Ysgol Maes Y Mynydd

Wrexham CBC School's Attendance Policy

'Success Starts at School'

Approvals	
Approved by Governing Body on	Date: 30/11/2021
Signed by Chair of Governors: *K Hughes*	
To be reviewed in 3 years or as advised by LA	Date: Autumn term 2024
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Introduction

WCBC is committed to ensuring that regular attendance at school is a priority which will in turn provide pupils with the best possible chances in life to succeed and to achieve their goals.

Regular school attendance is essential for all children and young people. Failure to regularly attend can increase the risk of leaving school without any qualifications, and can also increase the likelihood of pupils being drawn into criminal and anti-social behaviour.

WCBC Prevention and Support Services and all partner agencies will endeavour to work with parents, and pupils to ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate education and to attend school regularly.

This attendance policy reflects the local authority's Attendance expectations and is intended to set out an over-arching statement of appropriate protocols and practices relating to the management of and promotion of school attendance in Wrexham.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that attendance and punctuality remains a key focus for all, including governors, teachers, parents, pupils and partner agencies. WCBC will strive to ensure schools:

- Offer a safe and friendly environment which welcomes children regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or ability.
- Raise standards and ensure all pupils reach their full potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure all stakeholders receive communication about information on the importance of regular school attendance.
- Identify those pupils with irregular attendance at an early stage and to work with partner agencies to try and address any barriers that stop pupils from attending school regularly.
- Keep accurate and up to date attendance data.
- Ensure all pupils are safe, and will ensure all schools follow the local authority's 'Children Missing Education' guidance.
- Encourage schools to reward those pupils who have made significant progress in raising attendance levels.
- Provision of support and challenge to all schools, focusing resources to those schools with the most identifiable needs.
- Provision of equitable support to parents, balancing assistance with insistence to ensure that all parents/carers meet their legal responsibilities in relation to school attendance.

This document is supported by the All Wales Attendance Framework.
http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/pupilsupport/framework/?lang=en

Legal Framework

The law outlining attendance is:

The Education Act 1996 which places a legal obligation on:

- the local authority to provide and enforce attendance.
- school to register attendance and notify the local authority of a child's absence.

Section 7 of the above act states that:

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full time education suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.

Section 444 further states that:

'The parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable in law'.

School Attendance Orders (SAO):

Under the Education Act 1996 section 437- 443 a School Attendance Order applies when a parent of compulsory school age fails to prove that the child is receiving a suitable education and where the authority believes the child should attend school. A School Attendance Order may be used to direct a parent to send their child to a specified school, and should be used when a pupil is not on roll at any school.

The Education (Penalty Notice) Wales Regulations 2013:

This legislation came into force in September 2014 and has given local authorities new powers to issue fixed penalty notices (FPN). A code of conduct has been agreed by Wrexham County Borough Council on the issuing of the FPN which allows Head Teachers to apply for a £60 FPN when they have recorded.

- Minimum of 10 unauthorised absences in the current term which do not have to be consecutive.
- Minimum of 10 sessions of lateness after the close of registration.
- Parents/carers who chose to take their children out of school on holiday during term time without authorisation from the Head teacher for a minimum of 10 unauthorised sessions.
- Pupil regularly coming into contact with the North Wales Police or other partners during school hours without a justified reason and where absence is recorded as unauthorised.
- Parents/carers failing to engage with school/ESW but where prosecution has not been instigated.

The Head Teacher will inform the parent by letter that a request for a fixed penalty notice will be completed and sent to the Education Lead (Formerly Education Social Worker Team Manager) for the local authority. The Education Lead will consider the request, taking into account levels of

absence, level of parental engagement, any equality implications, history of attendance and also any statement of special educational needs before issuing a FPN of £60.

A penalty notice is £60 if paid within 28 days in receipt of the notice, increasing to £120 if not paid within 28 days. If payment is not received by 42 days then the local authority can prosecute parents for the child's absence.

For further information please see the WCBC website.

www.wrexham.gov.uk

Definitions

Compulsory school age – under section 8 of the Education Act 1996, children and young people should attend school from the start of the first term commencing after their fifth birthday.. A young person ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they have achieved their 16th birthday.

'Parents' are defined in section 576 of the Education Act 1996 as:

- All natural parents whether married or not.
- Any person who although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person, and any person, who although not a natural parent has care of a child or young person.

Meanings:

ESWS – Education Social Work Service

CME – Children missing education'

CTF - Common Transfer File – pupil file transferred to relevant school.

Attendance is **everybody's concern** and the school will expect all stakeholders to play a part in improving attendance. This will contain all having clear expectations and roles which include:

Role of Head Teacher:

- To be responsible for overall management and implementation of this policy.
- Work closely with the school's governing body.
- Set attendance targets with the SIA's and governors, and take advice from the local authority if needed.
- To use discretion when receiving applications for holiday requests and to provide reasons to parents.
- Regular attendance reports shared and provided to governors.
- Work closely with the local authority's Education Lead and nominated school ESW, and other support services.
- To notify the local authority when a 'child is missing education' and follow the local authority's CME procedures.
- Ensure the schools' own attendance policy is readily available for stakeholders including in the school, and on the schools website.
- To work with challenge advisors and to provide a comprehensive plan in terms of attendance processes and targets in accordance with the WG All Wales Attendance Framework expectations.
- Support with any legal action brought as required, including either attending in person or nominating a senior member of staff to attend court as a witness in a trial if called.

