

Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe

Article 28 - Children and young people have the **right to education** no matter who they are.

Attendance Policy

Main principles

"If education is to be effective, regular attendance is a prerequisite, and ensuring this must be a priority for everyone in the school" (school attendance - The Education and Science Department, 1989)

Attendance is a statutory necessity for our pupils until they reach 16 years of age. Also, it's a necessity for earning a successful school career. Regular intermittent absences and/or absences for more extended periods are harmful to our pupils' education. Everyone involved in our pupils' education must work in partnership to ensure a high attendance amongst the pupils at Bryn Tawe.

Aims

Raising and maintaining attendance levels continues to be a priority in Bryn Tawe in order to provide the best opportunity for all pupils to reach their potential. There are several aspects of our daily work that have a positive effect on raising attendance:

- Implementing and monitoring clear registration systems
- Promoting and rewarding good attendance
- Monitoring and acting on low attendance - with a graduated response depending on the level of absence
- Expectations and support for parents

Implementing and monitoring clear registration systems

All members of staff who have a registration responsibility are aware of our processes with regards to ensuring that every pupil and student is registered present in order to meet Health and Safety requirements, as well as to ensure that we are able to monitor attendance correctly.

The attendance officer is responsible for the daily monitoring of every member of staff by ensuring they are fulfilling their registration duties for the morning and afternoon sessions. This is done centrally by 9:30 and 13:45.

Promoting and rewarding good attendance

In line with our rewarding policy, we often use prizes as a way of motivating pupils to be proud of their attendance in the school. For example:

- Stickers of praise for good attendance are given every half term to pupils who

- achieve 95% or higher.
- Pupils who are present for 100% of the time during the Christmas term receive a certificate of praise for their efforts.
 - Similarly, pupils who are present 100% of the time receive various certificates during a rewards ceremony at the end of each year: one term = bronze; two terms = silver and three terms = gold.
 - Pupils also receive merit points that contribute towards their totals in order to win prizes in our reward ceremonies at the end of the Christmas and summer terms. Also, the 10 best pupils of each month/half term, with regards to merit points, who have attendance points to contribute towards their totals, will be given a chance to go out for lunch as a group.
 - We run a separate attendance competition for the best class in KS3 and KS4 every month, with the best class receiving the cup for that month.
 - Every month, statistics are showcased for the best classes, the pupils who have achieved 100% attendance (100% Club) for the month as well as the whole school's statistics monthly in order to maintain the pupils' interest with regards to where we are with attendance.

Monitoring and acting on low attendance - with a graduated response depending on the level of absence

Some pupils are more likely to miss school than others - the reasons for this can include the following:

- The pupil's medical history
- Family tendencies
- Difficulties with access to the curriculum
- Bullying
- Friends
- School work
- Ill health
- Problems with regard to care or problems at home
- Transport to and from the school
- Work and money

In light of low attendance we have various graduated responses to overcome the problem. These include:

- ✓ Head of Key Stage to receive a printout of the pupils with a percentage under 90% from the Attendance Officer.
- ✓ Regular discussions between the Head of Key Stage and the welfare officer to discuss pupils with low attendance percentages
- ✓ Weekly meetings between the Head of Key Stage and the welfare officer to discuss specific pupils
- ✓ Regular interviews (every half term/4 weeks) for pupils with low percentages (under 90% - PT; under 85% Head of Key Stage; under 80% Welfare Officer)
- ✓ Interviews to monitor targets
- ✓ Meetings with parents of pupils who have a regular low %

- ✓ Targeting particular families
- ✓ Dedicated parents' evening for pupils with low attendance
- ✓ Referral to the Welfare Officer
- ✓ Meetings with the Senior Management Team
- ✓ Governors' committee meeting
- ✓ Refer the case to the court

The Head of Key Stage the Welfare Officer and members of the Senior Management Team will regularly discuss the most suitable steps for individual pupils in order to respond to their needs in the best way.

Expectations for our parents:

- ✓ Ensuring regular attendance of their children
- ✓ Work in partnership with the school
- ✓ Ensure that their children understand the importance of attendance
- ✓ Take an interest in their children's education - ask about their experiences in the school and encourage them to take part in extra-curricular activities in the school
- ✓ Discuss any possible problems their children are having in the school - contact the school's teacher or headteacher to discuss any serious incidents.
- ✓ Not to allow them to miss school for trivial reasons - especially reasons that parents wouldn't miss work for
- ✓ Organise appointments and visits after school, over the weekend or during school holidays as this is an effective way of helping to avoid disrupting the child's education in the school
- ✓ Not to take their children on holiday during school time

Support for parents:

- ✓ Your child's school is the first point of contact to discuss any attendance problems.
- ✓ The school should agree on an improvement plan to improve your child's attendance.
- ✓ Keeping in regular contact with the school is crucial.
- ✓ Every school has a Welfare Officer who can offer support with regards to problems that involve attendance.
- ✓ They can offer specialist help to improve your child's attendance and behaviour whilst at the school.
- ✓ The Welfare Officer will work with families and schools to avoid serious problems such as bullying.
- ✓ Support is offered to reduce the burden on pupils who find things difficult on different occasions (i.e. if a child spends a lot of time caring for another member of the family).
- ✓ Support because of a long-term illness.
- ✓ Make sure that your child goes to school regularly, arrives on time and attends every lesson.

- ✓ Start developing these routines from a young age. If you feel that your child is having problems, speak with the teachers at the school.
- ✓ Contact your child's school as soon as you start to feel worried about your child's attendance.
- ✓ Being absent means that your child is missing out on important learning opportunities.
- ✓ Punctuality and regular attendance will help your child to develop two valuable aspects in the eyes of an employer, which are reliability and self-organisation.

