

PA41 School Teacher

Senedd Cymru

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

Absenoldeb Disgyblion

Ymateb gan Athro Ysgol

Welsh Parliament

Children, Young People and Education Committee

Pupil absence

Evidence from School Teacher

Record your views against the inquiry's terms of reference, which have been grouped into 5 themes.

1. Reasons

During Covid19 the government made attendance optional which was a change in attitude. The system on enforcement with AWOs was not there. Since the government has expected all children to return, the system of enforcement for non attenders has had to resume, but now against a background where non attending had been ok.

Parental control is also a factor. In my school, non attenders are often children who "play up" about going to school and the parents do not have the parental authority to make them go. This is coupled with a culture where education is not valued. The children do not understand they need jobs as adults, and will need an education for that. While the school promotes education parents often do not reinforce it.

2. Risks and consequences

Lack of socialisation. Lack of wider experiences. Lack of basic educational skills. Impact on job opportunities as an adult. Impact therefore financially. Circle of deprivation.

3. Impact

In my school setting children who miss their education through absenteeism do not have that supplemented by home tuition. Instead, they stagnate or regress.

4. Effectiveness of policies

A culture that values education is needed so that parents understand the need and value of it. They will not engage if they do not see the value of it.

Government needs to recognise the vital role that schools make. It needs to be supportive. It needs however, to recognise that teachers can only have influence to a certain degree, and shift the focus from teachers to parental responsibility.

5. Other

My views represent the school where I teach, where there are very high levels of social deprivation and very high parental unemployment.

