Ysgol Hen Heol/Old Road School

Attendance Policy

This policy has been written in line with the Local Authority document:

'Guidance for Schools on the Education Welfare Service – Supporting Attendance'
April 2013

Introduction

This school policy document on attendance has been produced to explain to all concerned, the rights, responsibilities and rules relating to the attendance of pupils at the school. If pupils do not attend school, they cannot be educated. Good attendance and punctuality leads to the best learning outcomes.

A whole school attendance policy is one that requires commitment from all staff employed within the school, together with governors, parents, pupils and the Local Authority.

All schools need a framework or model on which to build their individual whole school attendance policy.

Framework

It is recommended that elements of the whole school attendance policy should be incorporated into the school prospectus, staff handbook, pupils planners and regular briefings or newsletters to staff, parents and home school agreements.

Principles

The school will;

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures and receive suitable in-service training on registration regulations and education law.
- Complete registers accurately at the beginning of each morning session and afternoon session.
- Promote 'First Day Calling' to parents/carers.
- Reward good and improved attendance by individual, class and school.
- Promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after a period of absence.
- Work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We send a clear message that if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed.

As a school we:

- Encourage parents / career to sign Pupil Planners in KS2 after pupils complete their own weekly attendance
- Weekly attendance trees
- Attendance assembly every week – class of the week and overall school percentage (MAT pupils to show graph)
- Daily class attendance charts
- Termly certificates and letters

Procedures

If no contact is received from the parents/carers on the **first** morning of absence, the school will;

- School Administrative Officer to contact the parents by telephone
- School Admin Officer will continue to telephone parents every day until a reason is given
- When attendance fall below 92% please see appendix

  'Procedure for non-attendance – in line with All Wales Attendance Framework. To be implemented for all pupils less than 92%'

Practice

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by;

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately and the systems for recording pupil attendance.
- Using attendance codes consistently.
- Regularly analysing attendance data.
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance.
- Formalising early links with parents. Developing home-school agreements when appropriate.
- Liasing closely with the schools' Education Welfare Officer.
- Recording information regarding contact with parents and carers.

Registration

Keeping the registers

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately and neatly. The register may be requested in a court of law as evidence in a prosecution for non-attendance. It may also contribute data to pupils' end of term reports, records of achievement and to leavers' references.

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial if poor attendance and punctuality are to be tackled. It is vital that pupils are aware that registration is a significant part of the school day.

We adhere to the common standards and suggested codes when recording absences in the register.

Marking the registers

- We use electronic software (Teacher Centre) to record to collect attendance data.
- No pupil should be marked present unless actually in the room when the register is called or unless he/she has been given permission to be absent by the registering teacher
- Spaces must not be left in the register
- Registers close at 9.30 a.m. and 1.30 p.m.
- Where a pupil arrives late but the register is still open, the pupil should be marked as late but counted as present for that session
- Where a pupil misses registration but provides an adequate explanation, s/he should be marked as late but counted as an authorised absence for that session
- Where a pupil arrives after registration has closed and fails to provide an adequate explanation, absence must be marked as an unauthorised absence
- Our electronic package calculates total attendance and the percentage attendance is monitored closely.
- Electronic registers are readily accessible to authorised officers such as Education Welfare Officers to allow for easy checking of pupil's attendance patterns.
- We keep a daily list of pupils absent from that class for use in an emergency, i.e. a fire drill.

Strategies for promoting good attendance

- Early intervention. Intervention works best when pupils are young enough to respect people and processes and wish to improve
- The schools commitment to achieving high levels of attendance should be explicit and clear to the pupils, staff and parents
- Parents are to be constantly reminded of the importance and value of good attendance and punctuality.
- We operate an open door policy when it comes to dealing with pupils who are unhappy. If the child feels that they are falling behind or having difficulty with aspects of their work, or unhappy with their relationship with peers, we would encourage that they speak to staff. Their teacher will try to resolve any issue as swiftly as possible.
- Attendance statistics and individual lesson attendance statistics will be collected and used to inform pastoral and curriculum practices and identify patterns of absence and problem areas
- Focus on attendance issues with awards, activities and parental involvement
- Identify pupils at risk of poor attendance before they transfer to another class, group or school and devise ways of supporting them, through the Education

Welfare Service and by accessing the Teams Around the family or Family Information Service.

- Recognition of problems at an early stage with suitable referral to avoid exclusion and recognise the unacceptability of 'voluntary withdrawals' where pressure is placed on the parent to remove their child from school to avoid exclusion.
- Parents will be kept regularly and fully informed of all concerns around attendance and punctuality
- School to maintain links with the Professional Officer, Pupil Support Services to report any difficulties implementing the School Attendance Policy
- There is a designated governor who has responsibility for attendance

Rewards in recognition of improved attendance

- Weekly Assembly – MAT pupils analyse graph and explain trend. Classes are placed 89% and under on the cloud, 90-94% on the rainbow and 95% on the sun. The winning class receive a reward.
- Sending letters to parents/carers and 100% certificates for pupils with special praise both for those with 100% attendance and for those with no avoidable absences
- Sending children to senior members of staff for commendation for efforts made towards improvement as well as for full attendance
- Parents of pupils whose attendance is a cause for congratulation will be written to by the Headteacher at the end of every half term
- The school will award rewards every half term to all pupils whose attendance/punctuality is either excellent or much improved.