



Attendance Policy Ysgol Bro Eirwg

The School's Vision

Our aim is to create a happy and safe environment, which is continually developmental within an enjoyable, bubbly Welsh ethos in which every member of the school community can grow in self-respect and develop their potential as citizens. We are intent on raising standards and on offering the highest quality of provision within an effective and efficient establishment.

Introduction

Attendance at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Eirwg is generally good, but procedures need constant monitoring in order to ensure an improvement in attendance figures across the school.

Every child of compulsory school age has a right to effective full time education no matter what age, talents, abilities or special needs they may have. Regular attendance at school is vital for a child to benefit fully from the educational opportunities afforded to him or her. Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Eirwg takes seriously it's responsibility to encourage good attendance and monitor all attendance trends on behalf of our pupils. The school recognises that irregular attendance impacts on continuous education, undermines academic improvement, can lead to underachievement and low attainment, and can have a detrimental effect on the child's ability to establish friendship groups within the school.

This policy has a relevance to every pupil, no matter what age, on the school register.

As a school we aim to:

- Maintain an attendance level of 95%
- Maintain attendance levels by creating a positive and welcoming environment, in which our pupils can feel safe and appreciated.
- Reinforce the importance of good attendance to pupil and family.

- Ensure attendance is monitored consistently, and that reasons for absence are noted correctly..

Regular Attendance is important because:

- Every school day is important.
- Research has shown a link between low achievement and poor attendance.
- Pupils who attend regularly demonstrate greater achievement both socially and academically.
- Pupils who attend regularly are better able to adapt to school work, and to school life.
- Pupils who attend regularly achieve greater satisfaction in learning.
- Pupils who attend regularly find the transition to secondary education less stressful.

Expectations

What are our expectations of our pupils:

- To respect themselves and others.
- Make the greatest effort possible to attend school regularly, and to arrive punctually.
- Inform adults they trust about any cases of bullying or abuse.
- Encourage friendship and a sense of community
- To be happy, and to help others to feel content.

As parents we expect you to:

- Phone the school on the first morning of any absence to explain the absence, and to inform us when your child will return to school.
- Whenever possible arrange doctor and dentist appointments outside of school hours, or during school holidays.
- Update us by phone or letter if your child is away from school due to an extended period of sickness.

- Ensure your child arrives in school on time, dressed appropriately, with the correct equipment and in the right mindset to learn. If you are late we expect an explanation.
- To co-operate with the school, the Attendance Officer and the Educational Welfare Office to deal with any problems that could affect your child's school attendance.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually. Parents are required by law to make sure that their children attend school regularly.

As a school, we will:

- Make enquiries regarding absence by phone, text message or by letter as soon as possible.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular and punctual attendance via the newsletter, school prospectus and home-school contract.
- Publish our annual attendance figures in the school handbook, and in the Annual Report of the Governing Body.
- Acknowledge, and reward, high attendance
- Inform you of your child's annual attendance in the end of year school report.
- Make you aware of any concerns we have about your child's attendance.
- If we are still concerned we will refer the matter to the Attendance Officer who visits the school regularly to review and support attendance levels in the school.
- Conform to The Welsh Assembly Governments instruction to report attendance figures for monitoring purposes.

There is a responsibility on the Local Education Authority (LEA) to:

- To provide educational opportunities, and encourage high attendance for all statutory school age pupils.
- To support the school and parents, so as to allow them to meet their statutory duties, through the Educational Welfare Service (EWS).

The EWS is a branch of the LEA, which in addition to offering support and advice through its officers, can take parents to court for failing their duties under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act. The court can fine parents, and/or make a School Attendance Order, an Education Supervision Order or a Parenting Order.

Absences

Authorised Absences

Some absences are allowed by law. These are known as 'Authorised Absences', for example:

- Your child is ill or can not attend for reasons beyond your control.
- Your child is absent for reasons of belief on authorised religious holidays.
- If your child is absent for a considerable amount of time due to long term sickness, or frequently absent due to recurring illness, the parent should provide written confirmation from the doctor or specialist so that the EWS can ask the LEA to provide a home tutor.
- Your child is sitting an external examination
- Your child is competing in a national competition.

Unauthorised Absences

There are occasions when a child may be absent from school for reasons **not** authorised by law. These are known as unauthorised absences. Examples of unauthorised absences include;:

- Family Holidays
- Waiting for a parcel
- Shopping or having a haircut
- Family outing
- Child's birthday
- Sleeping late

- Where no explanation is offered, or the explanation deemed unacceptable.
- Regular or numerous unauthorised absences must be reported to the LEA. In such cases the family may be contacted by the EWS.

