

*St. Francis' Primary School
Drummaroad*



*Pupil Attendance Policy
October 2020*

Date Ratified	
Signature: Chairperson of the Board of Governors	
Signature: Principal	

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.

St Francis' will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

Mission Statement: St Francis' Primary School provides a high quality, rounded education which develops the complete potential of all our school family and teaches each one to respect themselves and others unconditionally. We inspire pupils to thrive in a Christ centered learning environment of faith, friendship and fun. Through the holistic enrichment of every child, we enhance their talents and advocate sharing them for the good of others. We welcome and value our whole school community as full participants in the child's learning journey; working together hand in hand with Christ who is the unseen but ever-present teacher.

Aims

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at St Francis' 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 St Francis' has overall responsibility for school attendance; all teaching staff should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to their 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. All school staff have a responsibility to set a good personal example in matters relating to attendance and punctuality. The following are responsibilities of school staff necessary to ensure pupils achieve and maintain excellent attendance:

- To accurately record of attendance and absence
- To differentiate accurately between authorised and unauthorised absence
- To respond to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care
- To contact parents with concerns and record this
- To consult with the Education Social Work Service when a pupil's attendance is unsatisfactory
- To promote regular attendance
- To acknowledge good/improved attendance
- To carry out class registration and follow up absences from lessons

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

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

St Francis' is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance. Incentives and prizes will be given to encourage and reward good attendance. Letters will be distributed to parents whose child's attendance falls below 95%.

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 St. Francis' 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 or Principal to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

Role of Pupils

Each pupil at St Francis' Primary School has a duty to ensure that they 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.

Absence Procedures

1. 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 by phone call, email or via See-Saw.
2. If a written note is not provided and there has been no phone call to explain absence, school will contact the parents to ascertain a reason for the pupils absence.
3. In the event of a child being on the child protection list a phone call will be made to the parents/guardians on the morning of absence if no explanation has been received.

Family holidays during Term Time

St. Francis' 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.

Procedures for Managing Non-attendance

See Absence procedures

Pupils whose attendance is a concern will be referred to the Education Social Work Service

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