**KILLYLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

*“Small School…BIG Opportunities”*

**

**PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**JANUARY 2020**

**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. We seek to work in partnership with parents and external agencies to develop co-operative and supportive networks to ensure all pupils develop to their full potential.

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

**AIMS OF OUR ATTENDANCE POLICY**

* To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at our 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 raise awareness of the importance of good attendance
* To promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Role of Parents/Carers:**

* Ensure your child receives efficient full time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.
* Ensure your child attends school regularly.
* Inform the school of the reason for any absence on the first day of absence followed by a written note when your child returns. If the absence is likely to be prolonged, then this should be communicated to the school to enable the school to assist with homework or any other arrangements that may be necessary.
* Ensure your child is in school by 9am for registration and the beginning of classes.
* Inform the school promptly if your child appears reluctant to attend.
* Ensure, if possible, all appointments are conducted out of school hours. If not possible, a note should be sent in detailing the date and time of the appointment. It is expected that pupils will return to school after an appointment.
* If your child sleeps in, you should inform the school by phone and bring your child as soon as possible.

**Role of the Pupils:**

* To attend punctually and regularly.
* To provide a written explanation from a parent/carer on return from absence.

**Role of Board of Governors:**

* Implement Attendance Policy and inform all stakeholders.
* Monitor and review policy.
* Set and monitor attendance targets. This is a standing item at each Board of Governors Meeting.

**Role of Principal:**

* Overall responsibility for pupil attendance.
* Give attendance a high profile in assembly, newsletters and school events.
* Report on attendance to governors.
* Monitor attendance and communicate with parents/carers to resolve attendance concerns as soon as they arise.
* Liaise with the Educational Welfare Officer regularly to review attendance or make referrals.

**Role of Teachers:**

* Teaching staff will complete attendance register on SIMS.
* Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils.
* Teachers will praise pupils for arriving on time and take prompt action where pupils are late or absent without explanation.
* Teachers will bring any concerns regarding school attendance to the principal’s attention.
* Follow up if absence notes are not produced.
* Provide homework or any other arrangements that may be necessary if a pupil is absent for a prolonged period.
* Provide support to pupils after a long absence.

**Role of the school secretary:**

* Oversee administration of the SIMS Register system.
* Collate registration data.
* Take phone messages from parents when pupils are absent.
* Provide regular attendance reports to the Principal.
* Liaise with Teaching Staff to monitor accuracy of record keeping.

**Role of Education Welfare Officer [EA]:**

* Work closely with school and families to resolve attendance issues.
* Visit school for meetings at agreed times.
* Identify, with school, cases of unauthorised absence which necessitate action and advise on responses.
* Provide written reports to school in the form of consultation sheets.
* Complete regular register checks.
* On receipt of a written referral, take appropriate action.

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.

**Family holidays during Term Time**

Killylea Primary School Board of Governors strongly discourage 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**

**Recording**

The class teacher will record on SIMS Attendance who is present and absent from school at **9.00am**. At **9.30am** registration is closed. Any pupil who arrives after registration has closed, must provide a reason for lateness and a decision made by the Principal to mark it as an authorised or unauthorised absence.

Reasons for absence may be offered verbally by phone but **must** be followed by a letter on the child’s return to school. The school may then decide if it wishes to authorise the absence or record it as an unauthorised absence. This will be made within the guidance set out in Department of Education Circular 2015/02. A reason for a period of absence is always required. The school will contact parents, who have not offered a reason, via a proforma asking for a valid reason [see appendix 1] and after a three week process will mark the absence as unauthorised if no reason is provided.

The Department of Education has issued a set of standard codes which are used to record absence. These codes are input into the electronic register as required and are used to give depth of meaning to the register and provide statistical meaning to the absences.

/\ Present Present

A Artistic Endeavour Authorised Absence

B Bereavement Authorised Absence

C Suspended Authorised Absence

D No reason provided for absence (after 5 school days have passed following return to school) 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 closes) Present

M Medical / Dental Appointments Authorised Absence

N No reason yet provided for absence (temporary code) Unauthorised Absence

O Other Exceptional Circumstances Authorised Absence

P Approved Sporting Activity Authorised Absence

R Religious Observance Authorised Absence

S Study Leave Authorised Absence

U Late (after registration closes) 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/ Severe Weather Conditions Attendance not required

# Holiday for all Attendance not required

1 Alternative Education Provision (organized by the EA) Approved Educational Activity

2 Home/ Hospital Tuition (organized by the EA) Approved Educational Activity

3 Elective Home Tuition Approved Educational Activity

4 Pupil Referral Unit Approved Educational Activity

**Authorised Absences:** The following types of absence will be classified as authorized:

* + Illness (when a note is provided by a parent)
	+ Hospital / dental appointments (when prior notification of absence has been given)
	+ Family bereavement
	+ Representing the school/ county/ country at an approved event
	+ Taking music/ ballet/ drama examinations
	+ Religious holidays (when prior notification of absence is given)

**Unauthorised Absences:** The following types of absence will be classified as unauthorized:

* + Birthday
	+ Staying at home with an ill parent/ sibling
	+ A shopping trip with a parent
	+ Term time holiday

**Monitoring**

The Principal monitors the attendance of all the schools pupils on a monthly basis and identifies any pupils as cause for concern or less than 85% attendance on a more regular basis. This information is also sent monthly to the Education Welfare Officer.

A letter will be sent to the parents of any pupil identified as having attendance problems informing them of the school’s concerns and will detail the attendance percentage and the number of days absent . The pupil’s attendance will be closely monitored and if after a two week period there appears to be no improvement the parents of the pupil will be invited to a meeting with the Principal to discuss the issue and hopefully resolve any issues preventing the pupil from attending. If the parents/carers do not attend the meeting or after such meeting the attendance of the pupil does not improve a formal referral to the EWO will be made.

The electronic registration system provides many reports and information that assist the school to monitor attendance. These reports will be accessed when relevant and provide information to assist the school to strategically manage attendance issues. The EWO will also have access to this information and will use the reports to support his role.

**STRATEGIES USED TO PROMOTE GOOD ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

* + Class teacher will ensure that the curriculum is delivered within a culture of inclusion and in such a way that pupils feel that they have and can succeed.
* Pupils who have attained full attendance for the month will receive a certificate in assembly.
* Attendance will be reported on in school newsletters and parents’ meetings.
	+ Individual pupils whose attendance has been a cause for concern will be encouraged to set and achieve personal attendance goals.
	+ Pupil attendance figures will be published with the annual academic reports.
	+ The overall attendance of the school will be published annually in the Board of Governors’ Report.
	+ Certificates are presented at Final Assembly to those pupils who achieve full attendance for the academic year.

 **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed annually along with the procedural operations for monitoring and managing pupil attendance and punctuality.

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| **KILLYLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY** |
| POLICY DATE:  | January 2020 |
| PRINCIPAL’S SIGNATURE: |  |
| CHAIRPERSON, Board of Governors, SIGNATURE: |  |
| REVIEW DATE [Annually]: | January 2021 |

**APPENDIX 1**



 Killylea Primary School

 *Small School…BIG Opportunities!*

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Website: www.killyleaps.co.uk

Killylea Primary School

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent/Carer,

It has been noted that your child \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was absent from school on

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

As outlined in the School Attendance Policy and to facilitate our computer records an absent note

should always been brought to school when your child returns from a period of leave.

I should be grateful if you would send in a note or complete the slip below and return it to school

as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



P Lowry

Principal

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**KILLYLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**ABSENCE NOTE**

My child \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was absent from school from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as he/she \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

(Please give reason for absence)

Signature of Parent/Carer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_