



Edenderry Primary School

Respect, Responsibility, Kindness, Co-operation.

Attendance Policy

Accepted	Review Date
October 2018	October 2020



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.

Edenderry 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 Edenderry 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 Parent / Guardian

Parents have a legal duty (*Article 45 (1) of The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986*) 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 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 / 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 and Responsibilities of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors has the ultimate responsibility for school attendance but this is delegated to on a day-to-day basis to the Principal. The Board of Governors has a responsibility to monitor school attendance and the effectiveness of the school's attendance policy and practice.

The Principal reports to the Board of Governors about attendance, it is placed as an agenda item at each meeting.

Role and Responsibilities of the Principal

Overall responsibility for attendance on a day-to-day basis lies with the Principal. The Principal has the role, along with the Board of Governors for determining resources and staffing to deal with attendance issues, ensuring the Board of Governors are informed about attendance issues and ensuring statistical information is provided as required by government.

The Principal has overall responsibility for attendance. The principal will meet with the education welfare officer half termly to discuss pupil attendance issues

The Principal will:

- liaise with the education welfare service about individual pupils particularly those with less than 85% attendance
- talk to pupils with irregular attendance
- send letter to parents of pupils who are absent from school on a regular basis without explanation
- make a referral to the Education Welfare Service if improvement in attendance is not made
- collate and report attendance information
- take responsibility for overall monitoring of attendance

Role and Responsibilities of the Class Teacher

Effective practice in relation to managing individual pupil attendance depends on the class teacher. In Edenderry Primary School the class teacher is responsible for :

- Developing trusting relationships with all pupils
- Monitoring attendance, e.g. marking register via SIMS, collecting absence notes and identifying pupils with irregular attendance patterns
- Following up pupil absence if notes not produced
- Talking to individual pupils about their attendance

- Promoting class attendance through the curriculum
- Referring pupils to the principal
- Providing support to pupils after a long absence from school

Roles and Responsibility of Office Staff

Office staff have an important role to play in monitoring attendance in school. The following are some of the roles they may undertake:

- Operating the SIMS system
- Taking phone messages from parents when pupils are absent
- Maintaining the late register
- Compiling lists of absentees
- Collating registration data

Role of Pupils

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

The Recording of Attendance

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

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

Attendance is recorded on each child's end of year report. Guidance regarding level of attendance is also provided.

To ensure the school's Attendance Policy operates in an appropriate manner, the Board of Governors has delegated authority to the principal who has the authority to decide whether an absence should be classified as authorised / unauthorised.

AUTHORISED ABSENCES

In normal circumstances the following types of absences will be classified as authorised:

- Illness (when note is provided by parent)

- hospital / dental appointments (when prior notice is given)
- family bereavement
- representing the school / county / country at an approved event
- taking music / ballet / drama examinations
- religious holidays when prior notification of absence is given)

In special circumstances parents may apply for a leave of absence for their child. The authorisation of the absence is at the principal's discretion and must be requested in writing, prior to the absence. In exceptional circumstances, when a written request is impractical, parents should contact the principal, in person, to discuss the matter in confidence.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

In normal circumstances the following types of absence will be classified as unauthorised:

- birthday
- on a shopping trip with parents
- staying at home with ill parent or sibling
- term time holiday

When a pupil is absent on a regular basis, a letter will be sent to the parents to highlight the school's concerns. This letter will detail the attendance percentage and the number of days of absence. Please see (Appendix A) for sample of the letter.

Absence Procedures

All parents / guardians are required to complete the attached absence notification form which provides a clear reason for any absence.

Family holidays during Term Time

Edenderry 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

Parent / guardians will be contacted by the Principal if a pupil's absence causes concern. Governors will be notified of any attendance concerns.

LATENESS

In Edenderry Primary school lateness is strongly discouraged. Pupils are expected to be in school before 9.00 am. The teacher will mark the class register on arriving to his or her classroom and return it to the school office at 9am. If a pupil arrives after registration has closed the pupil will be recorded as being late.

- ❖ When a child is late on a regular basis, the Principal will contact the parents to discuss the matter.
- ❖ If this continues to be a concern the Principal will make a referral to the EWS

Education Welfare Service

The Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) have a legal duty to make sure that parents / guardians meet their responsibility towards their children's education.

If a pupil's absence causes concern, or if their attendance falls below 85% and there is also a concern, 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 : _____ (*Chair of Board Governors*)

Signature : _____ (*Principal*)

Date : _____ (*date*)

Appendix

EDENDERRY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Education Authority Southern Region

Principal: K Orr B.Ed(Hons) M.Ed PQH(NI)
1A Lurgan Road
Banbridge
BT32 4AF

Telephone: 028 4062 2082

Fax: 028 4062 8605

Dear

It is a requirement for the school and the Educational Welfare Officer to monitor children's attendance. Attendance below 85% is when the EWO and school become concerned.

It is important that children have as full attendance at school as possible and I am enclosing 's Registration Certificates to make you aware of the number of days missed at school and would ask you to endeavour to make her attendance as full as possible.

Some absences are unavoidable but days can build up to a child missing quite a large part of the school year.

Yours sincerely

K Orr
Principal