Attendance Policy

* For the purposes of this policy, the term 'school' refers to maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, and pupil referral units (PRUs).

Enw'r Ysgol Name of school	Ysgol Hiraddug
Cyfeiriad a Chod Post Address and post code	Thomas Avenue, Dyserth, LL18 6AN
Rhif ffôn Phone number	01745 570467
Cyfeiriad e-bost ar gyfer y polisi hwn Email address for this policy	Ysgol.hiraddug@denbighshire.gov.uk
Dolwen we i'r polisi Web link to policy	www.ysgol.hiraddug.org

Enw'r polisi Name of policy	Attendance Policy
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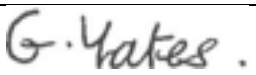
Dyddiad daw'r polisi yma yn effeithiol Date current version becomes effective	September 2024
Dyddiad Adolygu Review Date	September 2025
Arwyddwyd (Pennaeth) Signed (headteacher)	
Arwyddwyd (Cadeirydd y Corff Llywodraethol) Signed (chair of governing body)	
Gwybodaeth am y policy hwn ar gael i rieni/gofalwyr Information about this policy is available to parents/carers	By contacting school or visiting the school website

To be completed by Denbighshire Education and Children's Services:

Datblygwyd y Polisi gan Policy developed by	Wayne Wheatley

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1. INTRODUCTION

Denbighshire County Council has set out a clear statement of intent relating to school attendance with the introduction of an attendance procedure to be ratified and implemented across all schools in the County.

This model procedure is intended to set out an over-arching statement of appropriate protocols and practices relating to the management and promotion of school attendance in Denbighshire.

Schools set a range of attendance targets and absence targets, for statutory aged pupils (i.e. from the fifth birthday of a child in Reception to the last Friday in June, and where the child is sixteen by the end of that school year's summer holidays) and incorporates these in its key plans. The Local Authority supports schools to set their own targets using figures from the All Wales Core Data Set* on Attendance.

*http://schoolportalwales.org.uk/Default.aspx (Please note: this is a restricted link only accessible by Head Teachers with a username and password.)

Active and meaningful partnerships with schools, pupils and other agencies will be essential to the successful achievement of these targets.

2. INTENT

In order to improve levels of school attendance and punctuality the Local Authority will employ five key strategies:

- Provision of support and challenge to all schools, focusing resources on those schools with the most identifiable needs.

- Development of a range of performance indicators and subsequent setting of realistic yet challenging targets using the Core Data Set.

- Provision at school level to support individual pupils who experience difficulties in attending school regularly, working with parents/carers to achieve improvement and commitment to the pupils' education.

- Provision of equitable support to parents, balancing assistance with insistence to ensure that all parents meet their legal responsibilities in relation to school attendance.

- The continuing development of effective multi–agency working practices at school level in order to facilitate early intervention and sustained and improving levels of attainment of pupils.

- In developing the policy and practice for promoting school attendance, Denbighshire County Council will recognise the national context and central government priorities and balance this with the need to respond to the local context and particular priorities in Denbighshire.

- The Local Authority lead officer with responsibility for the development of school attendance policy and practice will be the Education Welfare Service Team Leader.

3. AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

It is vital to emphasise that there are two types of absence: authorised and unauthorised. Parents may need to be reminded that a letter or a phone call does not in itself authorise an absence, only the Headteacher's acceptance of the explanation offered by the letter or phone call authorises the absence. Schools will follow the Denbighshire Attendance Procedures in order to monitor, support and address attendance issues. Schools should develop a close working relationship with the Education Welfare Service in order to promote regular school attendance.

Absences from school will be authorised if the parent/carer can prove any of the following statutory defences:

- by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; or
- absent on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong; or
- absent because the school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance and no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Authority. *See link to Denbighshire County Council's School Transport Policy for further information.

  *** https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/your-council/strategies-_plans-and-policies/education-and-schools/school-transport-policy.pdf**

If a child is absent with the approval of the school, for whatever reason, no offence is deemed to have been committed, thus, the decision taken by the school to give or withhold authorisation for an absence is a critical factor in determining the Local Authority decision to prosecute.

An explanation is required for every absence. If one is not forthcoming the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Unauthorised absence is absence without approval from the Headteacher of the school. Regular unauthorised absence is an offence in law.

Parentally condoned absence is often more difficult to identify than any other form of pupil absence and is equally as damaging to the pupil's educational experience as any other form of absence. If school staff have reason to doubt that the explanation offered about a particular absence is genuine, the absence should be treated as unauthorised.

Since all absences are to be treated as unauthorised unless and until school agree on a satisfactory explanation, it is important that schools have procedures, consistently applied to pursue explanations and for amending registers. Such procedures would include a request for medical advice from relevant medical professionals.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOLS

Schools are primarily responsible for supporting the attendance of their pupils and for responding to difficulties and issues which might lead to non-attendance following Denbighshire County Council's Attendance Procedures (see Appendix 1).

