

Ysgol Minafon

The Old Highway Mochdre Colwyn Bay LL28 5AU

Rhif Ffôn: 01492 540 194

E-bost: swyddfa@minafon.conwy.sch.uk

Gwefan: www.ysgolminafon.co.uk



Dear Parent/Carer,

School Attendance Guidance

As we approach the end of the school year, I would like to take the opportunity to update you with regards to school attendance information in preparation for the return to school on September 1st 2025, as well as providing an update regarding holidays and leave of absence requests for your child.

Full attendance at school is important if learners are to benefit fully from the educational experience and we are fully committed to working with you to ensure that your child accesses their entitlement.

For any period of absence, we would ask you to ensure that you contact the school to advise of the reason for this in line with the school policy. School may contact you asking for further evidence to record absences as authorised for periods of frequent or extended absence due to illness. Parents/carers who are struggling to get their child to school should contact the school in the first instance to see what support may be available.

Where necessary, parents and carers are kindly asked to consider taking holiday leave during the weeks of allocated school holidays. Parents and carers must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence (four weeks minimum notice for a planned leave of absence) and the school will consider any application and reasons. Forms to request a leave of absence can be obtained from the school, either in paper copy from the school office or from the school website. The Headteacher will consider the request and respond in writing within 5 school days as to whether the request has been authorised. Subsequently, a parent or carer can make an informed decision whether they wish to pursue the absence in the knowledge of any potential consequences.

The school attendance policy is clear that leave of absence requests will not be authorised unless exceptional circumstances are evident and evidenced. Exceptional circumstances remain at the discretion of the Headteacher. If the Headteacher's decision is not to agree the request, then the holiday will be an unauthorised absence. A suggested list of exceptional circumstances is shown below:

- Those families of serving armed forces personnel
- Parents of a child experiencing a life limiting illness
- Family that has suffered acute trauma
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family
- Any other circumstance that is viewed as exceptional (If an event can reasonably be scheduled outside of term-time then it would not be normal to authorise absence)

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For periods of unauthorised absence, the Welsh Government has sanctioned the use of Fixed Penalty Notices as one response to address this in schools and Conwy County Borough Council will apply the guidance to ensure that learners are attending school on a regular basis should all other means prove ineffective.

Fixed Penalty Notices were introduced in September as part of a range of options to improve attendance at school. A Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued when a Headteacher does not receive substantive evidence that may allow them to authorise school absences in line with published WG School Attendance Coding Guidance.

<https://gov.wales/school-attendance-codes-guidance>

A Fixed Penalty Notice will only be issued if the request by the Headteacher meets the criteria stated in the Conwy County Council FPN Code of Conduct.

<https://www.conwy.gov.uk/en/Resident/Education-and-Families/Schools/Education-Penalty-Notices.aspx>

Any unpaid fines may result in legal action by the Local Authority if the unauthorised absence remains a feature of the school attendance record and meets the LA threshold for this action. Legal action is only taken when all efforts to engage parents and bring about a positive improvement in attendance have been applied without success.

We therefore request that all parents and carers work with schools from the earliest opportunity to share any difficulties and issues that may be impacting on their child attending school regularly.

For more information and support please visit the link below from Welsh Government.

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2023-11/improving-school-attendance-easy-read.pdf>

Further advice on school attendance can be sought directly from your child's school or from the Local Authority Education Welfare Service at ESWS@conwy.gov.uk