

ATTENDANCE POLICY

THE SCHOOL'S POSITION ON ATTENDANCE

We encourage pupils to attend school regularly, recognising that their commitment to attend regularly also indicates a commitment to make the most of learning opportunities. Full attendance is rewarded by Certificates of Achievement, which are collated in the Record of Achievement. This is shown to future employers or colleges of further or higher education when pupils leave Denbigh at the end of their full time school education. Regular and punctual attendance are qualities which are highly valued by employers who want to know that their work force is reliable, and as such they are qualities that the school seeks to develop in its students.

PUPILS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Regular Attendance

It is important that you come to school regularly. Regular attendance will help you to find learning easier and your learning will make more sense, as you will understand how one lesson picks up from where the last one in the same subject left off. You will also have time to practise the skills the teacher wants you to learn.

If you get into the habit of irregular attendance, your work will suffer, mainly because there will be little continuity of learning for you. You will always be missing key parts of a teacher's explanation, and will not get the practice you need to improve your skills and increase your knowledge.

The same applies to punctuality. If you are late, you will be missing important parts of the curriculum, so putting yourself at a disadvantage.

The law says that you must attend school. Your parent(s) are responsible for sending you to school, regularly, punctually and in a fit state to learn. If you do not attend regularly, your parent(s) may be taken to court and fined.

We understand that sometimes you and your family may have problems, but we expect you to make your attendance at school a priority. You should only take time off if you are ill or there is a major family emergency or a bereavement; reasons for absence such as, minding the house, looking after younger sisters or brothers, going shopping, going to Alton Towers, are not acceptable.

What you should do -

▪ If you are ill

If you need to stay at home because of illness, your parent should notify the school on the first day of your absence, by telephoning us, or through a note delivered by a brother or sister. Until your parent lets us know why you are absent, you will be marked as an 'unauthorised' absence.

▪ If you have an appointment

If you need to leave school during the school day because you have an appointment, you must inform your form tutor or subject teacher at the time of leaving, and then sign out with the School Nurse, Mrs Nelson. Your absence must be covered by a note from home, and must be for an acceptable reason, such as a hospital, doctor's or dentist's appointment. As far as possible, appointments of this nature should be made for outside school hours, so that your education is not interrupted.

If you should fall ill during the school day, you should report to the school nurse, who will decide whether you should go home, and will contact your parent if necessary. You should not go home during the school day without permission.

THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Teachers will mark the attendance register at the start of the morning session of school and once during the afternoon session. They will also mark the class register at the start of each lesson.

When your form tutor calls the register in the morning, she/he will mark you either:

- present or
- engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site or
- absent.

If you are absent, the tutor will authorise your absence when she/he has been informed of the reason and it is justified.

If you are absent and your parents have not informed the school on the first day, staff at school will follow up your absence. Your tutor or the attendance secretary may ring your parents to find out why you are away, or a letter will be sent home requesting this information.

By law, only the school can authorise absence. Parents can offer an explanation for your absence, but only the school can decide if it is justified. If, in our view, your absence is unjustified, your tutor or head of year may ask your parents to come into the school to discuss the matter.

If you are often away, the school will involve the Education Welfare Officer, Mrs Plumb, who may come to see your parents at home. She will work to help you establish better patterns of attendance.

Absence during the School Day

If you were marked present at the start of morning school, and then absent yourself during the day without permission, your tutor and head of year will follow up your absence, and if it is unjustified, your parents will be notified. You will be expected to make up the work you have missed.

Lateness

If you arrive late to school or to lessons, you disturb the class and the teacher who has to attend to you, marking you in the register, telling you what to do and what you've missed, rather than being able to get on with the lesson. Punctuality is an important quality which you should cultivate.

If you are late for school you will need to sign in at reception. If you do not arrive before the end of the tutorial session at the start of morning school, you will be marked as 'unauthorised absent', and will need to bring a note from your parent the next day to explain your lateness. If you are late twice in a week, your tutor will arrange for you to attend an after school detention.

School Procedures for Marking the Register

In addition to the categories of 'present', 'authorised' and 'unauthorised absence', your tutor can use other categories of attendance or absence as follows:

From 1st January 1998, there is an additional category of 'present' – called 'approved educational activity'. This consists of an educational activity, approved by the school, undertaken off the school premises, and supervised, either by a member of the school staff or another individual authorised by the school. Work experience, field trips and visits, approved sporting activities and courses linked to a Further Education College for part of the time are all examples of an 'approved educational activity'.

- Study leave for Year 11 students counts as authorised absence and should not normally exceed 10 school days during Year 11.
- If you are excluded from school for a fixed period, you will be marked as an 'authorised absence', with a code to show that you are excluded.
- If you are involved in a special family occasion, and your parent writes to your tutor asking permission for you to be absent and states the reason, the school must decide whether your absence is authorised or unauthorised. As well as taking into account the occasion (for instance, a close family member's wedding, your tutor will take into account your previous pattern of attendance.
- If your parent wishes you to be absent to observe a religious festival, you should bring a note from him/her in advance of the absence, asking permission to miss school on that day. This would normally be counted as an authorised absence.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS

These should not be taken during term time as they seriously disrupt the continuity of your learning. Term dates are set two years in advance and you are given a calendar for yourself and your parent at the beginning of the school year in order to help you plan your time and to avoid missing school. If your parent does not have the information required, the school office

should be able to help you. The school will not authorise absence for holidays taken during school time.

CONCLUSION

It is the policy of the school to encourage 100% attendance and punctuality.

If you have a reason for being absent that the school thinks is justified, then you will be marked as an authorised absence. If your reason for absence is unjustified, or your parent does not give a reason for absence, you will be marked as an 'unauthorised absence'. This will be recorded on your Record of Achievement.

If you attend school on every day of the school term, you will be rewarded with a 100% Certificate of Attendance. If you achieve this each term of your four years at school, you will be presented with an Award at the Awards Evening, held in November each year.

SUMMARY OF THE ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. You should attend school punctually and regularly.
 2. You need to let the school know why you are absent on the first day, by ringing the office.
 3. Absence is authorised by the school. Only illness and family emergency or bereavement will normally be authorised.
 4. Medical and dental appointments should be made out of school hours. If unavoidable, please bring your card or a letter to your Form Tutor and sign out with the School Nurse, Mrs. Nelson. You should sign in with the School Nurse on your return.
 5. Your form tutor will mark the register in the morning tutorial period. Teachers will register each class they take during the day. Lateness or absence will be recorded and followed up.
 6. Family holidays should not be taken in term time.
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This policy was reviewed in the Summer Term 2001 and was revised again in the Summer Term 2003.