Schools should adopt a positive and proactive approach towards attendance matters. Schools which encourage parents to take an active role in the education of their children can play a major role in improving levels of attendance and punctuality and in reducing absenteeism.

It is a legal requirement that schools will:

- Maintain attendance registers in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010*.
  The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. The register may be requested in a court of law as evidence in a prosecution for non-attendance, or for the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
  * **http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2010/1954/made**

- Accurately record each school session to show whether a pupil was present, or absent and whether authorised or unauthorised (according to criteria laid down by the Education Act 1996)*. Key to this work is the appropriate registration codes being applied by the registration staff.
  ***http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents**

- All Denbighshire schools must use the Welsh Government registration codes. See link below for further information:
  http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/565/1/100628attendancecodes4ien.pdf

- Remind parents it is the decision of the Headteacher as to whether or not an absence will be authorised.

- Schools must ensure registers are updated daily to ensure that the data being analysed by the central data team and the Education Welfare Service is accurate.

- Set annual targets to reduce absence and submit these targets in accordance with the statutory regulations. Targets should be submitted to: http://gwe-sms.blahwebserver.com/Account/Login (Please note: this is a restricted link only accessible by Head Teachers with a username and password.)

- Schools are required by law to have an attendance policy and are therefore strongly recommended to adopt the Denbighshire County Council Attendance Procedure. (See Appendix 1). The following should be personalised to every school:

    - Clear information is regularly communicated to parents through the school prospectus, newsletters, parents' evenings and through school web-sites. Parents should receive accurate and detailed information from school about attendance both at child level and overall school performance.

    - Opening and closing time of school with emphasis placed upon the need for a pupil to arrive on time.

    - Designated school staff must be aware of the importance attached to monitoring of attendance data looking at progress, trends and registration codes regularly. If a school is to be effective, designated staff need to analyse data at individual pupil level on a weekly basis.

    - Ensure school administration staff understand the SIMS attendance procedures and can support the school management team by producing reports on attendance.

    - Have in place first day contact with parents/carers, particularly in relation to pupils who are known to be poor attenders or who might otherwise be at risk.

    - Where absence is authorised, the school should remain vigilant to emerging patterns of non-attendance.

    - Schools must have a named governor with responsibility for attendance who receives a termly report on performance presented by the Headteacher at governor meetings.

- Schools must have in place a key senior member of staff with overall responsibility for attendance, monitoring the above activities.

'Good Practice: Guidance for Schools' is attached in the appendices of this document. (See Appendix 2).

4.1. PUPIL REINTEGRATION AFTER ABSENCE

After any period of absence, schools should consider whether the child requires support to reintegrate back into school. An Attendance Support Plan (see Appendix 3) should be used by schools to aid this process and each case needs to be managed on an individual basis.

- A named key worker with whom the pupil is comfortable should be appointed to support the pupil.
- Negotiate an Attendance Support Plan supported and agreed with the child, parent and school.
- Support identified within the Attendance Support Plan needs to be in place in readiness for the child's return.
- The pupil needs to feel welcome and supported on their first day.
- The identified key worker needs to debrief with the child at the end of each day throughout the reintegration period to eliminate any problems which may contribute to the child not returning.

4.2. SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION AUDIT TOOL

The Self-Evaluation Audit Tool (see Appendix 4) will be undertaken by all schools on an annual basis. Key features of these audits are to record key actions and areas for improvement:

- Analysing attendance data
- Examining existing procedures
- Inspecting attendance-related documentation
- Assessing communication with parents
- Considering strategies used to promote attendance
- Evaluating the response to Local Authority enquiries
- Identify training needs in the school

The audit will form part of the work with the Local Authority to address areas identified within the School Improvement Plan. The Education Welfare Service will support schools in this process.

(Copies of these documents are available electronically via the DCC Intranet - for education use only.)

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF 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 not a natural parent, has day-to-day care of a child or young person.

Having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law.

Parents can do a great deal to support the regular and punctual attendance of their child. Parents should:

- Ensure a good home routine is in place to prepare their child for the following school day (for example, school bag packed, uniform ready, an age-appropriate bedtime routine, a good early morning start including breakfast).
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day.
- Inform the school on the first day of their child's absence and keep the school regularly updated throughout the absence period.
- Ensure explanations for absences are a true reflection of the circumstances to enable schools to offer support to improve attendance.
- Expect contact from school regarding any unexplained absence of their child.
- Expect and be open to support from the school in order to improve their child's school attendance.
- Be aware that action can be taken in law to address unauthorised absence from school including a Fixed Penalty Warning notification at 5 days' unauthorised absence, followed by a Fixed Penalty Notice for 10 days or more unauthorised absence, an Education Supervision Order or parental prosecution.
- Schools will not approve holidays during term time. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Headteacher be in a position to consider the reasons for requesting holiday approval following the Exceptional Circumstance rule*. (Welsh Government Directive).

