

MAGHERAFELT 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.

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

Aims

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Magherafelt 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, Mr Ian Somerville, of Magherafelt Primary School has overall responsibility for school attendance; staff should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to his attention. The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item at each meeting. Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded at the beginning of morning and afternoon registration sessions. To enable our school to accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2015/02, which can be found at the following link:

www.deni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201502-attendance-guidance-and-absence-recording-by-schools

Magherafelt Primary school is committed to working with our parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance. All parents receive a copy of the Department of Education's 'School Attendance Matters – A Parent's Guide'.

Role of the Parent / Guardian

Parents have a legal duty to ensure –

Every child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient full time school 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 school as to the reason for a pupil's absence on the first day of this absence. This should be confirmed with a written note when the pupil returns to school. If the absence is likely to be prolonged the parent/guardian should inform school to enable assistance with homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.

At Magherafelt Primary School, pupils are expected to be in school at 8:50am for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and documented on the child's attendance record.

Role of the Pupil

Each pupil at Magherafelt Primary School has a duty to ensure that they attend school punctually and regularly. If they have been absent from school a written note from the parent/guardian should be given to the class teacher.

Absence Procedures

All teachers record their class's attendance and punctuality. This information is recorded onto SIMS which is the school's computerised system for recording attendance and punctuality. Codes are used to describe the cause of absence and hence it is important that parents provide a written explanation which clearly outlines the nature of the child's absence. In the first instance, attendance should be reported using our online form which can be found on our school website at the following link:

<https://www.magherafeltps.com/surveys/survey-1/>

Attendance may also be reported to the school in a physical written note a template for which may be found in Appendix 1.

School must also be informed in writing if a child needs to be absent from school to attend hospital / medical appointments. Where possible the child should attend school either before or after this appointment. Parents / guardians should endeavour to make all medical appointments for after school hours.

All absences and 'lates' are regularly monitored and any child whose attendance falls below 85% is routinely reported to the Educational Welfare Officer.

Family Holidays During Term Time

Magherafelt Primary School discourages holidays during term time due to the impact this has on pupils' learning. Family holidays taken during term time will be classified as unauthorised absences.

Procedures for Managing Non-attendance

Non-attendance at school will be clarified and the school will provide support and advice to help rectify the situation. If the non-attendance continues the educational Welfare Officer will then become involved.

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 and improve school attendance.

_____ (Principal)

_____ (Chair, Board of Governors)

Appendix 1

Magherafelt Primary School Absence Explanation Note

Please complete and return to the class teacher as soon as possible.

Name of Pupil: _____

Class: _____

Date (s) of Absence: _____

Reason for Absence:

Signed _____ (Parent / Guardian)

Date _____

