



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date of Review:	
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This policy has been written following a consultation process, ratified by the Board of Governors and communicated to the school community as required. It will be monitored and reviewed as part of the school's policy review schedule.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Article 28 (right to education) Every child has a right to education which must be free.

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.

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

As a Rights Respecting School, the rights of the child are at the heart of our school. The rights are based on the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child. All children everywhere are born with these rights which cannot be taken away.

Article 28 - You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.

AIMS

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

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

The Principal at Ballymagee Primary School, Mr P Totton, has overall responsibility for school attendance. Class teachers should raise concerns with the designated staff member, Miss V Bell, who will in turn bring concerns regarding school attendance to the Principal's attention.

The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item at least annually.

Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded at the beginning of each school day. A record of late comers is also kept with a note being made of the actual number of minutes a child is late.

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 2024/13 which can be found at the following link: <http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/support-and-development-2/school-attendance/recording-pupil-absence.htm>

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

All families are given a copy of the DENI 'School Attendance Matters – A Parent's Guide'. If the school has a concern regarding a child's attendance or number of late arrivals, the class teacher will raise this concern with the parent. If there is no improvement, a letter will be sent home from the Principal indicating the child's attendance and/or record of lates and encouraging the parents to work to improve this record.

In these circumstances parents will have the opportunity to come into school to discuss how they can support better attendance. Any child whose attendance falls below 85% is discussed with the Education Welfare Officer who visits the school regularly.

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) Education & 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 child's absence on the first day of absence.

This should be confirmed with a written note when the child 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.

Children are expected to be in school at 8:55am for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of a parent to ensure that their child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and on the child's attendance record.

If your child appears reluctant to attend school please discuss this matter promptly with the class teacher or Principal to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

ROLE OF CHILDREN

Each child at Ballymagee Primary School must attend school punctually and regularly. If absent from school, a written note from a parent/guardian must be provided to the class teacher upon return.

ABSENCE PROCEDURE

All teachers record their class attendance and any late comers. This information is keyed into SIMS which is the school's computerised system for recording attendances and latecomers. Codes are used to describe the cause of absence and therefore it is important that parents always inform the school of the cause of absence in writing to ensure their child's record is accurate.

The school must be informed in writing if a child needs to be absent from school to attend appointments. Parents should endeavour to make all routine doctor and dental appointments for after school hours.

PUNCTUALITY

Punctual arrival to school is key to starting the day smoothly for children. Children who arrive after 9am but before 10:20am will be coded as L and the minutes late will be recorded too. Children arriving between 10:20am and lunch time will be recorded as U. The school will work with families to support where persistent lateness has become an issue.

FAMILY HOLIDAY DURING TERM TIME

Ballymagee Primary School discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on children's learning. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence. Only in exceptional circumstances will a holiday be authorised. It is the school policy not to provide work for holidays taken during term time.

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING NON-ATTENDANCE

The reason for non-attendance at school will be clarified and the school will provide support and advice to help rectify the situation. If non-attendance continues the Education Welfare Officer will then become involved.

EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

The Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) has a legal duty to make sure that parents meet their responsibility towards their children's education.

If a child'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.