



YSGOL DERWEN / DERWEN FOUNDATION SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE and PUPIL ABSENCE POLICY

'Developing Potential Through Educational Excellence'

This policy refers to all absences which are planned and requested by parents.

Aims

- To ensure that parents and pupils are treated equally when authorising planned pupil absence from school.
- To ensure that pupil absences do not impact negatively on individual pupils or on the general progress of others in the class.
- To ensure that teachers' planning and teaching is not disrupted by pupil absence.
- To ensure that pupil absence figures are not excessive.

Context

All schools suffer unplanned pupil absences during the course of a year due to a range of illnesses that affect young children. However, we have been faced in recent years with increasing demands from parents who wish to remove their children from school for holidays during term time. Some holiday leave will be inevitable, particularly if parents are unable to take holiday leave at times other than during school terms, but an increasing minority of parents are now electing to remove their children during term time.

The Policy

Attendance

- Parents will be reminded about the effect absenteeism has on their child's education at the beginning of each new academic year and also during the year .
- All absences must be applied for on the official form available from the school office.
- A review of each application will involve the examination of absence history (including sickness absence) before a determination is made by the headteacher.
- The headteacher will only sanction **5 days** authorised absences for holidays or other leave during the academic year unless there are exceptional circumstances which will mean that authorisation may be given for up to an additional 5 days, at the headteacher's discretion.

- A child on the MAT register will be given additional authorised absences in order to support and promote their talent i.e authorisation given to perform in productions etc.
- Additional authorisation will be granted to children if they have examinations for external lessons i.e dance, music etc which cannot be organised outside of school hours.
- Unauthorised absences are recorded and remain on the child's record.

Monitoring

Attendance

- Each half term the attendance figures will be checked with assistance from the ESW from the LEA.
- Any concerns will be discussed with ESW.
- It is the responsibility of the class teacher to inform the school management about any concerns regarding attendance.
- The school will contact the family if patterns of absence etc. are noticed.
- Any concerns regarding attendance will be passed onto LEA ESWs.

Punctuality

- It is important that the children who attend Ysgol Derwen are punctual in order for the daily routines not to be disturbed.
- Regular late arrival also has a negative impact on the child's education.
- Children and parents are reminded about the importance of being punctual.
- A record of late arrivals will be kept.
- If a child is late on at least one occasion within a week they will be reminded about their punctuality by the school management. Late is deemed as being more than 5 minutes after the school bell - 8.55am)
- If a child is late for two consecutive weeks a note will be passes onto the parent informing them about the situation.
- If a child is late for a second time (following a note being sent home) it will be followed by another informing the parents that if the situation does not improve the matter will be passed onto LEA ESW.

Evaluation

Absence figures for the previous academic year with a term by term breakdown will be evaluated by the headteacher and governing body to determine if the policy requires amendment.

New targets will be set for the next academic year.

This policy was approved by full governing body on: **March 2022**

Signed: *R Jones* (Headteacher)

C Turner (Chair of Governors)

Reviewed annually



Ysgol Derwen / Derwen Foundation School
Re: Holidays in Term Time and Unauthorised Absence

Some parents arrange family holidays during term time, which can lead to problems in that:

- ~ Your child's education suffers;
- ~ Lessons and extra curricular activities are missed;
- ~ Continuity of project work is lost;
- ~ There is often no opportunity for teachers to set additional work or to assist a child in catching up on their return from holiday;
- ~ The class is generally disrupted and other pupils may suffer as a result;
- You may be in breach of your legal obligation to send your child to school.

There is a common misconception that any pupil is allowed to take 10 days holiday during term time per academic year - this is not strictly true! Parents are entitled to ask for leave of absence of up to 5 school days for an annual holiday, and this may be authorised by the school. Only in exceptional circumstances can any more than 5 days be granted.

If you need to request leave of absence for your child, please give as much notice as possible.

We wish to stress that any request for holiday absence will be considered very carefully. The following factors will be taken into account:

- ~ Your child's general attendance / punctuality record;
- ~ The number of similar requests;
- ~ The time of year that your child will be absent (e.g. requests for leave of absence at the start of the school year, or when assessments are taking place, are unlikely to be met);
- ~ Any educational nature of the proposed holiday;
- ~ Any second request in the same academic year will be automatically refused, except in exceptional circumstances (see above).

If you are unable to avoid requesting absence during school term, an application must be made on an application form (available from the school office) or by letter. A response will be sent to you within 14 days of receipt of your request. If your request is refused, and your child is still absent from school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Any authorised absence is damaging to your child's education, as well as reflecting badly on the school. Please consider this matter very carefully before making a request for absence during term time. Thank you for your co-operation.

Next years holiday dates can be found on the reverse of this letter.

Yours sincerely,
Richard Jones
Headteacher

YSGOL DERWEN/DERWEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Date:

Dear Parent

Child's Name Year

Date of Absence

Our records show your child was absent from school on the above date and it appears that we have no reason for absence. I would be grateful if you would complete the form below giving reason for absence and return it to school as soon as possible. Our records can then be updated accordingly.

