headteachers. This means absences due to pupils being taken on holiday during term time will be recorded as unauthorised unless the Headteacher has permitted the absence.*

*We hope that you can support this aim and arrange your holidays around the existing 175 days the schools are closed through weekends and school holidays and help us support your child in achieving success in school.*

**The school's statement on penalty notices is included in its attendance policies**

Welsh Government Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013 state that it is a legal requirement for local authorities (LAs) to conform to the Education Act 1996, Section 444, to include penalty notices as one of the interventions for promoting better school attendance.

According to the provisions set out in Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996, a penalty notice can be issued for specific cases of unauthorised absence. A penalty notice is a fine of up to £120 and it can be issued to a parent/carer as a result of a child being regularly absent from school/educational provision.

The school follows the code of conduct for penalty notices issued agreed by your local authority. As such, the school can ask the local authority to issue a penalty notice in specific cases

## **REGISTRATION ARRANGEMENTS - SUMMARY OF GUIDELINES**

We officially register pupils twice a day, and follow the arrangements set out below:

**Morning Session:** 8.40 – 9.00

**Afternoon Session:** (during lesson 5) 1.30 - 2.20

We ask all involved to be especially careful when taking the register in order to ensure that the information is accurate on the computer. On no account shall the process of taking the school's official register be delegated to a pupil.

A computer system is used to register the attendance of pupils, during the morning's registration session and in all lessons. All teachers will receive training on how to access the computer programme. The register is taken on the classroom computer . Should a problem arise with the computer system, there will be a paper register available from the Registry Office or information can be e mailed to the attendance officer.

**ALL** pupils must be registered either **present** or **absent** on the computer.

Please remember to 'send' the register back electronically and to do so promptly.

### **Morning registration**

#### **THE MORNING REGISTER MUST BE TAKEN PROMPTLY.**

- Registration should take place before 9.00am

### **Afternoon registration**

#### **THE LESSON 5 REGISTER MUST BE TAKEN PROMPTLY**

- This should be done before 1.40pm

### **Registration during lessons**

All teachers are also expected to register pupils in all lessons, and to do so as soon as possible at the beginning of the lesson.

## **MONITORING ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE**

Monitoring pupil attendance is an essential part of the wider pastoral regime that exists within this school. Regular absence has a detrimental effect on the development of the individual as a whole person as well as on the individual's academic work. As we have proved time and time again during the past years, a pattern of absences is one of the first signs of a child feeling unhappy in anyway, either about schoolwork or external issues. Quite often, this is an individual's way of drawing attention to the fact that he/she has a problem.

It is therefore essential that we are alert to those signs and messages and keep a close eye on absence patterns by:

1. asking for a note from the child explaining the absence on the first day back following the absence.
2. persisting in asking a pupil for an explanation for an absence that has continued over several days
3. drawing the Registration Officer's attention to constant absences or any absences that are cause for concern, so that they can be acted upon.
4. to be aware of the fact that the absence patterns emerging with some pupils mean that they do not spend a full week for every five weeks at school - draw the Registration Officer's attention to this. The Registration Officer will regularly discuss this with the Head of Year
5. use the Welfare Officer effectively - the officer calls on a weekly basis and can therefore act quickly on any concerns. The Head of Year will liaise regularly with the Officer.

If the pupil has not responded, there will be a second level of action in seeking an explanation for the absence. The Registration Office will contact the home after 4 days if no explanation has been provided for the absence.

## **TAKING CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL TO REPRESENT THE SCHOOL/ON AN EXCURSION etc.**

Anyone taking pupils out of school during a normal school day is required to provide a list via e-mail as well as providing information through EVOLVE. This procedure also minimises the time spent by the Form Tutor seeking an explanation for periods of absence. You will also need to contact the refectory to advise them when groups of children are away from school premises during lunchtime.

