



## **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

Principal: Claire Donnelly

Chairperson: Alden Henderson

Date of Last Review: May 2021

Date of Next Review: May 2024



## **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

Regular school attendance and punctuality are extremely important, valuable learning time is lost when pupils are absent or late. Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. The school's ethos demonstrates that children feel that their presence in school is important, that they are missed when they are absent or late. The school will take appropriate action when necessary in order to promote the aims of the policy.

### **AIMS**

- To maximise attendance of all children.
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated at the school.
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty.
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice.
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Education Welfare Service and multi-agency teams.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Responsibilities of families**

The responsibility for ensuring children attend school regularly and punctually rests with parents. However, where school attendance problems occur, the key to resolving these problems is engaging the child through collaborative working between the parent, the school and the EA.

Parents should:

- Ensure their children attend school regularly.
- Ensure they are punctual for school.

- Ensure they are appropriately dressed and in a condition to learn.
- Comply with the attendance policy.
- Make sure their child understands the reasons for good attendance and punctuality.
- Make sure appointments are made outside of school hours wherever possible and show evidence of the appointment when it is not.
- Notify the school when their child is absent as soon as possible, preferably on the first day.
- Provide an explanation for their child's absence on their child's return to school.
- Follow the procedure for term time holidays.
- Only allow absence from school for legitimate reasons.
- Work in partnership with the school.

#### Responsibilities of the school

The school will:

- Have a registration system that is accurate, informative and understood.
- Analyse data regularly and identify the actions that need to be taken.
- Follow up unexplained absences promptly.
- Ensure that attendance and punctuality have a high profile in our communications with parents.
- Have clear written guidance for parents.
- Promote good attendance and punctuality for all.
- Work in partnership with families and the Educational Welfare Service.
- Inform parents of their child's attendance regularly during the school year.
- Set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy

#### Responsibilities of the Educational Welfare Service

The Education Welfare Service will:

- Monitor registers regularly.
- Identify pupils/families with attendance difficulties.
- Agree time limited action which needs to be taken by the school or education welfare officer.
- Feedback on the progress of cases and exchange of information.
- Issue penalty notices where applicable.
- Provide advice to the school.
- Work in partnership with the school and families.

### Timing of the School Day

	Start	Register taken	Register closes	Session ends
Morning	8.55	9.05	9.30	12.00/ 12.30(for KS2)
Afternoon Foundation	12.45			2.00
Afternoon Rang 3	12.45			3.00
Afternoon Rang 3 -7	1.15			3.00
Friday	8.55			1.00 (For Nursery) 2.00 (P2-7)

School opens at 8.45 – Children can play in the playground with supervision from staff

### SCHOOL PROCEDURES

The School uses Attendance Manager provided by SIMS to store and monitor it's legal responsibilities in relationship to attendance. This system consists of specialised software and OMR sheets.

**Registers are a vital legal document** and teachers are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions.

Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a record of a pupil's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately leaves the school vulnerable to complaint from parents or carers and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.

### ABSENCE

**(Attendance codes available in school office)**

#### Lateness

- Pupils arriving after the register has been taken at 9.05am, will be considered as late.
- Pupils arriving after 9.05am must report to the School Office so that their attendance can be recorded.

- Pupils arriving after 9.30am will be officially absent for the morning session. This will be considered an unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory reason is given, for example a medical appointment.
- Lateness is monitored and recorded on SIMS

Action to address lateness will be taken in line with the school's strategy to improve punctuality.

### Illness

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence to provide the reason for the absence. Parents/carers should provide an explanation on their child's return to school.
- Where Office Staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will, wherever possible, contact parents/carers by telephone on the first day of absence.
- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the Principal or Vice Principal should be informed.

### Medical or Dental Appointments

- Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents should inform the school in advance and show the letter or appointment card as evidence.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours.

### Holidays During Term Time

Holidays during term time are discouraged because of the detrimental effect on education and where possible holidays should be taken during the school holiday periods. There is no automatic entitlement to leave and applications must be made in advance, in writing, to the Principal .

The school may consider approving a request for pupils provided the following conditions are met:

- The child's attendance maintains 94% and above for the past 12 calendar months .
- The child's attendance history for previous years has attained 94%.
- The period of absence does not include any internal or external examinations.
- That no more than 10 days holiday has been requested in one academic year.
- There are exceptional reasons as to why a holiday cannot be taken in normal holiday time.

If the holiday absence is not authorised because the child's attendance falls below 94% and the holiday is taken anyway, the case will be referred to the Education Welfare Service who may issue a Penalty Notice, in line with EA guidelines, to each parent for each child taken out of school.

Applications to take a holiday or an occasional special day during term time will be considered on an individual basis. The Educational Welfare Officer is able to issue penalty notices to those families who do not abide by the decision.

For those parents who wish to apply for term time leave the following steps must be taken:

1. Parent enquires at the school office and applies to the Principal at least one month before travelling using the form provided by the school office.
2. The secretary in consultation with a senior teacher completes part 2 of the form with previous attendance history.
3. Principal considers application in line with school policy.

### Other Absence

Other absence from school will be considered on an individual basis and a decision will be made to authorise or un-authorise the absence.

## **MONITORING ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is monitored regularly

- The Secretary will attempt to telephone families whose child is absent on the first day of absence where no reason has previously been given.
- Teachers must inform the Principal when they notice patterns of absence.
- Attendance data will be collected monthly to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This will include children with incomplete weeks; Monday and Friday absences; lateness; periods of extended absence; periods of un-authorised; and all children with attendance below 90%. This data will be discussed with the EWO as part of the regular monthly meetings.
- The Principal and EWO will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy, attendance target and the strategies used to promote good attendance annually and the Principal will recommend an attendance target to the Governors.
- The Governors will set an annual target of attendance and unauthorised absence and review this annually at its first meeting.

The attendance monitoring file is kept in the Office

## **REPORTING ATTENDANCE**

### To Parents

All absences both authorised, unauthorised absence and lateness will be reported to the parents twice a year, at the Parent Teacher meetings in Term 2 and at the end of the academic year within their child's report. The secretary will produce these reports for SIMS attendance module.

In order to give parents/carers a benchmark to their child's attendance to other children in the school and nationally the following grades will be used:

100% - Excellent  
98% - 99.9% - Very Good  
94% - 97.9% - Good  
90% - 93.9% - Satisfactory  
Under 90% - Unsatisfactory

Parents are able to make an appointment with the SENCo or Principal to discuss any concerns they have to

- **Educational Welfare Service**  
The Principal provides an attendance print out of 90% and below to assist the Educational Welfare Officer with their register check. This report is shared with the Educational Welfare Service.
- **To the Governing Body**  
The Principal's Report includes an attendance update each term.

### **PROMOTING AND REWARDING GOOD ATTENDANCE**

Children who achieve 100% attendance at the end of the year are presented with a certificate and attendance prize.

The rewards system is regularly reviewed and amended to continue to encourage good attendance particularly for poor attendees.

The aim throughout this process is to ensure all children have the best attendance possible. The school will work in partnership with parents and take into account individual circumstances, applying the process accordingly.