**Drumsallen**

**Primary School**

**Attendance**

**Policy**

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**January 2017Introduction**

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.

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

**Aims**

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Drumsallen 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 pupils.

4. To promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service.

**Role of the School**

Mrs J Kelly, as Principal at Drumsallen Primary School,has overall responsibility for school attendance. Good attendance is however a collective responsibility and therefore it is expected that staff should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to her attention or to the attention of:

Mrs C McClatchey (Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection)

Mrs J McCarragher (Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection)

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 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/publications/circular-201502-attendance-guidance-and-absence-recording-by-schools

Drumsallen Primary Schoolis committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

**Role of Parent**

Parents have a legal duty1 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 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 Drumsallen Primary 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.

**Role of Pupils**

Each pupil at Drumsallen Primary School has a duty to ensure that they attend school punctually and regularly.

In most cases, our children come to school on time every day. By making sure they do, you are helping to establish a good practice for the future. Patterns of lateness and absence that start in Primary School can end up in truancy in the secondary school and ‘hard to break habits’ for the work place, so please make sure you HELP your child by:-

* being firm about bedtimes.
* encouraging them to prepare the night before, those items will need for school the next day.
* making sure they are up in time to have breakfast and to leave the house promptly.

**REMEMBER: SCHOOL COMMENCES AT 9AM**

If you have been absent from school, or very late, a written note from a parent/guardian must be provided to your teacher when you return.

**Absence Procedures**

* Attendance / absence of pupils are recorded at the beginning of the morning and afternoon registration sessions.
* To assist Parents/Guardians in reporting absences, forms are readily available from the school office.
* There are over 30 codes for marking absences; therefore it is important that specific reasons for the absence or part attendance are given.

**Example**

**Code**

B Bereavement authorised absence

P Approved Sporting activity approved educational activity

D No reason provided for absence unauthorised absence

**Family holidays during Term Time**

Drumsallen Primary Schooldiscourages 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**

At the end of each month the school will run:

* each child’s attendance report.
* each class’s attendance report.
* whole school attendance report.

Each teacher will be asked to clearly highlight any child where there is a concern – normally where attendance falls below 85% or a regular pattern of poor attendance e.g. Mondays or Fridays.

The teacher will talk to the child or parent at this stage. Attendance may improve and

no further action will follow. However, where there is persistent low attendance or regular pattern, parents will be written to or invited to a meeting.

If the situation remains unresolved, the school will report the case to the E.W.S.

**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.

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.

January 2017