Governing Body:

- Approve the policy and amend if necessary.
- Receive reports from the Head Teacher on a regular basis.
- Attend meetings as and when required.
- Ensure policy is shared with all relevant stakeholders.
- Ensure a lead governor for attendance is appointed

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Senior Management Team:

- Work with all staff responsible for attendance and punctuality.
- To look at attendance data on a regular basis, linking in with schools ESW.
- Regularly check registers.
- Ensure all absences are recorded in line with the guidance of codes document including those unauthorised absence and no reasons provided.
- Regular and updated training on attendance for all relevant staff, using the LA ICT SIMS team.
- Raise issues of those staff not compliant with the completion of registers.
- Discuss any initiatives with all staff and promote the use of rewards for improved attendance.

Heads of Year:

- Ensure all pupil absences are recorded, and notes received.
- Work closely with the schools attendance administrator.
- Work closely with the schools ESW and other Prevention Services. To utilise valid attendance data and to identify those not achieving a satisfactory threshold. To attend set and pre-arranged meetings with the ESW.
- Contact parents/guardians of those pupils who have not attended and not provided reasons for absence on a daily basis.
- Truancy concerns are dealt with.
- To arrange letters and meetings for those parents whose children's attendance is posing a concern.
- To monitor patterns of irregular attendance.
- To provide rewards to those pupils with improved or excellent attendance.
- To raise attendance related issues in school assembly and to ensure pupils are aware of the fact that school have applied rewards and sanctions.

Class Teacher/Form Tutors:

- To carry out the statutory role of completing attendance registers twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010. The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately.
- Ensure absences are accounted for by ways of a note provided by parents.
- Follow up unaccounted reasons for absence and concerns raised to the Head of Year.
- To continue to raise the profile of attendance to all pupils.
- Contact attendance administrator with any queries and to employ SIMS messages so that communication is clear.
- Mentoring of pupils with low attendance, having regular discussions with the pupils and parents. Highlighting any issues identified with the Schools Attendance Administrator and Line manager with responsibility for attendance.

Pupils:

- Attend regularly and on time unless unwell or received an authorised absence.
- Bring to school a note explaining reasons for absence and give to class/form teacher.
- Inform teacher of planned absences.
- To work with school staff and the ESW service to address any issues preventing punctual and regular attendance at school.

Parents:

For the purposes of the Education Act 1996, 'parent' means all natural parents/carers whether they are married or not. It includes any person who although may not a natural parent, has day-to-day care of a child or young person.

- Ensure a good home routine is in place to prepare their child for the following school day (for example promoting a good bedtime routine, uniform ready, school bag packed and an early start in the morning including breakfast).
- To ensure their children attends school regularly and punctually.

- To notify the school if their child is unable to attend, on the first day of absence and regularly thereafter.
- To keep the school updated on parents/guardians contact details, including mobile numbers and new addresses.
- To work with their child in relation to homework, not completing homework is not a reason for missing school.
- To work with school and partner agencies to address any issues of irregular attendance of their children.
- Provide evidence for absences if requested. For example proof of medical appointments, dated prescriptions or a letter from a recognised medical service explaining periods of absence.
- Be aware that legal action can be taken to address unauthorised absence from school including a Fixed Penalty Notice, Education Supervision Order or Parental Prosecution.
- The Head Teacher will remove the child from their school roll if a parent requests to take their child on an extended absence (i.e. longer than four continuous weeks, including exceptional circumstances). On return to Wrexham, the parent would need to reapply to the Local Authority for a school place.

Role of Attendance Administrator: (It is recommended that schools utilise one designated person to manage registers / late book and SIMS management).

- To speak with parents on a daily basis to establish reasons for pupil's absence, especially for pupils who are known to be poor attenders or who might otherwise be at risk.
- To record absences daily, registers as and when required.
- To 'mop up' missing marks, providing reasons and inputting reasons on the red flag system on SIMS.
- To send text messages to those parents who haven't contacted school, or by telephoning parents individually in order to establish reasons.
- To work closely with ESW and support staff in school.
- To work with SMT and Head Teacher closely and produce reports as required.
- To ensure transfer of CTF of pupils are completed in a timely manner and pupils are not removed from roll unnecessarily.
- To check messages, if necessary, either on the schools answerphone or text messaging system.

Education Social Work Service

- To complete visits to families and provide support and assistance when appropriate.
- Facilitate Attendance improvement plans.
- Will act on behalf of the Local Authority who has a duty to provide appropriate education to all statutory school age pupils in the county.
- Enforcing the Local Authorities statutory duties in relation to school attendance and taking legal action where appropriate.
- The ESW service has the strategic responsibility for the writing and implementation of policies, operational procedures and codes of conduct in relation to school attendance.
- Will provide support and challenge to schools and families through analysing attendance data and targeting resources as appropriate.