Punctuality

- Morning registration takes place at 09:00. Your child must be in class at this time
- It is important to be punctual, as often the first minutes of the day are used to give instructions or to arrange the day ahead.
- If your child misses this short but vital session it can have an affect on the whole school day. Children who arrive late disrupt the whole class, and often feel embarrassed. We are of the opinion that no child is late for school, parents are late bringing them to school.
- Any child arriving after 09:30 can be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- We will inform you promptly of any concerns regarding your child's punctuality
- Children who have not been collected at the end of the school day will be kept in a safe place until collected.

Absence due to Family Holidays during term

The LEA considers **all** family holidays during term to be unauthorised absences.

Hierarchy of sanctions

Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Eirwg is a caring school and always seeks to resolve matters of poor attendance through effective partnership working with parents. On the rare occasion that the school is unable to elicit in parents the support deemed necessary to encourage pupils to attend school, sanctions may be used. Parents may receive letters which:

- Request reasons for their child's absence;

- Request medical evidence for their child's absence;
- Express concern about their child's absence and offer advice and support;
- Advise them about their child's lateness and ask for their help in getting their child to school on time;
- Advise them that the school has taken the decision not to authorise an absence;
- Advise them that an Attendance Officer intends to visit their home;
- Advise them of their legal responsibilities to ensure their child attends school regularly;
- Advise them that they are at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice;
- Advise them that a referral has been made to the Educational Welfare Service:

Fixed Penalty Notice

In some circumstances, the school may request that the Educational Welfare Service issue parents/carers with a Fixed Penalty Notice under The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013.

A warning letter will first be sent if:

- There have been 10 unauthorised sessions within one school term;
- A child has been late (after registration has closed) on 10 occasions within one school term;
- Parents/carers have failed to engage in attempts to improve attendance;
- The police have regularly found a pupil to be absent from school without an acceptable reason.

A Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued if:

- There is one further unauthorised absence within 15 school days of a warning letter having been issued;
- An unauthorised holiday is taken during term time (*note that no warning letter will be received*).

When the school feels that, despite its best efforts to support the family, attendance is not improving, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service. A referral might be made when, for example:

- A pattern of irregular attendance has developed;
- A period of entrenched non-attendance has become established;
- There is a lack of parental cooperation in ensuring a child's regular attendance; or
- A pattern of truancy is persisting.

Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Eirwg will liaise with the Education Welfare Service to provide the evidence required to prosecute parents who fail, without reasonable justification, to cause their child to attend school regularly, under sections 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

School Procedures for Recording and Monitoring Attendance

Recording

The class teacher will call the register, recording those present or absent at **9.00am**. Any pupils arriving late must enter the school via the main entrance..

The register is normally closed at **9.30 a.m.**, and any pupil arriving after this time will be recorded as absent for that session. A reason must be provided for all absences, and the school will record the absence as authorised or unauthorised according to LEA guidelines.

Registers are called at the beginning of the afternoon session (**1.00 p.m. – 1.30 p.m.**)

A reason is required for all absences. The school will be in contact with parents who have not furnished a reason for absence, and if after 3 weeks no acceptable reason has been forthcoming the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Monitoring

The Senior Management Team (SMT) of the school will monitor the attendance of all pupils each term, while pupils with a level of attendance below 85%, or whose attendance is causing concern, will be monitored more often. Parents whose children's attendance has become a cause for concern will be contacted in writing by the school. This letter will outline the school's concerns and offer support in solving any problems which may be keeping the child away from school.

Encouraging High Levels of Attendance

High attendance can be encouraged in the following ways:

- Prompt calling of the register, and registration process to be completed within 30 minutes of commencement of school day.
- Reviewing attendance regularly.
- Awarding a certificate for 100% attendance during term;
- A Gold award for 100% attendance during the school year, and a Silver award for 98% attendance over the same period.
- Recognise and offer support to pupils with known attendance difficulties before the KS2 to KS3 transition. This should include sharing appropriate information with the Secondary School of choice.
- Offer a comprehensive breakdown individual attendance in the annual report to parents.
- Effective use of the electronic registration system can provide vital attendance information for year groups, classes and individuals, which allows swift analysis and response by the school.

Date of approval

Date of review

Co-ordinator

Headteacher

Chair of Governors