  *http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/pupilsupport/framework

- The Headteacher 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 Denbighshire, the parent would need to reapply to the Local Authority for a school place.

Please note: School places are offered based upon school numbers at the time of application. Parents may be unsuccessful in securing a school place in the same school their child was previously registered prior to the extended absence.

5.1. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996* 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 needs he/she may have either regular attendance at school or otherwise."

"a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where they are registered as a pupil."

Furthermore, Section 444 states that:

"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence."

* **http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/444**

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Under Section 437 of the Education Act 1996, Local Authorities have a duty to ensure a child for whom they are responsible is receiving a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Section 436A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires that Local Authorities must make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children residing in their area who are not receiving a "suitable education".

Implementation of the duty under Section 436A should be integrated with a wider range of duties placed on Local Authorities, including the Children's Act 2004 and the Welsh Government's 'Safeguarding Children Working Together' that aims to provide outcomes, and safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Local Authority has the responsibility of enabling pupils and parents who experience difficulty in maintaining regular or punctual attendance at school, and to enforce attendance, where appropriate, through legal proceedings. In Denbighshire, this work is undertaken by the Education Welfare Service, working with other services who regularly offer significant input in the process.

***** **http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/437**

* http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/4
* http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents

6.1. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EDUCATION SERVICES (EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE)

The Education Welfare Service acts on behalf of the Local Authority who has a duty to provide appropriate education to all statutory school age pupils in the County. The Education Welfare Service has the strategic responsibility for the writing and implementation of policies, operational procedures and codes of conduct in relation to school attendance.

In addition to improving overall school attendance research shows that children who are not in school are more vulnerable and can be easily drawn into crime, anti-social behaviour and community based issues. The Education Welfare Officers undertake individual case work as part of the Denbighshire Attendance Procedure. (See Appendix 1).

The Education Welfare Officers are centrally based, responding to the needs of schools and families as they arise. Schools and families can contact the Education Welfare Service through the helpline number – 01824 708064.

6.2. REFERRALS TO THE EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

Schools must evidence that they have followed the Denbighshire Attendance Procedures (see Appendix 1) prior to referral. Referrals to the Education Welfare Service are made using the Inclusion Referral form* via e-mail to *inclusion.referrals@denbighshire.gov.uk. An acknowledgement of receipt will be automatically sent to schools.

Once the referral is accepted, the allocated Education Welfare Officer will engage in individual case work in conjunction with the pupil, parents, schools and any other relevant agencies.

The Education Welfare Service will assist in removing barriers which may prevent a child from receiving full-time education by employing a range of practices and strategies in their case work and only where necessary resorting to legal intervention.

6.3. LOCAL AUTHORITY MONITORING AND SUPPORT

The Local Authority Officers and Education Welfare Service will monitor attendance through regular inspection of centrally held data on all schools. It is the role of the Education Welfare Service to analyse and disseminate data on attendance.

Continuous analysis of school data informs the Education Welfare Service's day-to-day operational planning and long-term strategic direction.

The Education Welfare Service will provide local and national data to enable schools to act upon it with the aim of improving educational outcomes and social inclusion.

Thorough analysis of attendance data can help highlight the early indicators of disengagement, which can ultimately lead to persistent absence.

6.4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHILDREN SERVICES

Children Services staff undertake assessments of 'Children In Need', in collaboration with other relevant professionals. The assessment will look at all aspects of the child's developmental needs, including his or her educational needs. Education Welfare Officers may bring to the attention of Children Services, children who have been referred to them due to attendance difficulties, who in their professional opinion may require additional support in accordance with the Local Authority's eligibility criteria for 'Children In Need'.

The Education Welfare Service and schools work closely with Team Around the Family (TAF) and other such agencies and will consider referrals if there are issues other than education that are preventing full attendance at school**.**

6.5. POLICY OF SUPPORTING LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC)

Denbighshire County Council is committed to securing the best possible educational outcomes for 'Looked After Children' (LAC). It believes that regular, punctual, uninterrupted attendance at school is vital to help ensure that Looked After Children are able to make the most of the educational opportunities which are available to them. (See Appendix 5 for Looked After Children Policy).

6.6. MULTI-AGENCY NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Local Authority recognises that the reasons for persistent non-school attendance are such that no single service or agency can expect to successfully address the issue. The Local Authority strives, therefore, through the development of area and locality working, to develop a multi-agency, cross-service, inter-disciplinary approach. This is characterised by the delivery of a child-centred, seamless, co-ordinated and effective response.

6.7. SCHOOL NURSING AND OTHER HEALTH AGENCIES

The School Nursing Service is accessed through a referral system. (See Appendix 6).

The School Nursing Service is offered to all parents/carers, but parents can decline service.

