

Attendance Policy



Policy Reviewed Summer 2017

Next Review Date Summer 2020

Signed Chair of Governors

Signed..... Principal

Introduction

Punctual and regular school attendance is essential in raising standards to education and ensuring that every child accesses the Northern Ireland curriculum and reach their full potential.

St Brigid's Primary and Nursery School strives to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and high standards where everyone achieves success.

We believe the school is a vital part of the Catholic Community. We are firmly committed to providing a nurturing and caring community, which embodies our Catholic Ethos whose children can grow and develop to their full potential in all aspects of their life.

We are committed to establishing close links with the home, the parish and the wider community.

We, the Governors and Staff of St. Brigid's Primary and Nursery School believe the school is at the heart of the Community.

We seek to establish a vibrant learning community based on Christ's values and gospel message.

We are firmly committed to:

- The vision for the school and the aims for our pupils
- Providing a high quality education for all our children
- Developing pastoral care in the school
- Establishing close links with the home, the parish and the wider community.

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved activity off site, or absent. If a pupil is absent, every half-day absence has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Only the school can authorise the absence, not parents/ carers. This is why information about the cause of each absence is required in writing.

Aims

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at St. Brigid's Primary and Nursery 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.

Registration:

Morning registration begins at 9.10am promptly. Pupils who are late will be recorded as such in the register. Any pupil who is late on more than three occasions in a half term will be referred to the Principal.

Role of the school

The Principal at St Brigid's Primary and Nursery School has overall responsibility for school attendance; Class teachers should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to her attention.

The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance targets and ensuring they are included in the School Development Plan.

Teaching staff regular 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 2013/14.

<http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/support-and-development-2/school-attendance-and-holidays/recording-pupil-absences.htm>

St. Brigid's Primary and Nursery School is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

Role of Parent/Guardian

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that:

“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/she 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 it occurs. This should be confirmed in writing by completing the attendance proforma included in the school diary when the pupil returns to school see proforma below. If the absence is likely to be prolonged, this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with the preparation of homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.

Pupils are expected to be in school at 9.10am for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that **their child/children are 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 and/or Principal to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

If your child/children have been absent from school the attendance form at the back of the Homework diary must be completed and signed by a parent/guardian and provided to their teacher when they return. Use proforma provided at the back of the Homework Diary. See sample below.

Role of Pupils

Each pupil at St. Brigid's Primary and Nursery School has a duty to ensure that they attend school punctually and regularly.

St Brigid's Primary School Absence Note.

My child _____ in
Mrs/Mr/Ms/Miss _____ class
was absent on _____

Due to:
Illness A medical / dental appointment Other _____
(please provide reason)

Signed _____



Family holidays during Term Time

St. Brigid's Primary and Nursery School strongly discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on pupils' learning. Parents/Carers must contact the school prior to booking any term time holidays to explain the need to remove pupils from school during term time.

Currently there is no legislation in Northern Ireland with regard to holidays in term time (as there is in the rest of the United Kingdom) However, if a pupil's attendance falls below 85% in a school year, the school concerned is obliged to contact the Educational Welfare Officer.

Procedures for Managing Non-attendance

Education Welfare Service

The Education Authority, Western Region 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 school staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance.