



Building
together
for our future.



Braidside Integrated Primary and Nursery School

Pupil Attendance Policy

Ms J McAuley
October 2022

School Vision Statement

We aim to work together to support each child in reaching their personal and academic potential within a culture of mutual respect.

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. Braidside Integrated Primary School will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attend and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

Aims

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

Roles and Responsibilities

Braidside Integrated Primary School is committed to working with parents/guardians to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

1. Board of Governors

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

2. Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for school attendance and for reporting these matters to the Board of Governors at the monthly meeting.

The Principal will review monthly attendance figures across the school, identifying those pupils with severe chronic attendance (<80%).

The Principal will inform parents of the school's attendance policy and procedures, expectations of attendance and provide information and school data on a regular basis.

The Principal will work alongside school staff and teachers to identify reasons for absence; where severe chronic attendance is a feature.

The Principal will promote regular school attendance, incorporate individual and class incentives for good attendance and celebrate attendance success and improvement.

The Principal will work alongside the Education Welfare Service to monitor pupil absences and identify those pupils who require support; proactively addressing pupil absence concerns with the pupil and parent and taking steps to avoid issues escalating.

In the absence of the Principal, the most senior teacher (Vice-Principal) will assume the role.

3. Teaching staff

Teaching staff should regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded accurately in the morning.

Teachers should inform the Principal of any individual pupil attendance concerns they have on a regular basis.

To accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance in the Department of Education Circular 2017/15.

4. Parents/ Guardians

Parents/ guardians 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.

If a child is registered in school, their parent/ guardian has a legal duty to ensure they regularly attend that school.

It is a parent's/ 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 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 any other arrangements necessary.

Initial information for the first day of absence may be provided via email, telephone call or letter.

Pupils are expected to be in school at 9am for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents/ guardians to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and on your child's attendance record.

¹ Article 45 (1) of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986

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

5. Pupils

Each pupil at Braidside Integrated Primary School must attend punctually and regularly. If you have been absent from school, a written note from a parent/ guardian must be provided to your teacher when you return.

Absence procedures

All parents/ carers are required to provide the school with a written note which provides a clear reason for absence. This note may be given to the class teacher or sent to the school office to be retained for school records.

In the event where a reason for absence has not been provided, school admin staff will endeavour to telephone parents to seek a reason for absence; thereby ensuring accurate codes are recorded on the school register.

In the event of a prolonged absence due to illness, parents should ensure the school is informed and information updated as necessary.

Family Holidays during Term Time

Braidside Integrated Primary School discourages holidays taken 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, extenuating circumstances will a holiday be authorised. Parents should ensure that a written note regarding family holidays, including dates of absence, is submitted to the school prior to the holiday.

Procedures for Managing Non-attendance

Attendance records are reviewed on a monthly basis by the Principal. An overall whole-school attendance percentage is provided to the monthly Board of Governors meeting. Following the guidance from the **Department of Education, "Monitoring and Reporting Pupil Attendance using Absence Tiers" (Sept '22)**, the data will be scrutinised in the following way:

1. Tier 1: Identify numbers and % of children with regular attendance (i.e. 95%+)
2. Tier 1b: Identify numbers and % of children with at risk attendance (i.e. 90-95%)
3. Tier 2: Identify numbers and % of children with chronic attendance (i.e. 80-90%)
4. Tier 3: Identify numbers and % of children with severe chronic attendance (i.e. <80%)

Those children in Tier 3, will have their individual attendance certificates reviewed, to identify clear reasons for absence. The Principal will monitor and review individual pupil certificates and may follow this up by contacting parents via telephone call, sending home a letter or arranging a meeting with the parent to discuss non-attendance concerns further. Interventions employed by the school to assist with improving pupil attendance may include:

- Text messages to parents
- Letters to parents advising on attendance
- Referral to /Involvement of Educational Welfare Service

Educational Welfare Service

The Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) have a legal duty to make sure that parents/ guardians meet their responsibility towards their child's education. At present the Principal has a liaison meeting with the Educational Welfare officer once per term.

If a pupil's absence causes concern, or if their attendance falls below 85% and there is also a concern, 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.

Signature- Principal

Signature - Chair, Board of Governors

Date-
