



PUPIL 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. Ballyholme 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 Ballyholme 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 at Ballyholme Primary has overall responsibility for school attendance; teachers should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to the Vice-Principal who will then bring them to the attention of the Principal.

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 the school day.

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 Circulars. During the Coronavirus pandemic, attendance at school will be recorded in line with 2020/08 and all other subsequent related documents.

Ballyholme primary School is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

Role of Parent

Parents 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 has a legal duty to ensure that they regularly attend that school.

It is a parent's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence on the first day of absence either by telephone or email. This should be confirmed with a written note or an email through our website absence reporting system, 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 arrive in school between 8.45am and 9.00am. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and on your child's attendance record.

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

Absence Procedures

All Parents/Guardians are required to send a written note or email on their child's return to school, which provides a clear reason for any absence.

If a note or email is not received, school will send home a Reason for Absence form which should be completed and returned to school.

Family holidays during Term Time

Ballyholme 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 Managing Non-attendance

Attendance will be monitored by the school on a regular basis.

If a child's absence becomes a reason for concern the following steps will be taken:

- The class teacher will discuss concerns with parents and inform the Vice-principal
- If attendance does not improve the Vice-Principal will meet with the parents to discuss concerns and if necessary put strategies/adjustments in place
- If a pupil's attendance falls below 85% a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service if appropriate
- The Vice-principal will keep the Principal informed on any concerns relating to a pupil's attendance

Education Welfare Service

The Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) has 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.

Signature: _____Principal

Signature: _____Chair, Board of Governors

Date: