



Education, Schools & Children's Services Attendance Policy 2024/25

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 Emmanuel
Cyfeiriad a Chod Post Address and post code	Victoria Road Rhyl LL18 2EG
Rhif ffôn Phone number	01745 353447
Cyfeiriad e-bost ar gyfer y polisi hwn Email address for this policy	ysgol.emmanuel@denbighshire.gov.uk
Dolwen we i'r polisi Web link to policy	https://www.ysgolemmanuel.com/

Enw'r polisi / Name of policy	Attendance Policy
Rhif fersiwn y Polisi / Policy version number	February 2024
Dyddiad a gymeradwywyd y Polisi yn ffurfiol gan y Corff Llywodraethol / Date Policy formally approved by Governing Body	December 2024
Dyddiad daw'r Polisi yn effeithiol / Date Policy becomes effective	December 2024
Dyddiad Adolygu / Review Date	December 2027
Arwyddwyd (Pennaeth) / Signed (headteacher)	R.Archer
Arwyddwyd (Cadeirydd y Corff Llywodraethol) / Signed (chair of governing body)	A.Wilde
Gwybodaeth am y policy hwn ar gael i rieni/gofalwyr / Information about this policy is available to parents/carers	

Table of Contents

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL POLICY AND PRACTICE

1. Introduction
2. Promoting Attendance
3. Authorised / Unauthorised Absence
4. Responsibilities of Schools
 - 4.1 Pupil Reintegration After Absence
 - 4.2 School Self- Evaluation Audit
5. Responsibilities of Parents
 - 5.1 Statutory Framework
6. Responsibilities of the Local Authority
 - 6.1 Responsibilities of Education Welfare Service Officers
 - 6.2 Referrals to the Education Welfare Service
 - 6.3 Local Authority Monitoring and Support
 - 6.4 Responsibilities of Children Services
 - 6.5 Policy supporting Looked After Children (LAC)
 - 6.6 Multi- Agency Networks and Partnerships
 - 6.7 School Nursing Service and Other Health Agencies
 - 6.8 Links with other Local Authorities
7. Fixed Penalty Notices
8. Family Holidays during Term- Time
9. Extended Overseas Holidays
10. Children Missing Education
11. Safeguarding
12. Elective Home Education

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Legislation and Guidance
- Appendix 2 Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart
- Appendix 3 School Attendance Support Plan
- Appendix 4 Case Management Guidance – School Use
- Appendix 5 Good Practice: Guidance for Schools
- Appendix 6 School Attendance Self Evaluation Audit
- Appendix 7 School Nursing Service Referral Form
- Appendix 8 Fixed Penalty Code Of Conduct

FOREWORD

This document is an operational policy for schools to adopt through their governing body each academic year.

Operational staff in school with responsibility for school attendance must also be aware of other policies including the Reduced Time-table policy, the Safeguarding Policy and Fixed Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. These must also be considered when implementing action with regards to school attendance, well-being and safeguarding of a pupil.

The engagement and entitlement of pupils to a full education which meets the education, and social needs remain the commitment of Denbighshire County Council. This is never more so than in recent years with lower-than-expected attainment levels of some pupils.

We must work together with parents, pupil's, education and schools to form lasting relationships that consolidate true and meaningful professional relations that impact positively on the outcomes of a pupil.

G W Davies

Geraint Davies

Pennaeth Addysg / Head of Education

1. INTRODUCTION

Denbighshire County Council is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will provide an environment where all pupils parents and carers feel valued and welcomed and are committed to the fundamental principle that early intervention and partnership working is crucial in ensuring the attendance, protection and wellbeing of all children.

Schools follow the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and Denbighshire School Safeguarding Policy as well as local protocols in relation to specific and identifiable wellbeing issues that prevent a child from accessing education, or where there are safeguarding concerns.

For a pupil to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to education law and guidance and our school attendance policy is written to reflect this legislation and guidance produced by the Welsh Government. For information relating to this legislation and guidance, see Appendix 1.

The legislation makes provision for a school day which is to be divided into two sessions with a lunch break in the middle and to be available for 190 days in any school year.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance on an annual basis to ensure that it is achieving its set goals and targets as identified by the Governors, local authority, GwE North Wales Regional School Improvement Service and Welsh Government statutory returns on attendance.

This policy will contain the procedures that the school will use to work towards meeting its attendance targets, as set by the local authority.

2. PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents, carers and pupils.

Denbighshire is committed to ensuring that pupils are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them, both now and in the future. Schools will offer a variety of reward incentives for individual learners, classes and year groups who have high levels of school attendance, no unauthorised absence and/or have shown to significantly improve their attendance.

Schools will use a variety of strategies to intervene at an early stage to encourage improved attendance of individual pupils and assist to overcome any barriers that may be preventing the expected level of attendance. **Persistent absence in Wales is set at below 90 %** all pupils below this level are a concern for school and will require monitoring and intervention. The use of school attendance data and coding of pupils is fundamental to tracking and monitoring pupil and school performance. Strategies to improve a pupils attendance may be school-based, or involve joint working with other education services and partner agencies to ensure the most appropriate support for the pupil is in place supported by the parent/ carer. Please refer to Appendix 2 Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart, Appendix 3 Attendance Support Plan (ASP) and Case Management Guidance - School Use.

Where a school decides to implement a reduced timetable for a pupil there must be suitable reason to take such an approach and agreed with the parent, carer and local authority education together with any other services working with the pupil. A plan must be in place signed by all parties and involve a half termly review process to ensure the plan is offering an effective education. Any reduced timetable plan must outline the detail of the education to be offered each school day whilst the pupil is not in a school setting and coded correctly in the attendance register.

The focus will be on maintaining engagement, with school whilst the plan is in place to ensure a pupil has continuous learning and achieve good attendance. ***Please refer to the Denbighshire County Council Reduced Timetable Policy (2024) for more detail on the implementation process and monitoring.***

The potential consequences of not meeting the expectations of regular school attendance will be regularly communicated to parents and carers throughout the academic year in various ways such as text messages, the school website, newsletters, parents' evenings and through the local authority communication team working with education.

Statement from Welsh Government (December 2023) Threshold Change to Persistent Absence in Wales

Welsh Government in December 2023 changed the threshold for a pupil being persistently absent from previously being any pupils whose attendance was below 80% to those whose attendance is below 90%. This increased expectation underlines the importance attached to regular school attendance and the need for local authorities, schools and families to work together to achieve this outcome.

Belonging, Engaging, Participation Guidance Welsh Government Guidance 293/2023

[Improving school attendance: easy read | GOV.WALES](#)

The guidance is aimed at maintained schools, PRUs, EOTAS settings, parents/carers and local authorities. It is a practical document for leaders, teachers and other practitioners which sets out the approaches and resources that can be used by schools, PRUs and EOTAS settings to help ensure high levels of learner engagement and attendance. These approaches and resources should be adopted, developed and built upon so that they are aligned to the needs of children and parents/carers.

Attendance cannot be considered in isolation. The many interrelated and overlapping causes of absence and the varied nature of the learner experience in school, the community and at home mean that whole school strategies and strong multi-agency working arrangements are needed, designed to support all learners. There is a growing understanding that schools also need to support learners in developing a sense of belonging, connectivity and engagement with school, and to build their resilience and ability to cope with the challenges they face.

The guidance should be read in collaboration with the Denbighshire school attendance and safeguarding policy and the many themes and approaches considered and adopted by schools to further improve pupil engagement and attendance.

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. Parents need to be made aware of these decisions so as not to confuse matters at a later stage and/or if matters are pursued through a legal process.** Schools will follow the Denbighshire Attendance Procedures in order to monitor, support and address attendance issues. It is critical schools implement an Attendance Support Plan with a pupil of concern at an early stage in the monitoring process to engage all parties and document the actions of school to manage the attendance concern. This will form part of the evidence required to refer a case to the local authority Education Welfare Service. Please refer to Appendix 2

Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart, Appendix 3 Attendance Support Plan (ASP) and Case Management Guidance – School Use.