Please note any unexplained absence will be marked as unauthorised on the school register.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

R K Jones
Headteacher

Reason for Absence

.....

Signed (Parent)



**YSGOL DERWEN/
DERWEN FOUNDATION SCHOOL
APPLICATION FOR PUPIL ABSENCE FOR ANY CIRCUMSTANCE**

Name of Pupil	
Class/Year Group	
Inclusive absence dates from:	
to:	
Total number of school days absent	
Reason for absence	
Signature of Parent	
Date	

NOTE: Authorisations for absences may be granted by the Headteacher only. There is no automatic entitlement to absence during term time, nor is there a specified number of days, and each case will be dealt with on its merits. Holiday absences during term time are strongly discouraged. Absences which are not deemed appropriate for authorisation will be treated as unauthorised absences and will appear on the pupil's record.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY		
Number of previous absences during this academic year	Medical	Other
Headteacher's Signature		ABSENCE AUTHORISED
Headteacher's Signature		ABSENCE UNAUTHORISED
Date		

A copy of this form will be returned to you upon completion

Education Welfare Service - Procedures for Non-School Attendance

It is recognised that a child's success at school is likely to be negatively affected by poor attendance. Schools therefore have a key responsibility in supporting pupils to attend, in partnership with parents/carers and other professionals. Within Flintshire, the Education Welfare Service has a key responsibility to support improved attendance. This document outlines the processes that should be undertaken by the school and local authority (LA) when a child is not attending and should be read in conjunction with the following Welsh Government documents.

All Wales Attendance Framework - An operating toolkit for the Education Welfare Service

Inclusion and Pupil Support Guidance document no: 203/2016

Stage 1 - School Intervention

Schools should have a whole school policy on attendance which gives clear information regarding the importance of attendance and punctuality, alongside the systems and roles/responsibilities of the whole school community in relation to this. Schools should develop systems that facilitate efficient communication between parents/carers and that respond quickly to absence to prevent deterioration and potential risk around safeguarding.

Schools should identify a senior leader with responsibility for monitoring attendance. They should ensure that all staff are aware of the school's procedures and monitor to ensure that these are deployed effectively. Where the systems highlight concerns regarding a child's attendance, the following steps should be taken.

- School requests information regarding the child's absence. Where this is received, schools should consider whether this constitutes an authorised absence and should code it appropriately in line with WG guidance.

- If the school receives no information regarding the absence or the information provided is deemed to be unacceptable, the parent/carer should be invited to a meeting to discuss the matter. If the school receives no response to the request to meet or following the first meeting, the attendance continues to decline, a further invitation should be issued.

- Where a child has recorded absences of 20 sessions, inclusive of persistent lateness, schools should consider the use of a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) Warning Letter. Where this is deemed to be an appropriate action, the school will request the issue through the ESW.

- For some children, the absence may be related to periods of medical illness. Where this appears to be regular or over a sustained period, the school should request further medical evidence to support the need for absence, i.e. GP note or equivalent. The school may also request a medical for the child through school nurse.

- Where a child has had a period of absence for 10 consecutive days or more, a referral should also be made to the Education Welfare Service alongside any other action undertaken by the school.