## **CLEARING ABSENCES**

- Parents/guardians are expected to explain absences by communicating via letter or the home-school contact book, or a phone call.
- All form tutors receive training on clearing pupils' absences on the system, following explanation
- The relevant code should be used to explain an absence. If the Form Tutor is unsure of the code, he/she should contact the Head of Year for clarification.
- SIMS records the code used to identify the reason for absence.
- Any absences that remain unexplained after a week will constitute a serious issue. It will require collaboration with the Registration Officer to ensure that an explanation is given.
- A computer system is used that will contact parents automatically if they haven't provided a reason for their child's absence.

## **PUPILS WHO ARRIVE LATE**

- If a pupil arrives before morning break, he/she will be considered present
- Any pupils arriving during assembly or following the morning registration period, must register in the Attendance Officer's room. If the officer is not available, he/she should register in the Office.

- If a pupil arrives during assembly, the Officer will record that directly on the register
- If the pupil arrives after the morning registration session, the Attendance Officer will record this. Pupils sign in and out at the Attendance Officer's office. This process is essential, especially in a state of emergency

## INFORMATION ISSUED TO PUPILS

It is necessary for the pupil to provide an explanation for the absence on the **FIRST DAY** back at school. It should also be made explicit that any unexplained absence is now considered truancy.

### **Procedure for late arrival:**

- During the registration period (8.40 - 9.00) - they should go straight to the Form Tutor
- During assembly - register at reception
- After 9.00 - register with the Attendance Officer.

### **LEAVING SCHOOL PREMISES**

#### **A. Medical Appointment:**

- (i) Pupils must show their appointment cards/letters from parents, to the Form Tutor during registration period, although such appointments should be avoided as much as is reasonably possible during school hours.
- (ii) Before leaving the school, the pupil must sign out on the machine in reception.
- (iii) If pupils return to the school premises, they should re-register in reception.

#### **B. Illness/Accidents:**

Should pupils have to go home ill/because of injury during the morning session, the Attendance Officer will record the absence for the afternoon session on the register. A record is kept of any injury.

#### ***Sixth Form Students Travelling between Gŵyr and Bryn Tawe***

Having arrived at the partner school, the student must go to reception immediately in order to sign-in and must also sign-out before leaving, for health and safety reasons.

## THE PROCEDURE FOR ABSENT PUPILS

### ABSENT

### REACT

<b>4-day absence</b>	The home is expected to contact the School. If the school has not received an explanation, then the home needs to be contacted.
<b>Over a week</b>	The Attendance Officer will collaborate with the School Welfare Officer to seek an explanation
<b>Long term - (illness)</b>	The HoY will collaborate with the parents in order to re-intergrate the pupil
<b>Long term - (suspicious)</b>	School Welfare Officer will take responsibility
<b>REGULAR pattern</b>	Follow the Attendance Monitoring STEPS procedure
<b>Doctor's appointment etc.</b>	Appointment card and/or note from parents to the Form Tutor <b>(this should not require a full day's absence)</b> and to the Attendance Officer
<b>To take holidays during the term (up to 10 days in the year) apart from special circumstances</b>	Parents should contact the Headmaster before hand to request permission. A dedicated form is available from the Attendance Officer for this purpose. The information should be given to the Head of Year/Attendance Officer
<b>From a lesson when at School</b>	Contact the Office directly in order to provide the information. Office to inform the Head of Year or immediately.

## MONITORING ATTENDANCE

### Procedure

**STEP 1:** Look at the attendance of any one below the target of 95% \*\* (we need to be reasonable with short term data but must bear in mind the pattern that emerged last year). Inform the Welfare Officer that we are monitoring individuals.

**STEP 2:** Monitoring the pupil's attendance over a period of a fortnight

**STEP 3:** If there is no improvement, then the Attendance Officer is to contact the home –a warning letter is sent and figures should be discussed over the phone if this is the chosen method of contact.

**STEP 4:** If there is improvement, the pupil will return to the whole school monitoring procedure - if not - STEP 5 with a second letter.

**STEP 5:** Invite parents to the school to discuss the serious nature of the situation, and to agree on a detailed monitoring programme with the Welfare Officer

*(Reviewed: July 2023)*