

Ballylifford Primary School



Attendance Policy

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Ballylifford PS is a school committed to high quality educational opportunities for each pupil to develop his/her unique talents to the full in a secure, caring environment"

'Nurturing Potential, Achieving Together'

RATIONALE:

The aim of this attendance policy is to promote good attendance in the school by all pupils since we believe that there is a direct link between good attendance, academic achievement and overall personal development.

AIMS

- To promote the highest level of attendance possible for each pupil.
- To ensure that there are accurate attendance records for each pupil in the school.
- To allow Teachers to identify pupils with punctuality /attendance problems as early as possible so that action can be taken to improve the situation as soon as possible.
- To provide accurate information to outside agencies regarding pupil attendance/punctuality as appropriate.
- To provide staff/parents with up to date information through SIMS.
- To inform parents of importance of good attendance (leaflet)
- Pupils and parents made aware that school attendance target is 95%

IMPLEMENTATION

- All pupils are to be registered at 9:05 am each morning in class.
- Attendance is to be recorded electronically through SIMS
- All pupils are to provide a note explaining their absence on the day they return to school this should be in the student diary. A reminder note is issued to parents if this is not completed.
- The School produces a summary report of attendance every month.
- The school will contact EWO to discuss any attendance issues.
- Parent/Guardian to contact school on 1st morning of absence

PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

Every effort is made to ensure that our pupils will receive an excellent education - where they are provided with high quality teaching and learning every day in a safe, stimulating, secure environment.

The school has high expectations of all pupils and staff in relation to attendance and punctuality.

Pupils are actively encouraged to attend school regularly by all teachers.

Attendance is monitored closely and good attendance is recognised and rewarded at the individual and class level.

Targets for improvement of attendance are set and reviewed regularly at the individual/ class/ year group and whole school level.

ERRATIC ATTENDANCE/PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM

These are often symptoms of an underlying problem which may relate to home circumstances or to the pupils' school experience. A positive approach is adopted in all cases and the aim should be to define the cause of the absenteeism and deal, if possible, with that.

Pupils whose attendance is erratic will be reviewed by Principal along with SMT / Designated Safeguarding Team. When appropriate, they will liaise with the EWO to arrange for their involvement with the family of the pupil.

For all pupils to benefit from the education on offer in the College, regular school attendance is essential. Good attendance is recognised and rewarded at all levels in the school.

The school has high expectations of all pupils and staff in relation to attendance and punctuality.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CLASS TEACHER

It is the responsibility of the Class Teacher to:

- Encourage and recognise good attendance.
- Record the attendance of the pupils in his/her Class each morning in registration book which will then be entered onto SIMS.
- Ensure that a reason for absence is given in writing on the day of return.
- Record the reason for absence on the Registration Sheet and file the note carefully.
- Ensure that the register is returned to the Office immediately after Registration.
- The school will send letters to parents each month to those pupils with under 95% attendance, except for the month of September.
- Class Teacher will recognise **pupils** who have full attendance. The **class** in each Year Group which has the highest monthly attendance will also be recognised.

THE PRINCIPAL

It is the responsibility of the school to:

- Actively promote good attendance and punctuality in the school
- Monitor, evaluate and review the school attendance policy.
- Maintain a register of pupils whose attendance falls below 95%.
- Liaise with class Teachers to identify pupils who have attendance problems.
- Liaise with the EWO as appropriate regarding action taken to improve attendance of persistent absentees/latecomers.
- Work with class Teachers to set targets for the improvement of school attendance.
- Obtain generated letters to be sent to Parents/Guardians
- Provide accurate information on individual attendance as required to outside agencies/case conferences.
- Meet with the EWO when necessary
- Ensure that the EWO has access to school attendance data.
- Inform the EWO when a pupil has been suspended.
- Actively promoting good attendance.
- Setting whole school targets for improving school attendance.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school attendance policy.

THE EDUCATION AND WELFARE OFFICER

It is the responsibility of the Education and Welfare Officer to:

- Develop an effective partnership with the school in dealing with pupil welfare/attendance.
- Actively promote good attendance and punctuality in the school.
- Monitor the attendance of pupils.
- Liaise with the Principal in matters of pupil welfare and attendance.
- Provide accurate information on individual attendance as required by the school/outside agencies
- Deal with referrals made by school.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the school attendance policy will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. The evaluation will be based on the following evidence:

Attendance data and **Punctuality data** of individual pupils/classes/year groups.

The class teachers will monitor the attendance of pupils and their classes at the end of each month.

The School Leadership Team will monitor attendance records from time to time.

The School Leadership Team will receive and review attendance data on a monthly basis.

MARKING THE REGISTER

When marking the register a certain amount of formality is essential. Never encourage a casual attitude towards attendance and punctuality. Announce the name of each pupil in turn and expect a clear reply to each name. Insist on definite reply of 'Yes' or Present' - Miss or Sir.

- Collect register from the office before 9:00 am.
- Inside the folder there is a register sheet to record the attendance **for one week**.
- School Secretary will mark pupils present electronically through SIMS.
- When an absent pupil returns to school and gives a note of explanation, use the codes for absence (indicated on the register sheet) to complete the blank space.
- Registration sheets will stay in the Register for a short time to allow all absence notes to be submitted for that month.
- Pupils who arrive later than Registration time should register at the Office.

PARENTS

- Contact school on 1st morning of child's absence.
- Any absence is recorded in the Daily Register and recorded on the SIMS attendance module
- If there is a continuous absence, parents should inform the school.
- Where there is no contact from a pupil's parent/guardian by the end of day 2, the class teacher will telephone the home. If an unexplained absence continues into the next week, the class teacher should inform the Principal / Designated Safeguarding team who will liaise with the EWO who may visit the home.
- An absence note must be given to the class teacher on the first day a pupil returns to school. The class teacher will record the reason for absence on the Register and file the note. If there are a number of notes within any month, the Principal / Designated Safeguarding Team will contact parent/guardian to discuss the problem.

APPOINTMENTS

Dental and medical appointments should be made after school hours.

An appointment request note must be given to the class teacher to inform them of the appointment date and time.

Parent/Guardian must collect the pupil and be responsible for him/her while he/she is off the school premises. The Parent/Guardian pupil must sign their child out at the School Office.

TRUANCY

- If a pupil absents himself/herself from school without permission, the School will contact parents by phone/letter as soon as the school becomes aware of it.
- The pupil will be detained in accordance with the School's Disciplinary Procedures.
- If truancy happens more than once, parents will be asked to come to school to discuss the problem. The EWO will be kept informed.
- If truancy persists, the pupil will be placed on an Attendance Report

ABSENTEEISM

Parents/Guardians must telephone the school on the first day of their child's absence.

Pupils should always bring in a note from parents/guardians explaining an absence on their return.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

Ballylifford Primary School discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on pupils' learning. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence. Only in exceptional circumstances will a holiday be authorised.

PROCEDURES FOR POOR ATTENDANCE

- Class teacher meet with SLT on a monthly basis to identify those pupils whose attendance falls below 90%.
- Class teacher to meet with pupils whose attendance is falling between 90% and 85%.
- Letter sent to parents notifying school's concern about their child's attendance.
- A pupil whose attendance falls below 85% is referred to the EWO

EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) have a legal duty to make sure that parents meet their responsibility towards their children's education.

If a pupil's absence causes concern, or if their attendance falls below 85%, they will be referred to the EWS, if appropriate. EWS will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance.

Signed: _____ **BoG Chairperson**

Signed: _____ **Principal**

Approved by Governors: May 2019

Next Review: May 2021