On school entry and on commencing secondary school, the School Nursing Service sends parents/carers a health questionnaire. It is really helpful if the school can encourage the return of this information in order for the school nurse to link in with families at the earliest opportunity. The School Nursing Service health questionnaire, together with a handover from the Health Visitor, is used to identify any health issues likely to impact on the child's school attendance.

Where issues are identified, a referral will be made to health colleagues or other agencies. School nurses, as with school staff, are required to work in a confidential manner, therefore parents are encouraged to share this information directly with the school.

With parental consent, school nurses may have a role to play in giving advice to the staff on supporting parents and children and young people with their:

- Health & Well Being
- Exercise
- Healthy Eating
- Sexual health
- Immunisations
- Behaviour (e.g. sleep, continence, bullying)
- Chronic long term conditions

School nurses are unable to access GP records without the consent of parents. Schools are therefore advised to request that parents sign a consent form that the school or parent can forward to the GP for release of health information held by the surgery in order to support the family and the pupil with attendance issues at school.

6.8. LINKS WITH OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Denbighshire has strong links with the Education Welfare Service/Welfare Services across North Wales. Regular meetings take place to share good practice and coordinate actions that affect each Authority, and also cross-working arrangements with legal intervention and codes of conduct.

7. FIXED PENALTY NOTICE

A Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued by the Local Authority at the request of the school in relation to unauthorised absences from school.

Please refer to the following documents:

- Denbighshire County Council's Local Code of Conduct regarding Education Fixed Penalty Notices. (See Appendix 7).
- Denbighshire County Council's Attendance Procedures. (See Appendix 1).

A Fixed Penalty Notice can be requested by the school where a child has 10 or more school days recorded unauthorised absences. (Please note that each school day is made up of 2 sessions, am/pm therefore 10 days = 20 sessions).
Schools may request a warning letter be issued to parent/carers by the Local Authority at mid-point (5 days) however this may not be required in all instances.
A Fixed Penalty Notice applies to a child or young person of statutory school age, i.e. from the fifth birthday of a child in Reception to the last Friday in June, and where the child is sixteen, by the end of that school year's summer holidays.
The Local Authority will only issue a Fixed Penalty Notice requested by a school relating to unauthorised leave of absence, when a school provides the necessary evidence to substantiate their request.

If the absence is unauthorised and recorded on the register with a combination of any of the following unauthorised codes, this will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued:

- "U" - Lateness 30 minutes after the start of the school day or after afternoon register = 1 session am/pm unauthorised absence.
- "O" – Where the Headteacher makes the decision that the reason provided is an unacceptable reason not to attend school.
- "G" – Holiday absence not agreed by the Headteacher.

https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/resident/education/attendance.aspx

8. FAMILY HOLIDAYS DURING TERM-TIME

Welsh Government guidance states:

In term-time, parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils for holidays and authorisation remains at the discretion of the Headteacher.

All requests for holiday leave should be in writing, ideally four weeks before the holiday, the application can only be made by the parent/carer

with day-to-day care of the child, even if they are not actually going on holiday themselves.

There needs to be consistency amongst schools on this issue. Denbighshire County Council's position is that no term-time holidays should be approved unless there are exceptional circumstances. If a parent/carer applies for a holiday in term-time which results in the child being absent for 10 school days this would result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued. For further information see section relating to family holidays and extended holidays via the link below*.

http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/pupilsupport/framework

9. EXTENDED OVERSEAS HOLIDAY

When making judgements about extended absence for pupils from minority ethnic families, schools should ensure that full account has been taken, not only of the Regulations and Welsh Government guidance, but also of the situation of minority ethnic families in general and the particular circumstances relating to each individual case. It is important that schools show an understanding of the parents' perspective even though the school may not be able to comply with the request for absence.

Schools should ensure that all parents are aware of the school's policy on absence. In the case of minority ethnic parents, special care should be taken to ensure that the regulations are fully explained and understood.

Key to this is schools communicating effectively with all their parents and carers, including those whose preferred language of communication is other than English or Welsh. Schools should contact the EAL Service (07500 123964/ 01824 708064/ roz.mannix@denbighshire.gov.uk) for guidance on good practice in using interpreters and translations.

The current Denbighshire County Council provider for translation/ interpreting services is 'The Big Word'. The EAL Service can advise on using these services and other options.

For further information on extended overseas holidays please refer to link below:

http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/pupilsupport/framework

10. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

All agencies have a clear role to play in helping to trace children who go missing from schools in Denbighshire or who go missing from schools from other authorities, and who may have moved into Denbighshire.

Parents/carers can support the smooth transition of their children's education provision between Denbighshire and other Local Authorities, where a move is required for any reason, by notifying the child's registered school.

Schools are expected to follow corresponding procedures in relation to those pupils who are removed from school by their parents without a named-school destination being provided and confirmed. (See Appendix 8).