- The ESW team are centrally based and schools referral via the ESW referral form (Appendix 12). Families can contact the ESW service for support through their helpline number 01978 295571.
- Once school has followed the process documented in the All Wales Attendance Framework the ESW service can support school with a home visit.
- Parents have a legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually, or otherwise, under the Education Act 1996. Where parents fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child or otherwise are committing an offence and the ESW will need to be informed.
- It is unfortunate, but on occasions recourse to statutory powers may be required which may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice application or in the prosecution of parents. It is WCBC policy to prosecute all unpaid FPN cases. However the ESW does not take this action lightly and will endeavour to work and support parents, schools and pupils to improve attendance levels until all of these avenues have proved to be ineffective.

Keeping school registers

The school's register is a legal document and under The Education (pupil registration) (Wales) regulations 2010 the school is required to keep an accurate record of attendance. Registers need to be marked twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Registers may be needed in a court of law if deemed appropriate.

Schools Information Management System (SIMS) is used in all schools across WCBC to record all pupils' attendance.

By the end of the school week the schools overall attendance registers will be completed and an overall attendance figure will be calculated by the school.

Types of absences

It is important for parents to understand the definition of the different types of absences. Absences may be classed as either unauthorised absence or authorised absence.

The schools Head Teacher is the only person that should decide on whether an absence should be classed in either one of these categories, parents cannot.

Absences may be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness.
- Religious observance.
- Medical/Dental appointments during school hours.
- Fixed term and permanent exclusions.
- Holiday agreed by the Head Teacher.

Examples of what are classified as unauthorised absence are the following, however they are not limited: Absences may be unauthorised for the following reasons:

- Truancy.
- Late after the close of registration.
- Staying at home for no reason – condoned absence.
- Going shopping.
- Birthdays.
- Holiday not agreed by the Head Teacher.

In addition there are several codes classed as a present mark which include the following:

- Late before the close of register.
- Educated off site, pupils attending vocational courses at college/pupils attending alternative provision agreed by school.
- Sporting activity.
- Educational visit.
- Traveller absence.
- Interview.
- Work experience.
- Where pupils are on roll at school and also at another education establishment.

Please see appendix 1 which includes a breakdown of codes set by Welsh Government.

Punctuality

Punctuality is a legal requirement and pupils must attend on time. A Fixed Penalty Notice or a Prosecution can be sought in cases where persistent lateness after registers have closed are recorded as an unauthorised absence. Persistent lateness has a detrimental effect on a child's learning and also disrupts other pupils within the class and throughout the school.

Those parents of pupils who are persistently late will be contacted by the Class Teacher/Head of Year/Senior Management Team. **All pupils who are late must sign the 'late book' in school or the lateness must be recorded on SIMS by school staff and the pupil must enter through the main doors of the school.**

Medical absences

Where a child is continually absent from school on the grounds of medical reasons, it will be required for the parent to provide medical evidence (e.g. certificate or letter from recognised medical service) to school. This will be initiated by the school and the ESW which will result in the pupil and family receiving the appropriate support to assist and to ensure the pupil is attending school regularly. A referral may be made to the Community Paediatrician for assessment in cases of persistent absences due to illness or medical issues. There may be times where a reintegration / Attendance Improvement Plan may be necessary which will be a partnership agreement between the family, pupil, ESW service and school.

Holidays during term time

Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school during the school term for a holiday. Under the Education (pupil registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010, Head Teachers have discretion to authorise a holiday of up to 10 days during term time, more than 10 days can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

The Local Authority recommends that no holidays are authorised in term time unless for exceptional circumstances.

All requests for holidays must be completed on the schools holiday request form and completed by the parents/guardians. (Please see Appendix 2 for model form).

The Head Teacher will make the decision and may include the following contributory factors:

- Time of year.
- Length of time.
- Overall percentage of attendance.
- Impact on the child's learning.
- Whether the holiday meets the criteria for an exceptional circumstance and adequate proof has been provided.

Criteria for Exceptional Circumstances

- Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specified time in the year and there is no opportunity for a family holiday in school holidays. This must be supported by documentation from the organisation.
- Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
- To attend religious festivals or services such as the wedding or funeral of an immediate family member. Proof may be requested
- Other compassionate circumstances e.g. family illness or family crisis. Proof may be requested.
- Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issues. Evidence must be provided from a qualified professional such as a doctor.
- Where there are other factors which the Head teacher may consider exceptional circumstances, this may be referred to the Local Authority for advice.
- It should be noted that financial consideration are not deemed exceptional circumstances.

School procedures

Parents are expected to contact school on the first day of absence and to provide reasons for their child's absence. This will then need to be followed up by an explanation note that should be handed into the class teacher/form tutor and which will be kept on record by school.

If parents fail to notify school, then the school will make every effort to contact the parents and also other persons listed as a point of contact. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if no reason for the absence is provided within two weeks. Failure to receive any contact on the third day of absence may result in the involvement of the ESW Service.

