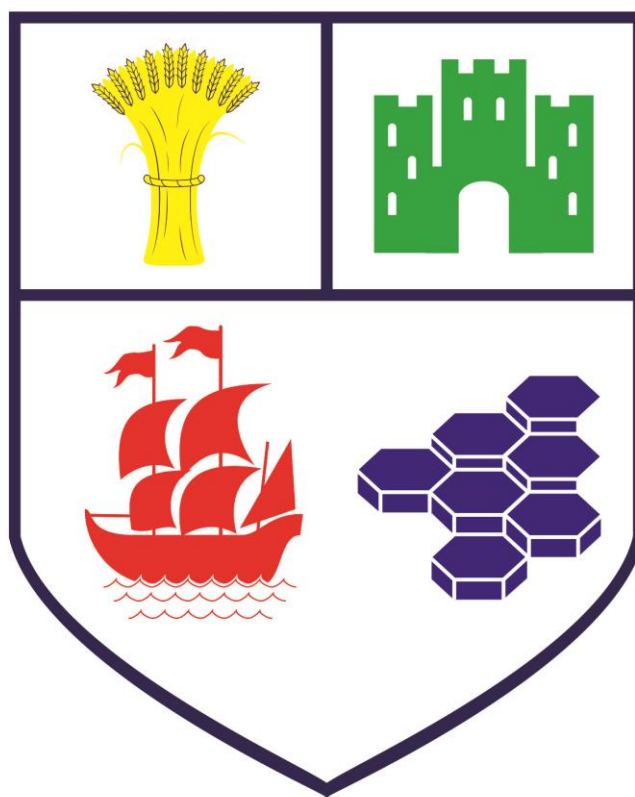


Dunseverick Primary School



Attendance Policy

This policy was reviewed & adopted by the BOG

November 2022

Signed by the Principal

Signed by the Chair of the BOG

Review Date

November 2024

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.

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

Our school motto is 'Enriching Lives, Learning Together and Equipping for Life'.

AIMS

- To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Dunseverick Primary School.
- To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.
- To promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

The Principal at Dunseverick Primary School has overall responsibility for school attendance; all 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 each meeting.

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 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/index/support-and-development-2/school-attendance/recording-pupil-absences.htm

Dunseverick Primary School is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

ROLE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/Guardians have a legal duty ⁽¹⁾ 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.

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

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 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 9.10am 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 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.

If a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern, the Principal/Class Teacher will have informal meetings and/or telephone calls with Parents/Guardians to discuss the reasons. School absence letters may be issued when levels of absence become a cause for concern.

ROLE OF PUPILS

Each pupil at Dunseverick 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.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

Except in extreme circumstances, appointments (eg. doctor/dentist) for children should try to be made outside school hours so that pupils do not miss valuable teaching time. If an appointment is necessary, a brief note from the Parent/Guardian should be written **WITH THE RELEVANT DATE(S) INSERTED, GIVING A REASON FOR THE ABSENCE**. Even if a phone call is received, a note is still necessary to retain on file.

When absence is necessary, a brief note from the parent, **WITH THE RELEVANT DATE(S) INSERTED, GIVING A REASON FOR THE ABSENCE** should be brought to school on return. This will be retained in the child's file. A note is necessary for computer attendance records, as required by the Educational Welfare Service. If possible, we would appreciate Parents/Guardians ringing the school office in the morning to inform us of a child's absence.

Children who have been ill/sick during the night should NOT be sent to school.

If a note is not received, all Parents/Guardians are required to complete the attached absence notification form at the end of this policy which provides a clear reason for any absence. These will be sent out by the school if a note is not received.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

Dunseverick 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

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. Dunseverick Primary School will endeavour to do what is possible to support families who

are experiencing difficulty with their child coming to school. Advice and support may be sought from external agencies, such as Education Welfare Service (EWS), Educational Psychology, transition support from primary to post-primary, programmes for parents or home-school liaison project.

EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

Education and Library Boards (ELBs) 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.

