

Attendance Policy



Date reviewed in school: April 2025

Date Ratified: 16th April 2025

Signed (Chairperson BOG): T Wallace

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 full potential.

Donemana Primary School will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages excellent attendance and where each pupil will feel valued, secure and happy..

Aims

The Aims of this policy are to:

1. maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Donemana Primary school.
2. develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
3. provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.
4. promote good relationships with Education Welfare Service.

Role of the School

The Principal at Donemana Primary School has overall responsibility for school attendance; teachers/designated 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 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.

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 2024/13 which can be found at:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Circular%202024-13%20-%20Attendance%20Guidance%20and%20Absence%20Recording%20By%20Schools.pdf>

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

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).

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/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 by completion of the form available on the home page of the school website. 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 no later than 9.10am for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that children are punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and recorded on children's attendance records.

If a child appears reluctant to attend school parents are asked to discuss the matter promptly with the class teacher or Principal to ensure that both the parent and child receive maximum support.

Role of Pupils

Each pupil at Donemana Primary School has a duty to ensure that they attend school punctually and regularly. If you have been absent from school, a written note/completed online form from a parent / guardian must be provided to your teacher.

Absence Procedures

If a child is late to school (after 9.10am) he/she must report to the secretary's office before going to class. The number of minutes late will be recorded on the SIMS register.

If a child will be absent from school for any period of the school day parents must provide a copy of the appointment letter / card or a written note explain-

ing the reason for the absence to the school office.

Absence due to illness

Donemana Primary School follows the guidance set out by the Public Health Agency on infection control in schools and other childcare settings. Parents are expected to follow the guidance below which states the period of time a child should be absent from school for when suffering from certain illnesses. Parents are also asked to contact school if his / her child is suffering from any of the illnesses below.

Do I need to keep my child off school?

Whooping Cough 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics	Chicken Pox Until all spots have crusted over	Conjunctivitis No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Diarrhoea & Vomiting 48 hours from last episode	Glandular Fever No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Hand, foot & mouth No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed
Measles or German Measles 4 days from onset of rash	Mumps 5 days from onset of swelling	Scabies Until after first treatment	Scarlet Fever 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	Slapped Cheek No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	
Impetigo Until lesions are crusted & healed or 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics	Flu Until recovered	Head Lice No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Threadworms No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Tonsillitis No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	

HSC Public Health Agency

Family holiday during Term Time

Donemana Primary School **strongly discourages** holidays during term time due to the impact this can have on pupils' learning. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence in line with the DENI circular.

Procedures for Managing Non-attendance

Donemana Primary School firmly believes in the importance of regular school attendance for learning and contentment at school, therefore attendance is closely monitored by the school Secretary and Principal.

Non-Attendance is managed in the following ways:

If an absence note has not been provided, the school Secretary will text parents on a weekly basis until it is received.

The secretary and / or class teacher(s) will notify the Principal if there are any concerns with regards to attendance during the school year.

The Principal will check attendance on a termly basis and write to the parents of any child whose attendance has fallen below 90% to remind them of the importance of regular attendance and to inform them of her duty to report attendance of under 85% to the EWO (Education Welfare Officer). If the child's attendance has improved by the end of the following term the Principal will write to the parents and child to recognise and praise the improvement in attendance.

The Principal will report all incidents of attendance below 85% to the EWO and work in conjunction with him/her, the child and the child's parents to ensure the child's attendance improves.

Education Welfare Service

The EA has 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.