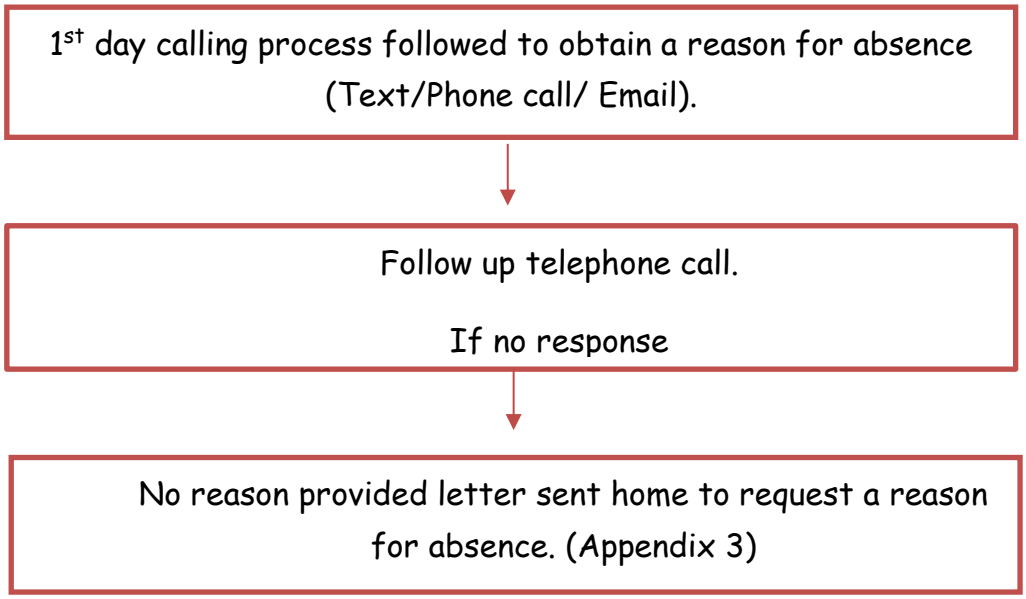
Children Missing Education

Schools have a duty to safeguard all pupils. The Education & Inspections Act 2006, requires the Local Authority to make arrangements to enable them to establish the identities of children residing within WCBC who are not receiving an education. For example these may be pupils who have not attended school for an excessive amount of time without any contact or reason for the absence. The duty lies with the Local Authority to investigate further. The Common Transfer File will be sent to the forwarding school once they have been notified.

Pupils should not be removed from the school register until the pupil has been admitted to another school/ PRU or until the CME document has been completed and recorded by the LA.

For further information either email cme@wrexham.gov.uk or visit www.wrexham.gov.uk (CME document)

Wrexham Attendance Procedure:



- Once a pupil hits **10 sessions (2.6%)** absence whether authorised or unauthorised **Attendance Letter 1** to be sent (appendix 4).
- Once a pupil hits **16 sessions (4.2%)** absence whether authorised or unauthorised **Attendance letter 2** to be sent (appendix 5).
- Once a pupil hits **22 sessions (5.79%)** absence authorised or unauthorised a **phone call** is made to the parent/carer by a member of school staff to discuss the attendance concerns. This should be Head of Year or person with responsibility for attendance in school. Record of conversation is kept (appendix 4).
- Once a pupil hits **26 sessions (6.84%)** absence whether authorised or unauthorised **Attendance letter 3** to be sent. This requests medical proof for all future absences to be authorised (appendix 5).
- Once a pupils hits **26 sessions (6.84%) Unauthorised** absence, a letter is sent arranging a meeting with the parent/carer, School representative and Education Social Worker for an attendance meeting to take place (appendix 6).Referral to ESW made to attend meeting (appendix 8). Consideration to be given to attendance improvement strategies, including the introduction of an Attendance Improvement Plan.
- If attendance continues to deteriorate, consideration to be given to implementing legal action – FPN or Prosecution depending on attendance history, level of absence and past compliance.

Schools Strategies to improve attendance

WCBC's aim is that all pupils achieve 100% attendance. However, there may be instances where pupils are unable to attend for genuine reasons. The ESW service categorises attendance concerns in the following way.

GREEN	97% - 100%
AMBER	93% - 96%
RED	below 92%

Peer Support

Pupils could be nominated school councillors, mentors and mediators in order to assist other pupils in achieving improved attendance levels. By leading a good example this has a positive impact with those pupils underachieving due to irregular attendance.

By ensuring pupils are involved in this process and giving them responsibilities, it could improve their confidence and self–esteem.

Parents Notice Boards

The parent's notice board is displayed at the front of the school which includes regular information and updates on attendance. Schools can raise the profile of attendance with parents/carers and the wider community through the use of parents'/carers' evenings, school newsletters or other communications. This will ensure the importance of attendance is spread widely throughout the school community.

Schools Websites

The school's website should also provide parents, pupils, governors and the public with all the relevant attendance information including the schools attendance policy, along with all other schools policies and procedures. Regular reminder messages about attendance can be issued via school social media accounts and messaging apps.

