



Attendance Policy

Updated By	Mrs V Wylie (08/10/20)
Date Accepted by BoG	21/03/18
Review Date	September 2021

In accordance with the recent guidance relating to Attendance and Coding from the Department of Education, namely Circular 2020/08 several amendments have made to attendance codes to reflect current circumstances due to Covid 19.

Introduction

Carniny Primary School recognises that punctual and regular attendance is an essential prerequisite to effective learning and is therefore committed to maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality. To this end we in Carniny actively promote a teaching and learning ethos which encourages all pupils to attend whatever their level of ability or need.

Aims

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Carniny Primary School
2. To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance
3. To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils
4. To promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service

Role of The School

The principal has overall responsibility for school attendance and ensures it is placed as an agenda item at each meeting of the Board of Governors.

Class teachers have an important role to play in managing attendance by marking the attendance register each day at the beginning of morning and afternoon registration sessions, collecting absence notes and identifying pupils with irregular attendance patterns. Teachers can speak to pupils about their attendance and to parents about their child's attendance. They will also promote class attendance through curriculum activities.

To accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way. We will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2017/15, which can be found at the following link:

www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201715-attendance-guidance-and-absence-recording-by-schools

Carniny Primary School is committed to working with parents/guardians to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

Role of Parent/Guardian

Parents/Guardians have a legal duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient full time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.

If a child is registered in school their parent/guardian has a legal duty to ensure that he/she regularly attends that school.

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence on the first day of the absence **by telephone**. This should be confirmed with a written note when the pupil returns to school.

In the case of a prolonged sickness this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.

Parents must ensure their child/ren arrive at school by 8.45am each day for registration and the beginning of classes.

If your child appears reluctant to attend school please discuss the matter promptly with the class teacher or Principal to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

Role of Pupils

Each pupil at Carniny Primary School must attend school punctually and regularly.

Following an absence from school a written note from a parent/guardian must be provided to their teacher on return to school.

Recording Attendance

Children are expected to attend school for 185 school days each year. Attendance is recorded on the Computer Attendance Module twice daily (morning and afternoon sessions) and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved activity off site or absent. If a pupil is absent every half day absence has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Only the school can authorise the absence, not parents/carers. For this reason, information about the cause of each absence is required in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no leave has been given. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping pupils off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a registration mark for morning session.

Children who are representing the school in a competition or perhaps taking a music, dance or drama examination organised by the school will be recorded as having attended school. Absences due to attendance at non-school organised activities (drama, dance, music) will be recorded as an Authorised Absence.

A full attendance involves being present the entire school day. A record is kept of all late arrivals. Children arriving after 9.00am will have their time of arrival recorded and those arriving after 10.00am and 1.00pm will be marked absent for the appropriate session. If a child goes home in the morning due to illness he/she will be marked absent for the afternoon session.

Absence Procedures

There are three steps parents should follow in relation to any absence planned or unplanned, brief or otherwise:

Updated October 2020

- A- Contact the school by telephone on the first morning of the absence and inform the school the reason for and expected length of the absence
- B- Keep the school informed if the absence is going to be more prolonged than initially anticipated
- C- On return to school provide teacher with written explanation for the absence

Medical/Dental appointments where possible should be taken outside school hours. If an appointment has to be made during school hours a written explanation must be provided stating clearly the time of the appointment. If a child attends an appointment during school hours a present mark is awarded providing the child returns to school for the remainder of the school day

All parents/carers are required to either complete the attached absence notification form or provide their own handwritten note giving a clear reason for any absence.

Family Holidays During Term Time

Parents are furnished with details of the school holidays at the beginning of the school year. The school discourages parents from taking children on holidays during term due to the impact on pupils' learning. Parent/Carers must contact the school prior to booking any holiday to explain the need to remove a pupil from school during term time. The contact should be in the form of a letter addressed to the Principal. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence. Only in exceptional circumstances will a holiday be authorised. Children will not be given work by their teacher to complete during the holiday absence.

Procedures for Managing Non Attendance

In the course of the school year the Principal monitors pupils' attendance. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% parents will receive a letter from the school informing them of their child's attendance level (Appendix 2). When attendance falls below 85% the school is obliged to bring the matter to the attention of the school's Educational Welfare Service (EWS) which will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve attendance.

The school will also communicate with Parents whose child has more than five late arrivals during a calendar month (Appendix 3). The Board of Governors is made aware of any attendance issues.

It is hoped parents/carers, school staff and statutory authorities can work closely to overcome any problems which may affect a pupil's attendance. If a pupil is reluctant to attend it is never a good idea to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This will only give them the impression that attendance does not matter, and may make matters worse.

Full Attendance Award Scheme

The school continues to operate its own Full Attendance Award Scheme. Certificates are awarded to those pupils who have not missed a day during the school year. The school also awards certificates to those children who have 2 - 6 consecutive years' full attendance. A prestigious trophy is awarded to any pupil who achieves 7 Years Full Attendance. Names of children receiving attendance awards are published in the Annual General Report in the Autumn term.

Monitoring of the School Attendance Policy

Carniny Primary's School Attendance Policy will be monitored annually by the Principal and the outcomes of any evaluation recorded in the Annual Report of the Board of Governors.



ABSENCE NOTIFICATION FORM



Please note – This form must be completed for each period of pupil absence and returned to the school immediately.

Name of Pupil _____

Class/Teacher Name _____

Date(s) of Absence _____

Reason

Signed (Parent/Guardian): _____

Date: _____



Principal: Mrs V Wylie BEd NPQH
Vice-Principal: Mr I Somerville BEd NPQH
Chair of Governors: Mr D Fulton

Telephone: 028 2564 3814

61 Old Cullybackey Road
Ballymena
Co Antrim
BT435JR
Website:
www.carninyprimary.co.uk

Date _____

The Parent of: xxxxxxxxx

Dear Parent

In Carniny Primary we are committed to maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality.

It is now school policy to inform parents if their child's attendance falls below 90%.

At (date of month/year) xxxxxx attendance was at xxxxx %.

The Educational Welfare Service requests details of pupils whose attendance fall below 85%.

I understand there may be a genuine reason for his/her absence from school. However, I trust you will ensure your child's school attendance is a priority.

Yours sincerely

Victoria Wylie
Principal



Carniny Primary School

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Website:
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Date: _____

The Parent of: *****

Dear Parent

In Carniny Primary we are committed to maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality.

It is school policy for parents to be notified if a child has more than 5 late arrivals in a calendar month.

***** has been late for school (arriving between 9.00am and 10:00am) on ** occasions during the month of _____.

A late arrival is disruptive for both the child who has arrived late and the remainder of the class.

With this in mind I ask you to ensure that ***** arrives at school by 9.00am each day.

Yours sincerely

Victoria Wylie
Principal