

Ysgol I D Hooson **Attendance Policy.**

Introduction:

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and additional learning needs. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. Ysgol I D Hooson takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of its pupils. We acknowledge that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes a child's ability to develop friendship groups within the school.

School starts at 8.55 a.m., finishing at 3.15 p.m. Nursery start at 8.55 a.m. and finish at 11.30 a.m. The afternoon nursery class starts at 12.45 p.m., finishing at 3.15 p.m.'

The free breakfast club is available for nursery – year 6 pupils from 8 o'clock each day. If a child arrives at school between 8.00 and 8.30 a.m. he/she is expected to go the breakfast club. A member of staff will be on the school yard from 8.45a.m until the bell rings at 8.55a.m .

As a school we aim to:

- maintain an attendance rate of a minimum of 95%
- maintain levels of attendance by promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued
- raise awareness of the importance of good attendance
- ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently

Good attendance is important because

- statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- regular attendees make better progress, both socially and academically
- regular attendees find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- regular attendees find learning more satisfying
- regular attendees have an easier transfer to secondary school

What is expected of the pupils:

- to respect themselves and others
- to do all they can to attend school regularly and on time
- to inform a trusted adult if they feel they are being bullied
- to encourage friendship and a sense of belonging
- to be happy and encourage others to feel happy

As parents/guardians we expect you to:

- ring school on the first morning of absence with the reason and when the child can be expected to return
- if possible, arrange dental / medical appointments out of school hours or during school breaks. Should this not be possible, then please inform us beforehand or on the day by phone, otherwise your child will be marked as absent.
- keep school updated by telephone, e mail or letter when a child has an extended period of absence due to illness
- ensure your child arrives in school on time, properly dressed, with the correct equipment and in a condition to learn. A reason should be offered for any lateness. If a child arrives late on a regular basis without a reasonable explanation, this will be recorded as unauthorized absence.
- To work closely with the school and Education Social Worker (ESW) to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance

Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. They have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly.

As a school we will:

- Follow up unexplained absences by phone calls and letters as soon as possible
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in the Home School Agreement and in regular correspondence
- Publish our attendance rate in the Governing Body's annual report to parents
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance
- Publish a child's attendance rate on their annual report
- Let parents know of concerns regarding a child's absence
- If concerns persist, make a referral to the ESW

The Local Authority has a responsibility:

- to provide and promote regular attendance of all statutory school age children
- to support the school and parents to fulfill their legal duty through the Education Social Work service.

The Educational Social Work service is the Local Authority's enforcement agency and as well as providing guidance and support through its officers, may also take a parents to court for not fulfilling their duty under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act. The court may fine the parent and put in place a School Attendance Order (SAO) an Education Supervision Order (ESO) or a Parenting Order.

Authorized Absence.

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as 'authorized absences.'

For example:

- The child is ill or is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause
- The child is absent on days exclusively set apart for religious observance in their particular faith
- The child is absent 'with leave.' This refers to leave being granted by the school, not by the parent, and would normally relate to no more than 10 school days in any one academic year.

We realize that there are rare occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we will try to deal with the situation sympathetically.

Unauthorized Absence.

There are times when children are absent from school for reasons, which are not permitted by law. These are known as 'unauthorized absences.'

Examples of unauthorized absences are:

- going shopping
- going for a family day out
- because it is your child's birthday
- sleeping in after a late night
- unapproved holidays
- where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory
- Unauthorized absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service may contact you to consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorized absences.

The Local Authority will have powers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices of £60 for unauthorized absence from school. These Fixed Penalty Notices could be issued to

address persistent unauthorized absences from school which have a negative impact on a child's attendance rates.

Punctuality

- The bell sounds at 8.55 in the morning and is followed by registration. Your child should be in school by this time.
- It's very important to be on time as the first few minutes of the day are often used to give out instructions or organize work for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and can often be embarrassing for your child. We take the view that there are no late children, only late parents.
- We will let you know if we have any concerns about your child's punctuality.

Term time leave of absence.

Parents should not normally take children on holiday during term time, although schools are entitled to exercise their discretion when granting parental requests. However each request should be considered individually taking into account the age of the child, previous attendance patterns, parental views and the educational progress of the child. If a request is not granted and the parent takes the child on holiday, the absence will not be authorized. If a request is granted the absence should not normally be for more than five days in any school year. If the absence goes on for longer than agreed, the extra day's absence will be unauthorized.

It is our policy that parents should:

- apply for leave of absence for term time holidays through a letter to the headteacher well in advance and before booking (the Head Teacher will consider the application and advise the parents of the decision)
- try to minimize time out of school by timing holidays at either end of a school break
- avoid taking a holiday in September, as it is unsettling for a child to miss the start of the school year
- remember that the more time your child is missing from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A thorough understanding of the work can only take place when the child is in the classroom.

School procedures for recording and monitoring attendance

Recording

The class teachers take the register at 9.00 am. Reasons for absence will be kept and if offered verbally by parents they will be recorded by staff. A reason for a period of absence should always be offered.

Monitoring

The Head Teacher will review the attendance of all pupils on a termly basis. Pupils identified as having attendance of below 95% will be contacted and offered support to resolve any issues which may be impeding a child from attending. When the classteacher is concerned about a child's attendance or punctuality, they will inform Miss Manon Davies(FPh) or Mr Sion Owen (KS2). They will follow procedures by informing parents of the school's concerns, and may invite the parents/carer to a meeting in school. The headteacher will be informed when there are further concerns.

The pupil's attendance will be closely monitored and if over the next half term there is no improvement, the parents of the child will be invited to a meeting with the Head Teacher to discuss the issue and hopefully resolve any issue preventing the child from attending. If the parents do not attend the meeting without adequate explanation, a referral to the ESW will be made.

Encouraging attendance through good practice and awards.

Attendance will be encouraged in the following ways

- A certificate for above 95% and for 100% attendance in any given term to be awarded
- A special award for 100% attendance throughout the year
- Awards to be presented during whole school assembly
- Identifying attendance issues at transfer from KS2 to KS3 and sharing information with receiving school
- Display attendance rates for each class.

Monitoring

When attendance rates fall below 95%:

1. School attendance officers will inform parents of the school's concern by issuing letter 1.
2. If there is no improvement in the attendance/punctuality, parents/carers receive letter 2.
3. If the school is still concerned and there is still no improvement, letter 3 is issued to parents inviting them to a meeting in school.
4. If attendance continues to be a concern and there is still no improvement, then parents/career will receive letter 4 informing them that fixed penalty is being considered and further discussions and meetings will be held involving the ESW.

Signed _____ Chair of Governing Body

Date _____ Review date _____