Schools Newsletters

Schools should communicate frequently with parents/carers about positive achievements and improvements, emphasising the responsibility and role of parents/carers in partnership with the school. Schools can raise the profile of attendance with parents/carers and the wider community through the use of parents'/carers' evenings, school newsletters or other communications. This will ensure the importance of attendance is spread widely throughout the school community.

Newsletters either digital or a paper copy are another way of communicating with parents. Good practice in Wrexham includes schools where newsletters are sent out on a half termly basis/weekly basis. Newsletters can inform parents and pupils where the school stands showing overall attendance figures. All other attendance data and information will be included in every bulletin.

Parents and carers should be encouraged to check the schools attendance information on a regular basis and also check on school holiday dates and inset dates to avoid confusion.

The School Environment

The school should provide a happy, welcoming and organised environment to ensure all pupils enjoy learning which results in good attendance. It is good practice for all staff to ensure that the classroom displays include the form attendance for the previous week and the schools' targets.

Breakfast Club/Lunch-time Club and Access to Water

Schools that can offer a breakfast club can set them up for a positive day. Breakfast club should be supervised by school staff. Children can have breakfast with friends, and ensure they have had a meal at the start of the day which statistics shows helps the thinking process. Schools that provide water to hydrate pupils have also benefitted from improved wellbeing and attention.

Staff Awareness

All staff must be fully aware of the importance of regular school attendance, and pupils must be regularly made aware of this during the school day from staff. A holistic and consistent approach should be applied to ensure that all staff apply the school ethos and reflect the culture of the school at all times. As part of staff induction, new staff should be briefed on the school's philosophy on attendance and introduced to their responsibilities for attendance management.

Attendance Assemblies

Celebrating attendance should be a priority. Involving pupils gives an incentive, motivation and encouragement. Assembly can promote a sense of self-worth. This promotes the wellbeing of children as well as rewarding them for their achievements. A consistent approach should be applied as suggested above to ensure that all staff apply the school ethos and reflect the culture of the school.

Prevention and Support Services can be invited to support these assemblies and to promote attendance initiatives.

Attendance Data Tracking and Targeted Interventions

The schools attendance administrator should track attendance data and run half-termly reports to identify groups whose attendance is dropping below the schools target. It may be that a specific year group, gender group or user defined group such as looked after pupils (LAC) or those entitled to Free School Meals are noticeably below the expected level. School staff and the ESW service will work with these identified groups to offer additional support to bring their attendance in line with the rest of the school. The SIMS MIS Support Team (01978 295468) can provide support with setting up reports.

Where pupils are identified as routinely absent from school in the days leading up to a school holiday a letter can be sent/phone call made home in advance of the holidays to discuss this matter. (Appendix 9).

Attendance Mentoring

Pupils with attendance below the targeted level can be mentored by an identified member of staff. Quality mentoring, especially as part of a school-wide effort, can be leveraged as a strategy to improve attendance and boost academic achievement. A positive, consistent and supportive relationship with an identified adult can help motivate attendance. Pupils and families are more likely to share the barriers they face to getting to school to an adult who meets with them regularly. All contacts with the pupil and their family can be recorded on SIMS and the impact of their involvement tracked.

Attendance Workshops

Bespoke attendance workshops can be delivered to groups by school staff, both parents and young people, with attendance below the targeted level. Workshops run for six weeks with each session lasting 30 minutes. An example programme for the six week workshops may include:-

1) Why is school attendance important?
2) Legal Framework
3) Barriers to regular attendance.
4) Removing the barriers to regular attendance
5) What are the benefits of regular attendance at school?
6) Conclusion and rewards for pupils who attendance improved during the 6 weeks.

Transition Process

Transition from Year 6 to 7 can be difficult at times to deal with. Staff should appreciate that pupils often find it hard to cope with the transition from year groups and also from primary to secondary school. Schools must ensure that all staff involved in this transition process and in transition taster days for all pupils are aware and supportive.

Additional support with transition can be provided by the Youth Work in Education (YWIE) service in nominated schools. (Please contact YWIE Advanced Practitioner for further information)

Parents evening

Parents of pupils with low attendance can be identified in advance of the parents evening and provide an opportunity to discuss barriers to regular attendance. Parent's evenings may benefit from the support of WCBC Prevention and Support Services if parents need advice and guidance or additional support in trying to ensure the regular school attendance. Requests for support must be organised in good time.

School Sanctions (Secondary)

Where pupils are regularly absent without authorisation but have been sent to school by their parent it is possible to implement school based sanctions if there is no improvement. This may be in the form of detention either during lunch time or after school. Parents must be notified on each occasion.

Rewards

Rewards can include the following:

- Pupil Certificate.
- Badges/Pens
- Extra free time.
- Class Trophy.
- 100% awards for the academic year for pupils.
- First In the queue for lunch.
- Snacks provided through the school canteen e.g. a snack or drink
- Books.