11. SAFEGUARDING

The Safeguarding Officer in Education Services provides advice, support and training to schools on all safeguarding issues. Safeguarding is a consideration with all attendance concerns. Part of the Education Welfare Service roles and responsibilities involves representation at the following multi-agency forums which identify and plan support for the most vulnerable families and young people in Denbighshire:

- Multi-Agency Panel (MAP) - Education led
- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) - Police led
- Joint Risk Assessment Panel (JRAP) - Children's Services led
- Prevent and Deter Panel (PAD) - Youth Justice Service led

For further information please refer to Denbighshire County Council's Safeguarding Policy via the link below:

https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/resident/health-and-social-care/safeguarding.aspx

12. ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

Parents or carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that their child receives a suitable education and some choose to discharge this duty by electing to home educate.

Schools must ensure that they receive the request to home educate in writing from the parents or a person with parental responsibility. On receipt of this notification, a copy must be sent by the school to the local Authority within 10 working days. If a child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs they cannot be removed from the school roll without the consent of the Local Authority Statementing Officer.

For further information please refer to Denbighshire County Council's guidance on educating your child at home via the link below:

https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/resident/education/educating-your-child-at-home.aspx

KEY DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES

Inclusion and Pupil Support Welsh Government Circular No: 47/2006

All Wales Attendance Framework

The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2006

Guidance on School Attendance Codes June 2010

Statutory Guidance to help prevent children and young people from Missing Education WG Circular No: 006/2010

Additional Supporting Documentation

Inclusion and Pupil Support, WG 47/2006
http://gov.wales/dcells/publications/publications/circularsindex/2006/inclusionandpupilsupport/inclusionpupilsupport-e.pdf?lang=en

Statutory Guidance to Help Prevent Children and Young People from Missing Education, WG 006/2010
http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/101419missingeducationen.pdf

Elective Home Education, Welsh Government
http://edyourself.org/articles/EnglandandWales.php

Non- Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Elective Home Education (May 2015) Welsh Government
http://gov.wales/consultations/education/elective-home-education/?lang=en

Safe Learners in Education Welsh Government
http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150114-keeping-learners-safe.pdf

Appendix 1

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE - GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

CODE	ACTION – Unauthorised Absences	CODE	ACTION – Authorised Absences
A1	First Day Absence Contact • Update codes as reasons are received. Official SIMS Codes to be used – Whilst parents provide reasons, it is school's decision whether to authorise an absence. Please be mindful ESW service is unable to pick up referrals where school have authorised the absences. Legal action cannot be considered where absences have been authorised under C, I & M codes or where N codes are still in existence.	**AA1**	First Day Absence Contact • Update codes as reasons are received. • Following 10 days+ authorised absence, at schools discretion, (seek guidance from helpdesk if required) for illness/medical invite parents to AA1 meeting (see example AA1 letter). Monitor and review. Official SIMS Codes to be used – Whilst parents provide reasons, it is school's decision whether to authorise those absences. Please be mindful legal action cannot be taken where absences have been authorised under C, I & M codes or where N codes are still in existence.
A2	Follow up call/text • Check absences have been accounted for, enter reason on SIMS	**AA2**	Deterioration - AA2 letter to be sent (see example AA2 letter)

	• Update codes as reasons are received. • If no response move to next stage		• AA2 meeting with parents and pupil, school nurse and any other medical professional as appropriate. ** • Minutes of the meeting to be taken and Attendance Support Plan (ASP) and/or Health Care Plan to be completed, copy for parent. • Where there are genuine health reasons and there is an impact on attendance/learning, consider supplying work that can be completed at home. For more serious/long term health conditions consider a referral to BSS Moderation for home tuition. Both situations can be coded as 'B' so long as work is being returned for marking. Review regularly. • **Where the above stages determine there are no genuine health reasons further absences should be recorded as 'O' unless medical evidence is supplied from the date of AA2 letter. If medical/illness reasons continue to be provided without evidence send letter (See AA2+ example letter**

			• **A3 letters will no longer be sent to these pupils, because absences will only be authorised following medical evidence. Monitor and review.** • **If no improvement escalate to A4 (Unauthorised route).**
A3	Send letter home by post (See example A3 letter) • Code response as appropriate • If no response following 3 letters consider moving to next stage if unexplained absences are continuing.		
A4	Personnel with responsibility for attendance: • Trigger of 5 unauthorised absences - arrange meeting with parents and pupil by letter. (See example A4 letter) • Minutes of the meeting to be taken, Attendance Support Plan (ASP) to be completed, copy for parent and a 2 week review date set. * • Monitor and review and move to next stage if no improvement		

A4+	Senior Leadership Personnel with responsibility for attendance: • Arrange meeting with parents and pupil. (See example A4+ letter) • Minutes of the meeting to be taken and Attendance Support Plan (ASP) to be completed/revisited, copy for parent and a 2 week review date set. * • Monitor and review. If no improvement consider issuing a fixed penalty notice or move to the next stage. • Send letter to inform parents of referral to ESW service (See example A5 letter)		
A5	Complete Inclusion Referral Form including the following evidence which must have been accumulated within the same academic year and demonstrate either no improvement or deterioration: • SIMS registration certificate report • Copies of letters from school to parents • School meeting minutes (all levels)		

