



Student Pregnancy Policy

Reviewed by: Well-being Committee

Version: 1

Reviewed on: 20th January 2015

Adopted by FGB on: 4th March 2015

Signed by:

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(Chair of Governors)

Next Review Date: 20th January 2016

Purpose and Commitment

Ysgol Treffynnon seeks to ensure *Excellence in learning and achievement for all (Rhagoriaeth mewn dysgu a chyflawniad i bawb)*. This encompasses a commitment to inclusive education that includes an assurance that any teenage parents at our school are given the appropriate opportunities to fully engage with their learning, training and future employment needs.

As the majority of pregnancies to students will occur in Years 10, 11 and the Sixth Form, it is vital that teachers are fully aware of their responsibilities to provide a suitable volume of work of an appropriate content and challenge so as not to jeopardize the potential examination success of a pregnant student.

The law requires that 'suitable' education is provided for those who cannot attend school. A young woman of statutory school age who is pregnant or has recently given birth is allowed 18 weeks maternity leave in total and links with mainstream education should be maintained.

The educational needs of all students are a priority and the school recognises that in the case of pregnant teenagers a certain degree of flexibility will be necessary if their needs are to be met in accordance with its commitment to an inclusive education for all. However the school also recognises that wherever possible this flexibility should be contained within a framework in which educational achievement is the norm and that attendance at school the expectation.

Introduction

The proper place for a student who is pregnant is normally in school with her peers, unless there is a medical reason to the contrary. The fact that a student is pregnant is not in itself a sufficient reason for exclusion, although it is recognised that LEAs often make arrangements in consultation with the student and parents for a period of education away from school.

Circular 10/94; DFE

The school has a responsibility to see that all students who become pregnant are given every possible consideration with regard to their future learning, training and employment needs whilst taking account of the wishes and health of the student concerned.

Circular 1/2004..... (WAG; Revised March 2006)..... makes clear that pregnancy is not a reason for exclusion from school. Health and safety should not be used as a reason to prevent a pregnant student from attending school and schools should ensure that the health and safety of a pregnant student is not compromised. Under no circumstances should a school invite a student to take a leave of absence in order for them to be sheltered from gossip or bullying.

Circular 47/2006; WAG

The Policy

This policy aims to set out the procedures and protocols surrounding the needs of pregnant learners at Ysgol Treffynnon:

1. A pregnancy or suspected pregnancy must immediately be reported to the Assistant Headteacher with delegated responsibility for Inclusion.
2. On confirmation of a pregnancy the following action will be taken:
 - (i) A meeting will be arranged with the student and their parents/carers. This meeting will involve the Assistant Headteacher with delegated responsibility for Inclusion; the Inclusion Welfare Officer (IWO); the Head of Year; and the School Nurse.
 - (ii) A Pupil Support Plan (PSP) will be started by a designated member of staff.

The Headteacher will be informed immediately knowledge of a pregnancy is known and be given information regarding agreed action plan.

- (iii) The student will be given advice dependent upon:
 1. Health of student.
 2. Age of student, examination aspirations and career hopes.
 3. Home Circumstances.
 4. Wishes/attitude of parents.
 - (iv) The following choices may be offered / considered:
 1. To carry on in school as long as possible, then move to Home Tuition.
 2. Immediate Home Tuition.
 3. Home Tuition with a phased return to school after the birth and/or limited examination entry.
 - (v) All the above options will be dependent upon factors outlined in 2 (iii) above. For example: students in Year 11, 12 and 13 will have a different perspective of the possibilities than a student say in Year 9 or 10. Also the time of year of the birth will be an important implication in the decision making process.
3. All appropriate medical support and additional needs will be provided through the Inclusion Welfare Service (IWS) and School Nurse (to include the advice and guidance of the student's G.P.).
 4. The feelings and health of the student will be paramount in all discussions.

Decisions must clearly be taken with regard to the health and safety of the student and the unborn child. A suitable risk assessment should be made by a designated member of staff, which takes into account any medical issues specific to the needs of the particular student.

