

Donaghadee 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.

Donaghadee Primary School's vision statement is:

'Our school is committed to providing an inspiring, dynamic and nurturing environment. Together the school community works to develop each child's emotional, social and academic potential. We aim to create independent, responsible life-long learners.'

To achieve this 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 improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Donaghadee 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 at Donaghadee Primary School has overall responsibility for school attendance; teachers and support staff should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to his/her 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.

Donaghadee Primary School is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

Advice with regard to parents' and pupils' responsibilities is given through:

- Parent Information meetings
- Weekly information notes
- Website
- School assemblies
- Class lessons

There is an emphasis on positive behaviour and attitude in our school and pupils are encouraged to be punctual and regular attendees.

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 school at 9.00am 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, LSC or Principal to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

Role of Pupils

Each pupil at Donaghadee Primary School has a duty to ensure that they attend school punctually and regularly. If a pupil been absent from school a Jot/Dojo message from a parent/guardian must be provided to the class teacher when she/he returns. If the absence is planned (eg medical appointment) then the school expects to be advised and the message may be presented prior to the absence.

Absence Procedures Managing Non-attendance

Our school operates the digital SIMS attendance register on a daily basis by teaching or support staff.

When a pupil is absence the relevant code is recorded on the register. If no communication is received **within 3 days** the teacher will record code D indicating no reason was provided for the absence.

If a pupil is late for school then code U will be applied indicating registration had closed.

Staff will monitor attendance in their class on a weekly basis and report concerns to the Principal or member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The School Secretary will ensure that regular printouts of school attendance figures for pupils with 88% or below are available for the Principal to identify any concerns.

If concerns are verified by the relevant class teacher the following actions will be taken:

- 1 Reminder re: attendance concerns if no improvement
- 2 Contact with parents to discuss reasons – teacher or SLT if no improvement

- 3 Letter to parents advising of pupil's current level of attendance if no improvement
- 4 Meeting arranged to discuss attendance – Principal if no improvement
- 5 Referral to Education Welfare Office – usually when attendance drops below 85%.
The Education Welfare Officer will work with the family to improve attendance and punctuality.

Throughout this process the school will closely monitor attendance and punctuality. If there is an immediate improvement, then the case will not be progressed, but attendance will continue to be checked.

Family Holidays During Term Time

Our school discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on pupils' learning. Taking holidays during term time is against Department of Education policy. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence.

Education Welfare Service

Education and Library Boards through the Education Welfare Service have 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.

Signature –

Principal

Signature –

Chair, Board of Governors