	• Review meeting minutes (all levels) • Any additional parental contact records • Attendance support plan • Medical/illness absences (AA1, AA2) must have entered the unauthorised absence pathway prior to ESW involvement. Referrer will receive an acknowledgement of referral letter with an allocated ESW and date for initial assessment appointment.		
A5+	Assessment and Intervention by the ESW Service: • Liaison and feed back to referrer as and when necessary. • In some cases a meeting may be required to address any school issues identified in the social work assessment. School to arrange meeting (see example A5+ letter) • Meeting to agree plan. 2 week review date to be set at meeting.		

	• School to send invitation to review meeting together with copies of meeting minutes and ASP(see example A5+ review letter, copy to ESW)		
A6	Governors Attendance Panel Meeting Invitees: Headteacher, Governor with responsibility for attendance, Wayne Wheatley, ESW, Health representatives if appropriate, Parent(s)/carer(s) and pupil. • School to arrange meeting - letter to be sent to parent/carer by recorded delivery, copy to ESW. • Parent/carer and student meet with the Governors Attendance Panel (meeting to be chaired by either ESW Team Manager or Headteacher). • Legal action will be discussed. • Attendance Support Plan (ASP) to be clarified and agreed. • Review date to be set for parent, pupil, senior leader and ESW. (Maximum of 4 weeks from meeting). School to send out A6+ Reminder		

	letter to be sent to parent in advance of meeting copy to ESW – see A6+ letter.		
A6+	Review meeting with Senior staff member, ESW, parent/carer and child • Recap progress of Attendance Support Plan (ASP) • Address any outstanding issues • Agree review date if required or decision if legal warning is to be issued. • No improvement, consider prosecution.		

Appendix 2

Good Practice - Analysis of Attendance Data

All schools hold a great deal of information about attendance which should be used for strategic planning and effective liaison with the Education Welfare Service and can thereby enable schools to manage attendance issues more effectively.

The link to this work is the administrative staff in schools who use SIMS relating to attendance data. Schools need to know how to use SIMS effectively to provide data for the school management teams who monitor attendance.

Schools can receive training for staff through Education Services on this matter by contacting the Education Welfare Service Team Leader.

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

- The school's commitment to achieving high levels of attendance should be explicit and clear to pupils, staff and parents.
- Pupils should constantly be reminded of the importance and value of good attendance and punctuality.
- The school must ensure the pupils' classroom experience is positive and enriching, encouraging them to take responsibility for and show commitment to their learning.
- Ensure that all school staff are trained on the appropriate use of registration codes. Training is available from the Education Welfare Service on request.
- Look at alternative curriculum options/possibilities for pupils who are hard to engage.
- Ensure that opportunities to reward attendance are scheduled into the school calendar.
- Discuss individual attendance targets with pupils; key staff need to monitor this work.
- Make clear to parents, through newsletters, the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Use the school web-site to promote the school's performance in school attendance weekly.
- Ensure key information about pupils is shared at transition.

- Use the media to promote good attendance at your school.
- Work closely with the governing body of the school and provide updates in governor meetings relating to attendance.
- Use the Attendance Audit to evaluate your school systems yearly.
- Use reward systems to celebrate success for pupils and inform parents.

INSET AND TRAINING

INSET and training can be provided and facilitated by Education Services, Customer Services and the Education Welfare Service to all schools, covering such issues as (please note this is not an exhaustive list):

- Good practice on the keeping of registers
- Strategies for promoting regular attendance
- Strategies for addressing persistent absenteeism
- Communication with parents
- Good practice in monitoring punctuality
- Reintegrating long-term absentees
- Rewards and incentives
- First-day of absence contact
- Primary-Secondary transfer

Appendix 3

Attendance Support Plan (ASP)

Date of meeting	Name	Date of Birth	
School	Year group/class	Attendance %	Punctuality
What are the specific issues impacting upon school attendance in each of the following areas?			
School	Home	Community	
Strengths			
Record actions/services to address specific issues identified above. Record by whom and by when. Build on strengths. Record also if support offered but declined with reasons and if no service available to meet identified need			
School	Home	Community	
Signature of school staff	Signature of parent/carer	Signature of pupil	
Date of review meeting			