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: [Free school and college transport | Denbighshire County Council](#)

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 **and communicated to the parent/carer**.
- Since all absences are to be treated as unauthorised unless and until school agree on a satisfactory explanation, it is important that schools' procedures are consistently applied to pursue explanations and for amending registers.

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 Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart (see Appendix 2).

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.

School must have in place processes and systems that accurately record absence and place an emphasis on monitoring individual pupils causing concern. These pupils should be monitored on a weekly basis to enable school to effectively reduce absence rates. See link below for Welsh Government School Attendance Codes: [Guidance on school attendance codes](#).

Weekly Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meetings with those responsible for monitoring school absence should identify those pupils who require attendance support plans working with the parent, school staff and other agencies to engage the pupil into a pattern of regular school attendance.

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.

*<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2010/1954>

- 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.
- Remind parents it is the decision of the Headteacher as to whether or not an absence will be authorised.
- 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. These should be shared with education and governing body of the school.

- Have an attendance policy and are therefore strongly recommended to adopt and follow the Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart. (See Appendix 2).

The following should be personalised to every school:

- Clear information regularly communicated to parents through the school website, newsletters, parents' evenings. Parents should receive accurate and detailed information from school about attendance both at child level and overall school performance.
- Opening and closing time of the school day, clear to all parents, with emphasis placed upon the need for a pupil to arrive on time.
- The attendance lead 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. Alongside this there needs to be regular monitoring of cohorts and whole school attendance data tracking patterns and trends.
- 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.
- 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 Governing Body 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 5).

4.1 PUPIL REINTEGRATION AFTER ABSENCE

After any period of absence, schools should consider whether the child requires support to reintegrate back into school. EBSA Emotional Based School Avoidance / Attendance Support Plan could assist with reintegration and monitoring of the pupil in school regarding both progress or decline should be used and regularly reviewed by schools to

support 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.
- Negotiate an Attendance Support Plan supported and agreed with the child, parent, school and any other relevant professional/agency.
- Support identified within the Attendance Support Plan needs to be in place in readiness for the child's return to school.
- 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

The School Attendance Self-Evaluation Audit (see Appendix 6) will be undertaken by all schools on an annual basis. Key features of these audits are to record key actions and areas for improvement using the school attendance data:

- Analysing attendance data
- Examining existing procedures
- Inspecting and being aware of 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 Hwb SharePoint within the Education Welfare Service pages.

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 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 daily throughout the absence period.
- Ensure explanations for absences are a true reflection of the circumstances to enable schools to offer support to improve attendance.
- 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 the use of Fixed Penalty Notices, an Education Supervision Order (court order on the child) or Parental Prosecution. Please reference Appendix 2 Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart and Appendix 3 Attendance Support Plan.

Link to Denbighshire Website: A brief guide to Fixed Penalty Notices for non-attendance at school:

<https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/search/search.aspx?q=fixed%20penalty%20notice#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=fixed%20penalty%20notice&gsc.page=1>

- Be aware that 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).
- Be aware that if the Headteacher receives a parental request for an extended holiday absence (i.e. longer than four continuous weeks, including exceptional circumstances) the Headteacher must advise the parent that the pupil will be removed from the school roll. On return to Denbighshire, the parent would need

to reapply to the Local Authority.

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.

Applications for school places are through school admissions using the Denbighshire County Council Website Education page to complete a school admissions application.

5.1 STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

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 additional 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.”

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/444>

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

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”.

* <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/4>

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

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, Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 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>

6.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICES OFFICERS

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 open to exploitation. The Education Welfare Officers, supported by Education Attendance Support Officers and Family Engagement Officers undertake individual case work as part of the service support.

