



PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

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 full potential.

Maghaberry Primary School will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourage good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

Our Mission is to ensure that every member of the school community strives to achieve their full potential by celebrating individual worth, talents and achievements and by sharing, understanding and empathising with each other.

Aims

- To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Maghaberry Primary 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 promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service.

Role of the School

The Principal has overall responsibility for school attendance; teachers/staff should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to his attention.

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

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.

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that attendance and lateness records are up-to-date. On returning to school, if a reason for absence has not been provided, parents may be contacted requesting a reason for absence. If none is provided, then the absence will be recorded as such.

The school shares the attendance percentage with parents at the end of each school year in the Annual Report and more frequently where there are concerns.

To record and monitor attendance accurately and 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: [Circular 2024/13 - Attendance Guidance & Absence Recording By Schools | Department of Education \(education-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

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

Role of Parent/Guardian

Parents/guardians 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. If a child is registered in school, their parent/guardian has a legal duty to ensure that 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 homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required. (Each school can decide what it feels is the most appropriate way to be informed of a pupil's absence such as emails, letters, phone calls, text messages etc) Pupils are expected to be in school at xxxx in the morning and xxxx in the afternoon 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. 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. Schools may also wish to issue links to parents and pupils highlighting some of the advertising campaigns and key messages that the Department has published:

- [Give your child a helping hand](#)
- [Miss School Miss Out](#)
- [Try and Stop Me](#)

Role of Pupils

Each pupil at Maghaberry Primary School must attend school punctually and regularly. If you have been absent from school, a parent/guardian must submit a reason via the 'Report Pupil Absence' link on the school website when you return.

Arrival at school

Pupils are expected to arrive at school in time between 8:50 am and 9:00 am. Pupils remain the responsibility of their parents until they enter the school grounds at 8:50 am.

The school does not accept legal responsibility for pupils before 8.50 am.

Action for Low Attendance

Pupil attendance is monitored intermittently throughout the year. In cases where lateness or absence is causing concern, parents will be contacted formally by written letter and requested to take appropriate steps.

Educational Welfare Service

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

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.

Lateness

The class register is taken between 8.50 am – 9.15 am. Pupils arriving after this will be marked as 'Late' with the number of minutes late and the reason for lateness being recorded.

Frequent lateness is disruptive to learning, both for the child concerned and the class. This may be discussed with parents at parent consultations and may also be referred to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Family holidays during Term Time

Maghaberry Primary School discourages 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. Parents must inform the principal in writing in advance of a family holiday during term time.

Review

This policy will be reviewed according to the review schedule for Safeguarding Policies.