Appendix 4

Attendance Self Evaluation – TERMLY 201?- AUDIT TOOL

Met with: _____ LA Officer: _____

Senior manager responsible for attendance: _____

	Measure	Grade	Score	Evidence
Performance	Was the school's attendance for 201-1 impacting on the national categorisation profile? Local categorisation position Quartile 1 – 6 points, Quartile 2 – 4 points, Quartiles 3 & 4 – 0 points	Q1 - 6 Q2 - 4 Q3 - 0 Q4 - 0		
Policy	The Attendance Procedure in school is being used as described by staff ?	Yes - 1 No - 0		
Coding	Is the register being completed without any 'missing marks'?	Yes - 1 No - 0		
	Are the appropriate registration codes being used?	Yes - 1 No - 0		
	Is the school authorising holidays?	Yes - 0 No - 1		
Referrals / procedures	Is the school working in a preventative capacity with the LA & referring cases when appropriate?	Yes - 1 No - 0		
	Is the school following other procedures as appropriate e.g. guidelines for 'Elective Home Education', 'Children Missing Education', exclusions, holiday absence?	Yes - 1 No - 0		
	Is the school responding in sufficient detail within the set time frame for advice and enquiries from the LA?	Yes - 1 No - 0		
	Is there a named Governor for attendance?	Yes - 1 No - 0		
	Do Governors get termly reports on attendance?	Yes - 1 No - 0		

	Measure			Grade	Score	Evidence
	Excellent Good Adequate Unsatisfactory	= = = =	15 12 - 14 7 - 11 0 - 6	Total		Comment:

Appendix 5

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) POLICY FOR SCHOOLS IN DENBIGHSHIRE.

School:
Head teacher:
LAC Designated Teacher:
LAC Governor:
Date Policy adopted:

1. **The Objective**
   To promote and support the educational achievement and welfare of Looked After pupils.

2. **The Role of the Designated teacher for Looked After Children**

- A senior teacher, with links to the Leadership Team of the school. The LAC Designated Teacher needs to have a voice which can influence and guide decision making within the school. The Designated Teacher may be required to attend meetings, sometimes at short notice, during the school day, and some flexibility may be required.
- To work in conjunction with the Education Liaison Officer (ELO), Head teacher and LAC Governor to ensure that all staff are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by Looked After Children and understand the complexity of individual cases (where appropriate), and the need for whole school, positive systems of support to help overcome them.
- To promote the involvement of LAC in extracurricular activities and opportunities, promote home reading and homework support.
- To develop systems for effective communication with carers, parents, social services, health, ELO and any other relevant agencies and support networks.
- To monitor the educational progress of all children who are Looked After in order to intervene quickly at an individual or school level, should additional support be required.
- To work in conjunction with the ELO to ensure all LAC pupils have Personal Education Plans (PEPs), which are a statutory requirement for all LAC. PEPs need to be completed within timescale (20 school days of starting a new school or becoming LAC). PEPs need to be meaningful, detailed and accurate.
- To attend, arrange for a representative, or provide educational updates and reports for reviews, PEPs and meetings. Ensure a speedy transfer of information and documents (securely) between agencies.
- To support pupils to share their views and make a contribution to their PEP. Ensure the pupil voice is heard and represented.

- To work closely and liaise with the Governor with responsibility for LAC.
- To be aware of the child's legal status, contact arrangements, those with Parental Responsibility (PR).
- To be aware, where possible of those pupils who are on a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) or have been adopted and have previously been LAC.

2.1 Wider School Staff

- LAC Designated Teacher to allocate a key member of staff the young person can speak with or meet with regularly, with or without prior warning where possible. Ensure the young person is in agreement with the allocated worker.
- To ensure all school staff who are in contact with Looked After Children have the appropriate amount of information regarding the young person's circumstances and are at least aware they are looked after by the Local Authority.
- In the absence of the usual class teacher(s), some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the covering teacher. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Head teacher or the Designated teacher.

2.2 Training

- To develop own knowledge and understanding of Social Care / Education procedures and keep up to date with relevant training and attend training opportunities provided eg LAC Forum.
- To ensure all school staff have the appropriate training opportunities in order to fully support LAC within the school.
- To cascade information and training to school staff as appropriate.
- To have a firm understanding of the LAC / PDG Funding arrangements at a regional, local, school and individual pupil level. Be aware of the procedures and the impact of the funding on individual LAC pupils. (This will be recorded on the PEP).

3. The Role of the LAC Governor

- To work closely with the LAC Designated teacher and ELO and have a good understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by Looked After Children and what the school does to support LAC.
- The LAC Governor will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis, including information such as;
  Number of LAC in the school.
  Attendance of LAC.
  Comparison of test scores / levels.
  Levels of fixed term / permanent exclusions of LAC.

- The LAC Governor, as a critical friend, should feel comfortable to question and support the school in promoting the educational achievement and welfare of LAC.
- The LAC Governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure LAC pupils have equal access to;
  National Curriculum / additional educational support and extra-curricular activities.
- To share and cascade information regarding LAC to other Governors and report to the Chair of Governors.

