

Donaghmore Primary School Attendance Policy

Introduction

Regular school attendance is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential.

In Donaghmore Primary we will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

Aims

1. To maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Donaghmore 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 Education Welfare Service.

Role of the School

The Principal has overall responsibility for school attendance; teachers should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to the Principal's attention.

The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item at meetings on a regular basis.

Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded at the beginning of morning and afternoon registration.

To enable our school to record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2013/13 <http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/support-and-development-2/school-attendance-and-holidays/recording-pupil-absences.htm>

Staff at Donaghmore Primary School is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

Role of Parent/Guardian

Parents have a legal duty to ensure:

Every child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient full time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.

(Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986)

It is a parent/guardian's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence on the first day of absence. This should be confirmed with a written note when the pupil returns to school. If the absence is likely to be prolonged, this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.

Pupils are expected to be in class by 9am for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and recorded on your child's attendance record.

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 Donaghmore Primary School has a duty to ensure that they attend school punctually and regularly. If you have been absent from school a written note from a parent/guardian must be provided to your teacher when you return.

Absence Procedures

If a parent/guardian knows that a pupil will be absent from school prior to the pupil's absence, then written notification of the reason for absence and the times/dates of absence should be given to the pupil's class teacher.

A child must be collected by an adult if required to leave school premises during the school day.

If a pupil is unable to attend school, a parent should call school to inform the class teacher and then send the class teacher a note of explanation for the absence when the pupil returns.

Family holidays during Term Time

The Governors and Staff at Donaghmore Primary School discourage 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.

Procedures for Managing Non-attendance

If no reason is given to explain a pupil's absence from school, the class teacher will contact the pupil's parent.

If concerns are raised about the amount of time a pupil has been absent from school, then the Principal will speak to that pupil's parent. If attendance continues to be a concern, then the principal will write to the parent about these concerns.

If a pupil's attendance falls below 85%, the Principal may make a referral to the EWO.

Education Welfare Service

The Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service has a legal responsibility to make sure that parents meet their responsibility towards their children's education.

Regular attendance is an essential requirement for educational results and where attendance difficulties exist or a pupil's attendance falls below 85%, Education Welfare Service (EWS) will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance.

This policy will be reviewed triennially or sooner if required.