Further examples can include pupils being entered into a draw at the end of term or the end of an academic year for some of the following:

- Cinema tickets.
- Book vouchers.
- I-tunes voucher.
- Bike

Partnerships with local businesses can be established to support such schemes in some localities

Additional Attendance Strategies

Role of the Local Authority Education Social Work Service

The Education Social Work service is a statutory service which supports schools to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly. Schools have a designated ESW who will liaise with the school on a regular basis, depending on need. The ESW will meet with a senior member of staff within school where service provision allows and will discuss those pupils who have attendance of below 92%. The ESW service has recently reshaped into 3 Local areas of service delivery to reflect staff amendments.

The school, in a joint discussion will then refer the pupil to the ESW service if necessary. The individual circumstances of each pupil will be considered. Once school has followed the process documented in the All Wales Attendance Framework the ESW service can support school with a home visit.

The ESW service can support with implementing Attendance Improvement Plans with pupils over a six week period. Intensive support and engagement with the pupil and family are made in order to bring about positive change in the pupil's attendance.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually, or otherwise, under the Education Act 1996. Where parents fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child or otherwise are committing an offence and the ESW will need to be informed.

It is unfortunate, but on occasions recourse to statutory powers may be required which may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice application or in the prosecution of parents. It is WCBC policy to prosecute all unpaid FPN cases. However the ESW does not take this action lightly and will endeavour to work and support parents, schools and pupils to improve attendance levels until all of these avenues have proved to be ineffective.

Role of School Improvement Advisor.

Schools should work with School Improvement Advisor. The School Improvement Advisor provides a holistic overview of the impact of structures to promote the school improvement process.

Attendance Panels

Attendance panels involve school governors, members of the senior staff group, ESW service, and parent and on occasions they can include the pupil. Whilst the panel's aim is to address the attendance of pupils it is not always in the best interest of the pupil to be out of class.

Parents can be invited into school to discuss their child's attendance. An Attendance Improvement Plan (AIP) can be completed and signed during these meetings. Letters of invitation should be sent to parents in advance by school. Parents are asked to notify school to confirm whether they will be attending or not. If they are not available to attend then another letter should be sent to offer a further opportunity.

Failure to attend without notification can result in any absences remaining unauthorised by the Head Teacher and may result in a visit or telephone call from the ESW Service.

Community Education Patrols (CEP)

Community Education Patrols are initiated by the Education Lead in partnership with North Wales Police. These patrols are arranged on a prescribed basis.

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 N Wales Police have the power to engage parents found with children during school hours. Any child found unaccompanied by an adult can be taken back to school or to a designated place of safety. Community Education Patrols are intended to promote the benefits of regular school attendance and to promote partnership working.

Parents and pupils details are logged, along with the reasons for the pupil being away from school. Schools are emailed to inform them of the details obtained.

First Day contact

School should operate a first day contact process, to ensure schools contact parents of those pupils who are absent on a specified day. This process is deemed to be good practice and identifies those pupils who are regularly absent at an early stage. Such pupils can then be referred to support services in accordance with the terms of this policy.

Data Collection

School's attendance data is continually being tracked and monitored electronically both on an individual pupil level and also as a whole school. This data is collated by the Local Authority and shared amongst all schools across Wrexham on a regular basis.

Monitoring and reporting

The school should regularly prepare reports to the governing body, senior management and challenge advisors (GWE) to ensure that levels of attendance are clear and that attendance codes are accurate. In addition parents should also be notified through the schools regular communication channels. The Local Authority will also monitor levels of attendance and raise concerns with Head Teachers.

Appendix 1

Code	Meaning	Statistical meaning
/ \	**Present at registration**	**Present**
L	**Late but arrived before register closed**	**Present**
B	**Educated off-site**	**Approved educational activity**
D	**Dual registered**	**Approved educational activity**
P	**Approved sporting activity**	**Approved educational activity**
V	**Educational trip or visit**	**Approved educational activity**
J	**Interview**	**Approved educational activity**
W	**Work experience (not work based learning)**	**Approved educational activity**
C	**Other authorised circumstances(not covered by another code)**	**Authorised absence**
F	**Agreed extended family holiday**	**Authorised absence**
H	**Agreed family holiday**	**Authorised absence**
I	**Illness**	**Authorised absence**

M	**Medical/dental appointment**	**Authorised absence**
S	**Study leave**	**Authorised absence**
E	**Exclusion**	**Authorised absence**
R	**Religious observance**	**Authorised absence**
T	**Traveller Absence**	**Authorised absence**
N	**No reason provided for absence**	**Unauthorised absence**
O	**Other unauthorised absence(no explanation provided)**	**Unauthorised absence**
G	**Family Holiday (not agreed)**	**Unauthorised absence**
U	**Late arrival after the close of registration**	**Unauthorised absence**
X	**Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age**	**Not required to attend**
Y	**Partial and forced closure**	**Not required to attend**
Z	**Pupil not yet on roll**	**Not required to attend**
#	**School closed to all pupils**	**Not required to attend**

Appendix 2

Holiday in term time request

Section A

To be completed by the Parent/Guardian at least 2 weeks in advance.