Stage 2 – Local Authority Intervention

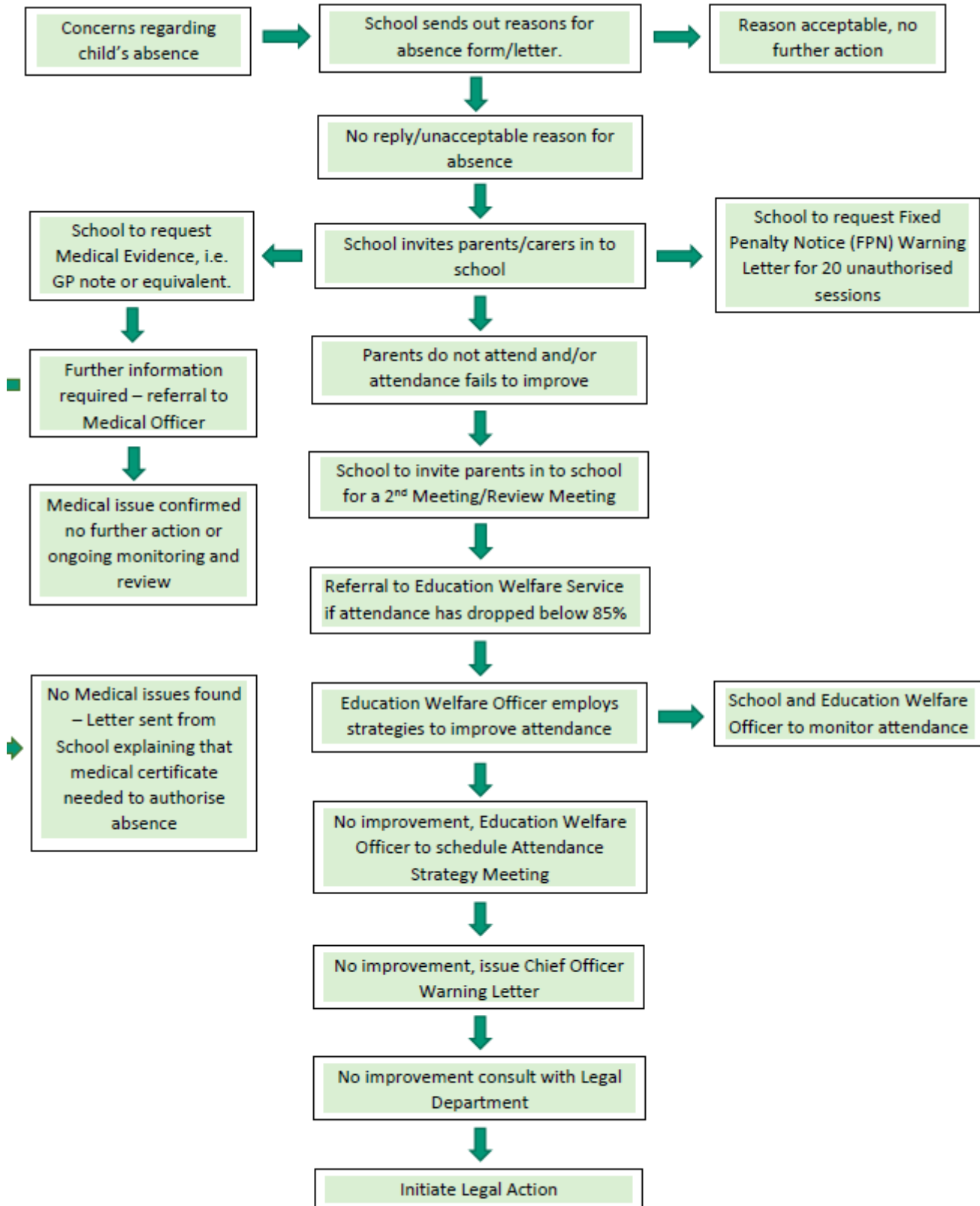
Much of the work required to support and improve attendance will be carried out by schools through their procedures and the range of intervention and support they offer. Where a child continues to demonstrate difficulties in attending, the school should involve the designated Education Welfare service (EWS). Schools should have well-established links with the EWS and have regular meetings timetabled to discuss, review and monitor those children causing concern. The following outlines the steps to be taken where school's systems have been exhausted.

- Schools should make a referral to the EWS in the following instances:
 - Where a child's attendance falls below 85%
 - Where a child is absent for a period of 10 consecutive days
 - Where the school has received no response to their requests for information relating to sustained absence

EWS monitoring processes may identify children that have not been identified by the school. These cases should be raised through the regular school/EWO liaison meetings and a referral form completed where necessary.

- The school and designated EWO will consider each referral and determine the best course of action, which may include FPN, medical intervention or engagement with specialist services etc.
- For some children, access to alternative provision may be required whilst securing re-engagement. This could include a range of bespoke packages including home tuition. EWOs will undertake a monitoring role in partnership with the school, ensuring that requests for provision are made and that provision is implemented and accessed.
- Where further information is required regarding a child's medical condition, the EWO will make a referral to the Medical Office (Community Paediatrician) to confirm the extent of the condition.
- An Attendance Strategy Meeting will be coordinated by the EWO if there is no discernable improvement in a child's education following the previously agreed actions, or where the medical information has identified no reasonable medical need. A revised programme of activity will be developed and a further meeting scheduled for 4 weeks to review the impact on the child's attendance.
- If the review meeting demonstrates a lack of improvement in the child's attendance, the LA will issue a Chief Officer's Warning Letter, which will outline the possible consequences of a continued lack of improvement.
- Where there continues to be a lack of engagement/improved attendance, the LA, through the EWS, will initiate legal proceedings

Procedures for Non-School Attendance



Education Welfare Service - Referral Form

Email referral form to: educationwelfareservice@flintshire.gov.uk and school EWS contact

School:	Phone:
Report Date:	

Pupil Details	
Name:	Date of Birth:
Gender: (M=Male, F=Female)	Ethnicity:
Year Group:	Reg Group:
Pupil Address:	

Other Information (T = True/Yes, F = False/No)	
SEN Status	(if blank, no SEN Status is recorded)
EAL Status	(if blank, no EAL Status is recorded)
Is Pupil Eligible for FSM?	T/F (true or false)
Is Pupil LAC?	T/F (true or false)
Is Pupil a Young Carer?	Yes/NO (Delete as appropriate)

Attendance – please attach registration certificate	
Overall School Attendance	%
Of which Authorised Absence is	%
Of which Unauthorised Absence is	%

Contact Information		
Persons with Parental Responsibility	Address	Telephone
Name: Relationship: Priority:		Home: Mobile: Work:
Name: Relationship: Priority:		Home: Mobile: Work:

Family Links		
Name	Date of Birth	Year

Reason for Referral

Signed:

Date:

Actions taken by school to improve attendance – to include evidence of telephone calls made, letters sent, meetings held (please attach)

Interventions

Number of Interventions

Response

Signed:

Date:

Designation:

Contact Details: