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'Every child, every chance, every day'
'Pob plentyn, pob cyfle, pob dydd'

ATTENDANCE POLICY

ADOPTED BY GOVERNING BODY
ON March 2017

Policy Number	Date Reviewed	Date of Next Review
YBGP32	March 2017	March 2020

1. AIMS

Poor attendance disadvantages children. We aim to ensure that the children in our school attend regularly and on time, and where this is not the case, staff follow a staged procedure designed to encourage consistent attendance.

The performance indicator by which we judge the success of our efforts is set each year by our average attendance figure. In the last academic year (2015/2016) our average attendance was 95.9%. We are seeking this year to improve this figure.

While 100% attendance is clearly the ideal, in many cases legitimate illness or other factors can prevent it. On the other hand, attendance, which falls below 90%, where a child is known to be in reasonable health and there are no other extenuating circumstances, is poor and should give cause for concern. In order to ascertain the levels of individual children's attendance, we aim to ensure that a complete register check is undertaken every week, and where there is cause for concern, appropriate action shall be taken.

If no improvement is evident the Inclusion Welfare Officer (I.W.O.) will meet up with parents and Headteacher to come to agreed targets for the individual.

We also aim to publish our overall average attendance, and our figures for unauthorised attendance by year group, in the Governors Annual Report to parents. In addition, we are obliged to make our attendance figures known to legitimate agencies (e.g. the DFES and the LA) by completing appropriate returns. A trophy is given weekly to the class with the best attendance. At the end of every half term the Headteacher sends out a Red Amber or Green letter of attendance. We aim to ensure that SIMS registers, on which these returns depend are kept accurately, and that the criteria by which we judge absences as authorised or not are common and known to all class teachers.

2. SIMS REGISTERS

As a legal procedure, registers are kept electronically at all times. Teachers are required to complete the register at the beginning of each session every day. Any child arriving 30 minutes after close of registration is deemed late.

Where there is an absence, teachers are required to enter the appropriate explanatory symbol on the electronic system. The paper copy is retained in the event of registration during fire drills. A sickness / medical appointment will only be authorised if the teacher has received a message from a parent/guardian or sibling. Any notes received from parents are kept. If no explanation for absence is received by 9.30, the secretary will contact the parent for a reason. Parents can inform the school of any absence by telephone or email.

Teachers are asked to use their professional judgment in deciding whether or not to authorise an absence and if clarification of absence cannot be ascertained, then the teacher should seek advice from the Headteacher. Clearly, where there is a definite pattern of nonattendance or where the explanation for absence is unsatisfactory (e.g. going to the airport, buying shoes), absence may not be authorised even with a message from a parent. Conversely, a teacher may authorise an absence without a message if he/she feels that the explanation given is genuine and that the child concerned has normally good attendance. In any event, teachers are asked to actively seek an explanation for every absence and keep a note of the response.

3. PROCEDURES

Class teachers have initial responsibility for expecting good attendance and punctuality from the children in their care. Teachers are expected to find out and record absences, as outlined above. Where they are receiving no response from parents, teachers should talk to them personally. Should concerns persist, teachers should talk to the Headteacher. Poor attendance will be monitored by the Headteacher. Teachers need to follow the guidance above.

If attendance remains poor, the matter will be discussed with the IWO. The IWO will monitor attendance on a termly basis, and discuss all attendance with the secretary and Headteacher.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The class teacher is initially responsible for encouraging good attendance, seeking out reasons for absence, keeping the register correctly, and referring children for whom concerns exist.

The secretary has oversight for whole school attendance, and is responsible for checking that the registers are accurate. The secretary also liaises with IWO. Also the secretary keeps the Headteacher briefed about attendance issues, for completing statistical returns for legitimate agencies as and when they are required, and for keeping records of concerns. The school's IWO is responsible for dealing with statutory referrals.

5. AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED LEAVES OF ABSENCE

The Headteacher in agreement with the Governing Body and the All Wales Attendance Framework (2011) can authorise up to 10 days leave of absence at any one hit during the academic year. The new form (2014) 'Application for pupil leave of absence from school for parental holiday' is submitted to the Headteacher for approval and the following points are taken into consideration before authorising leave.

1. The child's previous attendance history
2. The age of the child(ren)
3. The child's stage of education
4. The time of year
5. The nature of the trip (an exceptional experience)
6. Holiday already taken/granted within current academic year
7. Where the parents are restricted in terms of leave from their employer

As yet no fines are issued to parents in Wales. No absences for shopping, birthdays, haircuts or similar reasons will be authorised.

6. REWARDS FOR GOOD ATTENDANCE FROM (Further to the above)

The Governing Body have decided on the following rewards for good attendance:

Termly individual awards: -

Bronze certificate 94 - 95.99%

Silver 96 - 97.99%

Gold 98 - 100%

The aim for the school is to achieve 96% overall attendance for every academic year to ensure that we are in the higher 25% quartile when compared to other schools in our family and the LA.