With regard to learning, students should whenever possible and practicable be:

- (i) Encouraged to stay in school as long as possible, particularly if near end of Year 11 or 13.
- (ii) Encouraged, if possible, to return after the birth. However, there may be concerns over the student's feelings with regard to:
 - 1. Being pregnant in school and peer group relationships.
 - 2. Being able to cope emotionally with school work and the pregnancy.

Points 2 to 4 should be addressed during discussions with the student, their parents/carers, Head of Year, IWO and School Nurse.

- 5. The school is committed to taking a flexible approach to the needs of the individual student; and being sensitive to any changed or changing circumstances.
- 6. If the student is to remain in school for a period of the pregnancy she will be given one or two 'companions' to escort her between lessons, to toilet and canteen.

School Staff

- 7. All staff to be made aware of the pregnancy in the interests of the student's welfare and safety. All First Aiders to be made aware – teaching and non-teaching staff.
- 8. If the student is to remain in school for part, or for the whole of pregnancy, immediate contact with parents must be available. Home telephone plus emergency numbers must be available and up-to-date.
- 9. All discussions between staff involved, student and parents to be private in nature and only information which is relevant and necessary to be disclosed.
- 10. Heads of Years will liaise with the student's Form Tutor and with their Subject Teachers should home tuition be an agreed option. This is essential to ensure a continuity in the learning and not to hinder the academic chances of the students should pregnancy occur during an examination year.
- 11. Should the mother and/or father of the baby be a student of the school, discussion should take place with him regarding the offer of support, advice, and counseling if required.
- 12. The school will emphasise to the student that it is both possible and desirable that she remain in education and that parenthood does not mean an end to formal education and the pursuit of academic qualifications and further education, training and employment.
- 13. The Policy Statement is broadly based to allow each and every student to be

dealt with on an individual basis.

14. The school has a Sex Education Policy which details advice to students about their sexual behaviour and allows them to make their own decisions/choices.
15. The school should take due consideration of current Child Protection Procedures as laid out in the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures* (WAG; 2008). Depending upon the age and home circumstances of the pregnant student, it may be legally and/or morally incumbent upon the school to refer the knowledge of pregnancy to Social Services and/or the Police¹

¹See appendix for the age thresholds for referring to social services and/or police.

Appendix

Children under the age of 13

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, children under the age of 13 are of insufficient age to give consent to sexual activity.

In all cases where the sexually active young person is under the age of 13, a full assessment must be undertaken by the agency involved. Each case must be assessed individually and consideration must be given to making a child protection referral to social services.

Young people aged between 13 and 16

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 reinforces that, whilst mutually agreed, nonexploitative sexual activity between teenagers does take place and that often no harm comes from it, the age of consent should still remain at 16. This acknowledges that this group of young people is still vulnerable, even when they do not view themselves as such.

Sexually active young people in this age group will still have to have their needs assessed during this protocol. Discussion with social services will depend on the level of risk/need assessed by those working with the young person.

Consideration should be given to making a referral if the young person becomes pregnant or has a miscarriage or planned termination.

This difference in procedure reflects the position that, whilst sexual activity under 16 remains illegal, young people under the age of 13 are not capable of giving consent to sexual activity.

Young people aged between 17 and 18

Although sexual activity in itself is no longer an offence over the age of 16, young people under the age of 18 are still offered the protection of child protection procedures under the Children Act 1989. Consideration still needs to be given to issues of sexual exploitation through prostitution and abuse of power in circumstances outlined above. Young people, of course, can still be subject to offences of rape and assault and the circumstances of an incident may need to be explored with a young person.

For young people over the age of 16 and under the age of 18, there will be an imbalance of power and the child or young person will not be deemed able to give consent if the sexual partner is in a position of professional trust or is a family member as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

(Extracts taken from the All Wales Child Protection Procedures, 2008)

Ysgol Treffynnon is committed to following the procedures and protocols provided by the ***All Wales Child Protection Procedures*** in carrying out its duty of care towards any student who discloses to a member of the school staff that they are pregnant.