



# Attendance Policy

July 2013

*Dreaming, believing, succeeding together*  
*Breuddwydio, coelio, llwyddo gyda'n gilydd*

## **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 2005 we have used electronic registers using SIMS and the information is readily available.

Ysgol y Foryd 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:-

- Advice from the DFES (Department of Education and Science)
- 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 and Behaviour and Discipline for Learning Policy. A record of attendance also features on the children's Annual Report to Parents and Interim Report (Spring Term annually).

- 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, Mrs Christina Gentleman, our

Family Liaison and Support Officer phones home (or text messages) to ascertain reason for absence.

Extended absence after the first day requires parents to contact the school to detail the reason for continued absence.

### **School Policy Authorised Absences**

- For absence other than for sickness, parents must seek the prior approval of the Headteacher. A holiday application form is available from the office.
- "Authorised absences" are defined as:-
  - Annual family holiday of no more than 10 school days duration and this permission must be sought by the parents in advance (exceptional circumstances only).
  - 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
  - Educational visit
  - Sickness
- Other than in exceptional circumstances, all other absences are "unauthorised"
- The attendance of children is to be monitored by Mrs Gentleman(FLSO) and office staff who check all registers each day and reports any problems to the Headteacher.
- The school works closely with the ESW Service and meets on a weekly basis to report any problems to them for their assistance.
- The school openly encourages an active partnership with parents and welcomes parents in to discuss any problem relating to attendance.

### **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.

Absence for a holiday of more than 10 working days will not normally be authorised. For a holiday of more than 10 days or an extended trip overseas during term time, the onus is on the parent to provide full details and to demonstrate why it is necessary to go during school time. Parents will be

encouraged to discuss proposals so that, if possible, consideration can be given to the most appropriate time of the year for the trip having regard to the stage of the pupil'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. 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. Attendance registers will be completed accurately at the start of each morning and afternoon session and show if any absence is authorised or unauthorised. Children arriving late within registration period (before 8.25am) must knock on the classroom door and parent must sign in with reason for lateness. After 8.25 am pupils should be signed in by parents through the main entrance 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 3.00pm 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. 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 and the EWO will be notified.

## **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 Welsh Government, Department for Education and Conwy County Council, on matters relating to attendance.