



## Attendance Policy

Good attendance is essential if students are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills which will equip them for life.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which students, staff and parents can work in partnership.

The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage punctuality and good attendance and pastoral staff will liaise with home and other agencies about a child's attendance when this is appropriate.

### Principles

A child should come to school every day.

i) A child should only be absent if the reason is "unavoidable." Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by parents), as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

ii) Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness or other unavoidable causes.

iii) Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given. This includes:

- going shopping
- minding the house
- truancy
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark

Providing a note may not be sufficient if the reason given is not "unavoidable."

iv) Some children need encouragement to attend regularly. Any problems are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. It is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from school. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving problems together.

v) If problems cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the school County Education Welfare Officer.

### Procedures

If a child is unfit for school, parents should contact the school on the first day, in person or by telephone. When the child returns, he or she must bring a written note, signed by a parent, for each period of absence. Absences will not be authorised without this procedure. Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school each time. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which are unavoidably in school time, provided a written explanation is received.

### Holidays

With effect from September 2013 the government abolished the right of head teachers to authorise absence specifically for holidays of up to 10 days per year if

special circumstances exist. Instead, head teachers will only be allowed to grant leave of absence for any reason if they are satisfied exceptional circumstances exist.

### **Lateness**

Children must attend on time to be given a mark for a session. Parents are expected to ensure that children are present at registration. Arriving more than thirty minutes after the start of the session without good reason is counted as unauthorised absence. Students need to arrive before 9.15am after which the register will be closed. Parents will be notified if there is a recurring pattern of lateness.

### **Special Circumstances**

It is recognised that there may be circumstances when a child may arrive late for a period of time because of transport difficulties or because of prolonged illness. The school would adopt a flexible approach in these instances and work with the student and parents to help in any way possible.

### **Attendance Registers**

The school will follow the guidance on completion of attendance registers outlined by the Local Authority.

It will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if the need arises, so that changes, additions and amendments can be made after consultation with all parties.