Appendix 6

School Nursing Service Referral Form

Re: Child's name:	D:O:B:
Address:	Contact tel: Home…… Work……. Mobile……
School:	Class (if known)
Name of adult with parental responsibility (P.R.)	Name ……..
Is child aware of referral (please circle) Yes No Not applicable	**Please be aware that referral <u>will not be accepted</u> without parental consent**
Reason for referral:	
Other agencies involved:	
Name of referrer (please print):	Signature of referrer:
Designation:	Contact number:
Date of referral:	Date received by School Nurse

Appendix 7

Parents' Guide to Attendance Monitoring in Denbighshire Schools

PARENTS GUIDE TO ATTENDANCE MONITORING IN DENBIGHSHIRE SCHOOLS

The flow chart below outlines the communication and action parents/ carers can expect in relation to attendance concerns of their children. The codes (A1 – A6+, AA1 & AA2) are used by schools and Local Authority to reference the level of involvement:

PARENT/CARER RESPONSIBILITY
Ensure that your child attends school regularly and on time
Contact school on first day of absence to provide an (honest) reason and make daily contact thereafter to update.
Respond to communication from school
Attend meetings in relation to school attendance if/when required

SCHOOL ACTION TO MONITOR AND MANAGE ATTENDANCE	
A1	Text or telephone call to parent/carer if child is absent without reason. If no response go to A2
A2	Follow up text/phone call No response go to A3
A3	Letter home to request reason for absence

If the absence remains unexplained for 3 + days or is not accepted by the school (unauthorised) the following steps		**If the absence is accepted by the school (authorised) the following steps will be taken:**	
A4	Meeting in school with parent/carer to offer support to prevent further unauthorised absences. Attendance Support Plan (ASP) to be drawn up. Regular reviews (fortnightly). Consider Fixed Penalty Warning to prevent ongoing attendance concerns. If no improvement go to A4+	**AA1**	Following 10+ days authorised absences (or earlier if required), meeting in school with parent/carer to maximise attendance. Attendance Support Plan (ASP)/Health Care Support Plan to be drawn up. Regular reviews (fortnightly). No improvement, and where it is found that there is no clear medical evidence to prevent school attendance, go to AA2
A4+	Meeting in school with parent/carer to review and revise ASP. Regular review meetings (fortnightly). Consider Fixed Penalty Notice to prevent ongoing attendance concerns.	**AA2**	Meeting in school with parent/carer to clarify the medical concerns. Where there are no genuine health reasons further absences will be recorded as unauthorised and will be managed down the unauthorised route, go to A4/A4+.

Local Authority management of ongoing unauthorised absences.

A5	Referral from school to Education Welfare Service.

	Assessment undertaken regarding school attendance concerns. Attendance Support Plan drawn up – aim to prevent legal action where possible. Referrals of support to other agencies considered.
A5+	If required meeting in school to address any concerns identified in the assessment preventing school attendance. Regular reviews (fortnightly). No improvement go to A6
A6	Governor's Attendance panel meeting in school. Review actions of school and ESW service. Regular reviews (fortnightly).
A6+	If no improvement consideration of legal action.

EXAMPLE TEXTS AND LETTERS FOR PARENTAL COMMUNICATION:

T1 Attendance Text

As you know, [pupil name] has now missed [no. of days] of school this year. This is having an impact on their progress. Please help them to attend. If you would like support please speak to the class teacher or contact [academy telephone number] to make an appointment with [name of parent support advisor].

T2 Attendance Text

(pupil name) has now missed a further (no of days) of school this year. You can have a big impact on helping them attend and not miss anymore learning. Next week is a fresh start – we would appreciate your help in improving (pupil's name) attendance over the coming weeks.

AA1 Attendance Concern

Dear PARENTNAME

School Attendance Concerns
PUPILNAME (DOB)

I am writing to you in relation to your PUPILNAME's attendance, which is currently NUMBER per cent. They have been absent for NUMBER sessions.

Absence from school impacts significantly on children's academic progress and wellbeing.

The wellbeing and progress of our pupils is our priority, and we know that absence from school is often a sign that additional support may be needed.

I would like to invite you to contact us as soon as possible to discuss how we can work together to maximise PUPILNAME's attendance and ensure any support needed is put in place.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

Enc. Registration Certificate

Yours sincerely

AA2 Attendance Concern

Dear PARENTNAME

School Attendance Concerns Stage 2

PUPILNAME (DOB)

I am writing to you in relation to significant concerns about PUPILNAME's attendance, which is currently NUMBER per cent.

Each absence is recorded on your child's register, which current shows they have NUMBER authorised and NUMBER unauthorised absences.

Poor school attendance is often a sign that additional support is needed, and we would like to ensure that this is put in place to support PUPILNAME's improved attendance.

I would like to invite you to meet with me on DATE at TIME to discuss this matter and identify any support that may be required. This meeting may result in a Parenting Contract being agreed, which will aim to outline any support needed and how that will be put in place.

Please be aware that further unauthorised absences may result in you being issued with a Penalty Notice Warning or a request for support from the Local Authority.

You are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting so we can work together to ensure PUPILNAME's attendance improves, and such action is not necessary.

I look forward to meeting with you soon.

Yours sincerely

Enc. Registration Certificate