The Education Welfare Service 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 Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart (see Appendix 2) prior to referral. Referrals to the Education Welfare Service and Support Officers should be completed on the appropriate form and sent via e-mail to [*inclusion.referrals@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:inclusion.referrals@denbighshire.gov.uk). An acknowledgement of receipt will be automatically sent to schools.

Once the referral is discussed at the service weekly allocation meeting school will receive a tracking sheet advising if the referral has been accepted or not. If the case has been accepted the tracking sheet will detail the worker who will make direct contact with the referrer, the family and any identified professionals involved.

The service staff 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 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.

Thorough analysis of attendance data by both school and the Local Authority can help highlight the early indicators of disengagement, which can ultimately lead to persistent absence.

6.4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHILDRENS SERVICES

Children's Services staff undertake assessments 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's 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 'Care and Support'.

6.5 POLICY 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.

[*https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/search/search.aspx?q=Looked%20after%20children%20policy%20for%20schools#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=Looked%20after%20children%20policy%20for%20schools&gsc.page=1](https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/search/search.aspx?q=Looked%20after%20children%20policy%20for%20schools#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=Looked%20after%20children%20policy%20for%20schools&gsc.page=1)

Section 20 of the [Children and Young Persons Act 2008](#) states that the governing body of a maintained school must designate a member of staff as having responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who are looked after in the school. This duty applies regardless of whether or not there are looked after children on the school roll, as schools need to be sufficiently prepared to respond quickly to these children needs.

In discharging their duties under the Children Act 1989 and 2004 Denbighshire County Council as a designated Education Liaison Officer (ELO) to coordinate the child's education plan and address the education needs of looked after children and care leavers

in the local authority area. In addition, the ELO must ensure that every child looked after by them has an effective and high-quality Personal Education Plan (PEP). They are there to make sure that looked after children get any additional support they need with education and are based within the social care or education departments of the local authority. They have a clear remit to establish and enforce joint procedures and protocols, provide information as appropriate to all involved in corporate parenting and to act as a champion for young people in public care.

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, 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, 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 7).

The School Nursing Service is offered to all parents/carers, but parents can decline the 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 Services across Wales. Regular meetings take place to share good practice and implement consistent actions that affect each Authority.

There are cross-working arrangements and developments in place linked to Welsh Government guidance and policy in the area of school attendance.

7. FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

A Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued by the Local Authority at the request of the school in relation to unauthorised absences for a child or young person of statutory school age (i.e. The school term following the child's fifth birthday of a child in Reception to the last Friday in June in Year 11).

Please refer to the following documents:

- Denbighshire County Council's Local Code of Conduct regarding Education Fixed Penalty Notices (see Appendix 8).
- Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart (see Appendix 2).

Schools may request a Fixed Penalty Notice Warning letter be issued to parent/carers by the Local Authority. A warning can be issued following 5 days of unauthorised absence.

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).

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 can 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.

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 may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

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 Manager 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.

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. **Schools must ensure they report any child who is determined as missing on SIMS via the lost children's data base and seek advice of cases of concern with the Education Welfare Service Helpdesk 01824-708064.**

11. SAFEGUARDING

The Safeguarding Officer in Education Services provides advice, support and training to schools and Education Services staff 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
- Exploitation Panel - Children's Services
- ECS Panel – Education led
- Multi Agency Daily Strategy Meeting – Police led

12. ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

Parents or carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that their child receives a suitable education, and some choose to elect 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

Individual Development Plan (IDP)/Statement of Special Educational Needs they cannot be removed from the school roll without the consent of the Local Authority Additional Learning Needs Department.

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

<https://www.gov.wales/home-education-handbook-home-educators>

Appendix 1

Legislation and Guidance

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) to any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent means natural parents and includes any person who has parental responsibility or has day to day care of the child.

Section 444 1, 1(a) and (ZA) contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school or alternative provision arranged by the Local Authority.

For further information please see link below.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2010/1954>