

THE MAELOR SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Committee Responsible	Finance, Personnel & Premises
Date Agreed	18 December 2017
Date for Review	Autumn term 2020

Principles

Every child has a fundamental right to be educated. Punctual and regular school attendance is an essential requirement for successful learning from the time a child starts school. If a child's school attendance is 100%, they will be able to make the best of all the opportunities available to them. An excellent attendance record will benefit young people in their future lives, whether that is in further education, training or employment. Poor attendance will have a serious impact on their education, work ethic and life chances.

Parents and teachers have a duty to ensure maximum attendance at school. Pupils and parents must be made aware that absence can reduce the standards achieved by individuals however motivated they are and staff must adopt strategies to assist those pupils who are absent.

Aims

- To enable maximum pupil attendance through valuing high attendance rates.
- To encourage students to take full advantage of their educational opportunity by attending regularly.
- To recognise the external factors which influence pupil attendance and work in partnership with parents, the Education Social Worker and Head of Year/Pastoral Manager to address difficulties.

Objectives

- To provide accurate and up-to-date data.
- To identify patterns of non-attendance at an early stage and work to resolve any personal/social difficulties.
- To provide an effective and efficient system for the monitoring of attendance.
- To discourage the taking of family holidays in school time wherever possible.

Practice

1. High attendance will be recognised in the school rewards system.
2. Pupil attendance will be recorded on each pupil's report.
3. Attendance records will be monitored weekly.
4. The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will make arrangements to ensure that the HoY/PMs are able to see the ESW during the ESW's weekly meetings at the school.
5. ESW will provide support and encouragement for pupils encountering difficulties in attending school.
6. ESW will be available for counselling individual pupils during his/her weekly visit.

7. Tutors must insist on a written explanation for absence (telephone messages in advance are permissible when cleared with HoY/PM)
8. Parents have a responsibility to contact the school on the first day of absence. Tutors must notify HoY/PM when absence is unexplained or on the third day of absence when HoY/PM should contact parents. All unauthorised absences should be referred to HoY/PM immediately.
9. HoY/PM will send letters home to parents notifying concern regarding poor levels of attendance and if repeated unsatisfactory reasons for absence are received. A meeting with parents will be arranged if there is no immediate improvement.
10. HoY/PM will engage ESW to investigate unexplained or lengthy absence as required.
11. The Local Authority will have powers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices of £60 for unauthorised absence from school with effect from September 2014. These Fixed Penalty Notices could be issued to address any unauthorised absences from school in excess of five school days in one term. An information leaflet produced by Wrexham County Borough council is available for further details.
12. ESW will liaise with external agencies in consultation with the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher to conduct case conferences, or seek external provision such as home tuition, unit referral, or a placement at Gwersyllt Support centre.
13. ESW will implement legal proceedings on instruction from the Headteacher.
14. Statistical summaries will be used to identify pupils whose attendance falls below 90%; these pupils will be targeted for scrutiny.

Holidays in term time

Government Guidelines state “in term time parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils for holidays”. The Headteacher **may** grant a pupil leave from school to enable him or her to go away on holiday. However, except under exceptional circumstances, no more than ten days in any school year will be granted. Permission will only be granted if the parent can demonstrate that the proposed holiday cannot be taken in the school holiday period due to restrictions imposed by an employer or exceptional family circumstances. Permission will only be granted when a request is received in advance. Normally, a month’s notice will be required in order that the pupil, parents and teachers can look at options for covering work missed by the absence.

Note. The Headteacher will not authorise absence solely on the grounds that absence is with parents’ consent even if the school has been notified. Some absences such as day trips during school time will be classified as 'unauthorised' and parents notified by the Headteacher.