Name of Child:	Class	dob	Address	Tel no.
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

Holiday dates: (including possibility of late flight arrivals if possible)

From: ..... to .....

Destination .....

(NB – This is for child protection reasons ensuring all our children are safeguarded)

Reason for request

……

……

Declaration:

I understand that this holiday request may be authorised or not authorised and the Head Teacher will use his/her discretion in making the decision based on my child's circumstances. If the Head Teacher does not authorise this holiday, this may lead to a request for a Fixed Penalty Notice to the Local Authority Lead ESWTM which will be determined in line with the schools attendance policy. (Please ask for a copy at school or the schools website)

Parent/Guardian ……..Date:…….

Email address:……

(This will be used to send you a copy of Section B to inform you if the holiday request has been authorised)

Section B

To be completed by the Head Teacher within at least 1 week from the request.

Reasons for refusal to authorise absence .....

.....

.....

Reasons for authorising .....

.....

.....

The Head Teacher has authorised/unauthorised (* delete) the following holiday request for the reasons specified above.

Please see attached attendance registration certificate.

Signed .....

Green	100%	Not missing any lessons.
	99%	Missing about 10 lessons.
	98%	Missing about 20 lessons.
	97%	Missing about 30 lessons.
Amber	96%	Missing about 8 days of school. It will be difficult to catch up on the lost learning from about 40 lessons.
	95%	Missing about 2 weeks of school.
	93%	Missing 14 days of school. This is almost three weeks which is a significant amount of education to lose.
Red	92% and below	Missing more than 3 weeks of education. A serious loss of learning which is likely to have a detrimental effect on achievement and life chances.

Appendix 3 – No Reason Provided Letter

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»
«address_block»

Dear Parent / Guardian,

«chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» - «date_of_birth»

According to our records, «chosen_forename» has recently been absent from school. You will be aware that it is the parent's responsibility to notify the school on the first day of a pupil's absence to explain the reasons why the «he_she» is unable to attend school. Unfortunately we have not received any contact from you.

I am therefore writing to you to give you an opportunity to explain the recent absences. Please complete the tear off slip below and return it to the school as soon as possible or alternatively call the school on SCHOOLS PHONE NUMBER or email on XXXXX. Any absence that has not been explained within two weeks will be categorised as an Unauthorised Absence.

Yours sincerely,

School Attendance Officer

Please complete this slip and return to the **School Attendance Officer** as soon as possible.

«forename» «surname» - «date_of_birth»

Dates of unexplained absence:
«dyddiadau_absenoldeb_heb_eglurhad»

Explanation for the above dates of unexplained absence:

Parent/Carer Signature…… Date……

Appendix 4 – Letter 1

«salutation»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Name of Pupil: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» «reg»

I am aware that «chosen_forename» has been absent recently and I am becoming concerned about «chosen_forename»'s attendance, and felt that I should draw your attention to it as soon as possible.

The attendance level is «percentage_attendance»%.

Your child's academic attainment suffers if they miss school frequently. There may be reasons why this is occurring and if you felt that it would help to discuss the matter with me, then please contact me and let me know when you are available and I will make arrangements to see you.

Otherwise I hope to see an improvement in «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»'s attendance.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 5 – Letter 2

«salutation»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Name of Pupil: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» «reg»

Further to my previous letter regarding «chosen_forename» attendance I have noticed that further absences have occurred. I am becoming concerned about «chosen_forename»'s attendance, and felt that I should draw your attention to it as soon as possible.

The attendance level is only «percentage_attendance»%.

Your child's academic attainment suffers if they miss school frequently. There may be reasons why this is occurring and if you felt that it would help to discuss the matter with me, then please contact me and let me know when you are available and I will make arrangements to discuss this matter with you.

In the meantime, I hope to see an improvement in «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»'s attendance.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 6 – Record of conversation

Pupil Name: _____ Staff Member: _____

Attendance: _____ School: _____

Date: _____

Record of conversation including issues identified.

Outcome and advice given:

Appendix 7 – Letter 3 Medical Proof

«salutation»
«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»,

Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» «year_reg»

I am writing to you regarding «chosen_forename» as I have concerns about «his_her» non-attendance at school which continues to deteriorate despite two previous letters.

Due to the level of illness and/or medical absence, I must ask that if any further absence occurs, evidence must be received by the school that shows that the pupil's absence has been supported by a Doctor or suitably qualified medical professional. Some examples of evidence that could be used are: Prescriptions, Appointment Cards, Doctor's Notes, etc.

If this evidence is not supplied when your child returns after an illness or medical absence, your child's absence will be recorded as an **unauthorised** absence.

Should you wish to discuss any of the points raised in this correspondence you may contact me on the number at the top of the letter between the hours of 9am and 4pm.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

Appendix 8 – Meeting letter

«salutation»
«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Ask for/Gofynner am –
Direct Dial/Rhif Union -
E-mail/E-bost –

Dear «salutation»,

Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» «year_reg»

I am writing to you regarding «chosen_forename» as I continue to have concerns about «his_her» non-attendance at school. A meeting to discuss these concerns will take place at **xxxxxxxxx on …… at …….**

The Law states that parents must ensure that their children receive appropriate full-time education according to their age, ability and aptitude. This means that whilst your child is registered at school, you have a responsibility to make sure that they attend regularly and on time.

