

DUNMURRY PRIMARY SCHOOL

**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.

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

It is our mission at Dunmurry Primary School to nurture all pupils in a safe, caring and child-centred environment and to empower them to thrive in a community in which social, moral and spiritual values are promoted so that the rights of all are respected.

Aims of this Policy

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Dunmurry 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 Dunmurry Primary School has overall responsibility for school attendance.

Teachers should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to their attention.

The Board of Governors will provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets.

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 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](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201715-attendance-guidance-and-absence-recording-by-schools)

Role of Parent / Guardian

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

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 they regularly attend that school.

It is a parent’s/guardian’s responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil’s absence on the first day of absence. This can either be done with a phone call to school or a message sent to the class teacher via email, Seesaw or Google Classroom. This should then 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 8.55 a.m. (9:00am for KS2 children during staggered start due to Covid-19) for registration and the beginning of classes.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians 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 or Principal to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

Role of Pupils

Each pupil must attend school punctually and regularly. If you have been absent from school, a written note from a parent must be provided to your teacher when you return.

Good attendance matters, it is important for your education and your future and high levels of attendance will be celebrated by termly and annual certificates each year.

Absence Procedures

All Parents are required to write a note or complete the attached absence notification form which provides a clear reason for any absence.

Family holidays during Term Time

Missing school at any time is detrimental to a child’s education therefore Dunmurry Primary School discourages holidays during term time. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence. Only in exceptional circumstances will a holiday be authorised.

Appointments such as doctor or dentist should be arranged, where possible, outside school hours.

Procedures for Managing Non-attendance

The school will monitor attendance and will inform parents/guardians of levels and share any concerns. We will require explanations of all absences.

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.

Attendance affected by Covid-19

If pupils are required to learn from home rather than face-to-face, i.e. not required to attend school physically due to social distancing rules imposed by the Department of Education or school this will be considered an Approved Activity. Pupils are required to show evidence of their completion of work by submitting it via Seesaw or Google Classroom.

If a pupil is self-isolating due to a family member having tested positive for Covid-19 or following advice from PHA they are required to submit evidence of completion of work via Seesaw or Google Classroom to have an approved attendance.

If a pupil is refusing to return to school or parents are refusing to send pupils due to fears over Covid-19 and no online learning is taking place this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

J Hackett

Principal

Chair, Board of Governors

Date: December 2020