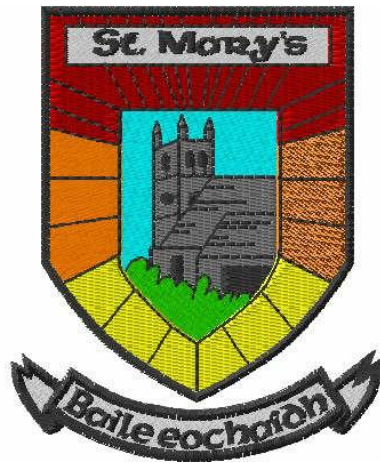


St. Mary's Primary School and Nursery Unit

ATTENDANCE POLICY



ST. MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT
ATTENDANCE POLICY

Aims

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at xxxxx school.
2. We aim to develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
3. We aim to provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.
4. We aim to promote good relationships with Education Welfare Service and Child Protection Services.

St. Mary's Primary School and Nursey Unit aims to ensure that every child will want to attend school. This will be achieved by creating a warm, welcoming and secure atmosphere where all pupils will feel valued, and a stimulating and accessible curriculum is delivered in a physically clean, bright and attractive environment. Our Primary School and Nursery Unit has an excellent record of attendance, which it aims to promote and maintain. **An overall level of 96% attendance is the target; currently we demonstrate 97.4% over-all attendance.**

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

The Principal at St Mary's has overall responsibility for school attendance; Staff should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to 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 each meeting and is included in the Annual Report.

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.

Our secretary will undertake to record any messages from parents regarding their child's expected absence or lateness, and will initiate contact with parents, on third day of absence, for which no explanation of absence has been received. She will maintain the role of completing the computer attendance record for the pupils. The records will be kept in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department Of Education which are available upon request.

To enable our school to accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2015/02, which can be found at the following link:

www.deni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201502-attendance-guidance-and-absence-recording-by-schools

St Mary's is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

ROLE OF PARENT

Parents 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'*.

Article 45(1) of The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986

If a child is registered in school, their parent has a legal duty to ensure that they regularly attend that school. It is a parent'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 between 8.45-9.00 am for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that each child is punctual.

Lateness is recorded after 9.15am. Any child arriving after this time is required to sign the 'Pupil In/Out Book' stating the reason for the lateness.

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 Mary's must attend school punctually and regularly. If s child has been absent from school, a written note from a parent/guardian must be provided to the teacher when they return.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

Parents of children at St. Mary's Primary School / Nursery are encouraged to send a note to school to explain predicted or illness absences or inform teachers of forthcoming medical appointments.

Missing school at any time is detrimental to a child's education therefore family holidays or other appointments e.g. Doctor or dentist should be arranged, where possible outside school hours.

In exceptional circumstances, where this is not possible, parent/guardian should speak to class teacher before removing their child from school premises. If a pupil must leave school during the school day, Parent/Guardian must sign the Sign-Out Register in front foyer of the school.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

St Mary's discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on pupils' learning. The Principal is unable to authorise family holidays during school term and pupils will be marked absent if this occurs. No work will be sent home on these occasions. 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

Each month the Principal receives a copy of the monthly attendance report where attendance is monitored.

The principal at St. Mary's Primary School and Nursery Unit may contact Education Welfare Officer where required, to discuss pupil attendances falling below the standard of 85%.

Pupils with less than 90% attendance are also monitored to ensure that attendance does not decrease further. Principal may discuss this with parent/guardian.

Patterns of absence are also analysed.

Where attendance is deemed to be concerning, the school,

- will talk with the parent / carer to identify the reasons for absence
- may have no other option but to inform Education Welfare Service

EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE (EWS)

LINK OFFICER: ELAINE DONALD

The Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) have 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.

Sanctions for failure to meet parental responsibilities may be taken or instigated by EWS e.g. Applications to the Family Proceedings Court for an Education Supervision Order – Children (NI) Order 1995 and/or Parental prosecutions – Education and Libraries (NI) 1986, Article 45, Schedule 13).

Signature – Principal

Signature – Chair, Board of Governors

ABSENCE CODES

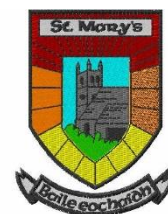
GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

February 2015

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ABSENCE CODES	DESCRIPTION	STATISTICAL MEANING
/\	Present: / = (AM): \ = (PM)	Present
A	Artistic Endeavour	Authorised Absence
B	Bereavement	Authorised Absence
C	Suspended	Authorised Absence
D	No reason provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence
F	Family Holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
G	Family Holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence
H	Other Absence	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	Authorised Absence
L	Late (before registration closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental Appointments	Authorised Absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence (temporary code only)	Unauthorised Absence
O	Other Exceptional Circumstances	Authorised Absence
P	Approved Sporting Activity	Approved Educational Activity
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Study Leave	Approved Educational Activity
U	Late (after registration closed)	Unauthorised Absence
V	Educational Visit	Approved Educational Activity
W	Work Experience	Approved Educational Activity
X	Only staff should attend	Attendance not required
Y	Exceptional Closure	Attendance not required
*	Not on roll	Attendance not required
#	Holiday for all	Attendance not required
!	No attendance required	Attendance not required
1	Alternative Education Provision (organised by the ELB)	Approved Educational Activity
2	Home/hospital tuition (organised by the ELB)	Approved Educational Activity

3	Elective Home Education	Attendance not Required
4	Pupil Referral Unit	Approved Educational Activity
5	Another mainstream school (under Entitlement Framework – EF)	Approved Educational Activity
6	Training Organisation (under EF)	Approved Educational Activity
7	FE College (under EF)	Approved Educational Activity
8	Intensive Support Learning Unit	Approved Educational Activity
9	CAMHS	Approved Educational Activity



ABSENCE NOTIFICATION FORM

Please Note – This form must be completed for each period of pupil absence and returned to the school immediately. Thank you.

Name of Pupil	
Class Teacher Name	
Date(s) of Absence	
Reason	
Signed (Parent / Guardian)	
Date	