

Ysgol Y Foel

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2023/24

This Policy is taken from the new procedures by the Flintshire Education Authority.

Punctual and regular school attendance is an essential requirement for successful learning from the time a child starts school in nursery, right through their school career.

In total there are 175 non-school days a year. This gives families the opportunity to:

- Spend time together
- Go on family visits and days out
- Go on holiday
- Go shopping
- Attend routine medical, dental appointments

A pupil who ends the school year on 90% will have missed four complete weeks of school.

Children's attendance will be monitored throughout the year. They will be categorised as:-

- **Red** under 92% (a serious loss of learning which is likely to have detrimental effect on child's achievement and life chances)
- **Amber** 92 – 94.9% (absent from the classroom for up to three weeks and the loss of a significant amount of education)
- **Green** 95% and over

Pupils are not granted leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any such absences are at the discretion of the headteacher. If it is unavoidable to take a holiday during term time, complete the holiday request form giving reasons for why the holiday must be taken and make an appointment with the headteacher no less than 3 months before the holiday. Each application will be considered on an individual basis.

Holidays will not be authorised if:-

- child(ren)'s attendance is already in amber or red category
- holiday will fall during key settling and learning periods (e.g. September)
- preparation periods for literacy and numeracy tests (March through to mid May)
- End of stage assessments periods for Yr2 and Yr6 (Spring term through to end of May)

Taking a holiday during term time, seriously affects your child's attendance and in turn their attainment.

Poor attendance will have a serious impact on education, work ethic and life chances.

The school will not authorise:-

- Days out
- Routine medical / dental appointments that can be arranged before or after school time.

Emergency appointments or hospital appointments will be authorised.

Daily absence

Parents are asked to give the school a reason for a child's absence. This can be given in advance of an expected absence e.g. hospital appointment, or on the day of an unexpected absence e.g. illness. Parents are asked to inform school by:-

- Sending a dated letter
- Sending an email (can be done via website)
- Phoning up and leaving a message by 9.30am on the morning of the absence.

If no phone call is received then the school will phone the parent to ascertain the reason for the child's absence. This is part of our safeguarding procedure.

If the parent cannot be contacted and therefore no reason is given for absence it will be recorded as unauthorised. If that child is a child for whom the staff have concerns then the Duty Social Worker would be called.

Staff will closely monitor reasons for absence by adding comments on the SIMS register, as well as lack of communication. Staff are to inform the Head when absenteeism is regular and following a pattern e.g. regularly missing Fridays or Mondays or a specific lesson. Staff are to keep accurate records and notes of all cases of concern.

Parents will be informed termly of their child's cumulative attendance in the year so far. This will help parents to see how a few days here and there can quickly add up to a problem. Parents, if necessary, will be invited to the school to discuss any problems which may be a cause of any absenteeism. Should absenteeism prove to be a result of fear or intense dislike of certain lessons, then this aspect will be examined with a view to possible ALN investigation or referral to the agencies.

The Education Welfare Service will also be informed of situations causing concern.

Any regular absences for which no reason is given may eventually lead to action being taken against parents concerned, by the Local Education Authority.

Late Arrivals

If a child is not in school an 'n' is marked in the register until a reason can be determined.

If no reason has been determined by 9.30 the home/ carers will be contacted. The secretary will update SIMs.

If a child arrives after 9.15 the late arrival is recorded in the late book. The school secretary will amend SIMs to reflect this.

Persistent Absenteeism

A pupil becomes a persistent absentee when they miss 10% or more across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' and carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

Flintshire Education Authority sends a representative to school on a half termly basis to check pupil's attendance.

For children who fall into the amber or red categories, if there is no improvement a formal meeting will be arranged with the school to create an action plan. This may include a referral to the school nurse or the ALN services.

Education Welfare Service

Flintshire Education Welfare Service asks schools to refer any pupil whose attendance falls below 80%. The EWS will try to resolve the situation by agreement but if a variety of ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed Flintshire Local Authority may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

The Local Education Authority can issue a fixed penalty notice for a pupil who has 20 (10 school days) unauthorised absences from school. These do not have to be consecutive. If it is paid within 28 days, the fine will be £60. If paid after 28 days but within 42 days it will be £120. If it is not paid by the 43rd day legal action can result.

Full details of this new attendance procedure is available on the Flintshire LA website.

Policy updated – September 2020