Where a pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly, the Local Education Authority can prosecute a parent unless the parent can demonstrate that:-

- the pupil was absent with leave granted by the school
- the pupil was ill or prevented from attending by some unavoidable cause
- the absence occurred on a day set aside for religious observance
- the nearest appropriate school with available places is beyond the prescribed walking distance and no transport has been provided by the LEA. (The limits for walking distance are 2 miles for children under 8 and 3 miles for children aged 8 and over).

Failure to ensure regular attendance in such a case is a criminal offence that carries a maximum penalty of a fine of £1,000 per parent, per child, or, in more serious cases, a fine of up to £2,500 per parent, per child and/or up to 3 months imprisonment.

Alternatively a Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued by the Local Authority to address persistent unauthorised absence. If paid within 28 days the fine is £60. If paid after 28 days but within 42 days the fine is £120. If the penalty is not paid in full by the 43rd day then legal action can result.

The Education Support~~Social Work~~ Service wishes to support you to bring about an improvement in your child's attendance, without the need to take legal action against you.

If this date is inconvenient please contact the school on XXXXXXX to arrange a mutually convenient date.

I look forward to meeting you.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

Appendix 9 – Record of meeting

Attendance Support Meeting

Date of meeting:	**Name:**	**Date of birth:**
School:	**Year**	**Attendance:** **Sessions late:**
What are the specific issues impacting upon school attendance in each of the following areas?		
School	**Home**	**Community**
Strengths		

Actions/services to address the specific issues identified above.	**By Whom**	**When**
1. **2.**		

3. **4.** **5.**		

Signatures			
School	**Parent/carer**	**Pupil**	**Other agency**
Date of review meeting:			

Appendix 10 – End of term absences letter

«salutation»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Name of Pupil: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname» «reg»

I am aware that «chosen_forename» has been absent recently at the end of the last half term and felt that I should draw your attention to it as soon as possible.

The attendance level is «percentage_attendance»%.

Your child's academic attainment suffers if they miss school frequently. There may be a valid reason why this absence occurred but we as a school are keen to work with both pupils and parents to avoid absences becoming regular, especially at the end of half-terms. There are only 190 school days with 175 non-school days, therefore every day in school is vital.

If you felt that it would help to discuss the matter with me, then please contact me and let me know when you are available and I will make arrangements to see you.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 11

Education Social Work Service
Attendance meeting
Referral form

Electronic Version

The information contained on this form is confidential to the child, individuals with parental responsibility for the child, and those people professionally involved with the child.

Information on this form will be kept in line with Wrexham's Data Protection Policy.

When completed please send to ESW@wrexham.gov.uk

Please note incomplete forms will not be processed and will be returned to the referrer

School: - _____

Name	Date of Birth	Attendance %	Attendance letters 1, 2& 3 sent and phone call attempted? Yes or No

For information as to how Wrexham County Borough Council handles personal data, please see our Privacy Notices on our website: www.wrexham.gov.uk
I gael rhagor o wybodaeth am sut mae Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Wrecsam yn trin data personol, darllenwch ein Hysbysiadau Preifatrwydd ar ein gwefan: www.wrecsam.gov.uk

Appendix 12

Education Social Work Service

Referral form

Hard Copy version

The information contained on this form is confidential to the child, individuals with parental responsibility for the child, and those people professionally involved with the child.

Information on this form will be kept in line with Wrexham's Data Protection Policy.

When completed please send to ESW@wrexham.gov.uk

Please note incomplete forms will not be processed and will be returned to the referrer

Name of pupil: **Date of birth:**

Age: **School:**

Address:

Any known risk at the address: Yes ☐ No☐ Details:

Home Telephone:

Looked After Child: Yes ☐ No ☐ Free school meals: Yes ☐ No ☐

Details of any Additional Learning Needs:

Details of any current involvement with Children's Services:

Please include name of social worker if known:

Names of those with parental responsibility:

Name	Relationship to child	Address (if different to above)	Telephone number

Parents' preferred language of communication:

PSP in place: Yes ☐ No ☐

Current attendance figure:

Number of day's exclusion and reason for exclusion this academic year:

Reason for referral: Attendance ☐ Exclusion ☐ Safeguarding/Wellbeing ☐

What is being requested and why?

Referral completed by:

Name: Designation:

School: Date:

Contact email: **Contact number:**

Outcome (to be completed by office staff)

Referral number:

Allocated to ESW ☐

Further information requested ☐

Advice given – no need for allocation ☐

For information as to how Wrexham County Borough Council handles personal data, please see our Privacy Notices on our website: www.wrexham.gov.uk

I gael rhagor o wybodaeth am sut mae Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Wrecsam yn trin data personol, darllenwch ein Hysbysiadau Preifatrwydd ar ein gwefan: www.wrecsam.gov.uk