**QUEEN ELIZABETH II**

**(POMEROY)**

**PRIMARY SCHOOL**

****

**Pupil Attendance**

**Policy**

**(2021)**

**Contents**

**Policy**

**Appendix 1 –** Attendance Policy Summary document (included in start of year booklet)

**Appendix 2 –** Absence Note

**Appendix 3 –** Letter to Parent – Concerns with attendance

**Appendix 4 –** Letter to Parent – Referral to Education Welfare Service

**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 potential. Queen Elizabeth II Primary School will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

**Our Vision**

In Queen Elizabeth Primary School, we aim to work in partnership with parents to provide a high quality education for all, within a caring and respectful environment. We will celebrate pupils’ achievements encouraging them to experiment and take risks in their learning, enabling them to become independent, life-long learners who take pride in their work.

**Aims**

* To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Queen Elizabeth II 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 Educational Welfare Service

**Role of the School**

The Principal at Queen Elizabeth II Primary School has overall responsibility for school attendance; teachers and non-teaching staff should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to his/her attention.

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 daily. If a child needs to leave school for an appointment in the afternoon they will then record this on the class record and the secretary will then record this on the computer system.

To enable our school to record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2020/08 <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-202008-attendance-guidance-and-absence-recording-by-schools>

Queen Elizabeth II Primary School is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

**Role of the Parent/Guardian**

Parents have a legal duty to ensure:

*Every child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient full time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.*

(Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986)

Paragraph 3 (1) of Schedule 13 to the 1986 Order states that it is the duty of a parent to secure the regular attendance of their child at school – as a parent you are legally responsible for making this happen.

Under Part III of Schedule 13 to the 1986 Order, if a child or young person who is registered at a school does not attend regularly, a parent can receive a fine not exceeding £1000 in court (for each child). An Education Supervision Order (ESO) could also be made by a court under Article 55 of the Children (NI) Order 1995.

It is a parent/guardian’s responsibility to inform school of the reason for a pupil’s absence on the first day of absence (information required to code absence appropriately). This should be confirmed with a written absence 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. Absence notes should be downloaded from the school website. These can either be sent along with the pupil on return to school or via e-mail before the return of the pupil. \*\* Only Absence Notes downloaded from the school website will be accepted.

Pupils are expected to be in school at 8.55 am for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness is recorded (number of minutes) at registration and recorded on the pupil’s attendance record. If an unexpected situation arises, which will leave the pupil late, parents should provide an explanation in writing via e-mail or along with the pupil. Parents will be contacted by the school Principal if pupils are repeatedly arriving late to school. Punctuality to school will also form part of the pupil’s annual school report.

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

It is important to note that non-emergency appointment should, where possible, be made outside of school hours. It is understood that this is not always possible and so, occasionally, urgent appointments will have to occur during the school day. A note requesting permission to get out of school must be sent to school. It is not normally necessary for pupils to stay off school for the whole day to attend an appointment and so we would expect parents to bring pupils into school/back to school before and after their appointment. Parents should present an appointment card to the school prior to all medical/dental appointment unless an emergency appointment has been made.

It is not appropriate or permissible for children to leave school to attend a birthday party, hair appointment etc. or to stay off school, due to their birthday.

**Role of Pupils**

Each pupil at Queen Elizabeth II Primary School has a duty to ensure that they attend school 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**

1. Absence from school requires the parent/guardian to inform the school of the reason for absence.

On the first day of absence, parents MUST inform the school before 10am by phone/e-mail.

They should provide the class teacher with a written explanation for their child’s absence on the first day of their return to school.

1. A note requesting permission to get out of school for dental/medical appointments MUST be sent to school either with your child or via e-mail in advance of the appointment

**Absence Notes**

Notes received from parents explaining absence will be kept in a central file called ‘Attendance’, in the main office for the remainder of the year. Recorded absence notes and documentation kept about a child with ongoing attendance concerns, will be retained for a longer period.

Internal Procedure to Facilitate the Implementation of the Attendance Policy

* The class attendance sheet should be completed accurately each day
* Where a pattern or regular lateness to school occurs the Principal will contact parents to discuss the matter
* Pupils returning to school without an explanation for their absence will not be permitted into the school building.
* Where attendance does not improve and falls below 85%, the Principal will follow the further procedures outlined in the attendance policy.

**Family Holidays during Term Time**

Holidays must not be arranged during term time.

Queen Elizabeth II 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 ‘G’ Family Holiday (Not agreed). Teachers are not expected to provide planned work which the child will miss due to his/her absence, during the absence.

**Procedures for Managing Non-attendance**

Where accumulated absence falls below 85%, the Principal will contact the parent/guardian. If attendance remains problematic, the parent/guardian will be invited to school to discuss the matter. Parents will receive a letter advising them that failure to redress this situation will result in their child’s attendance being discussed with the Educational Welfare Officer which could likely result in referral being made to this agency. Should the parent/guardian fail to respond, or if there is no improvement in the child’s attendance, the matter will be referred to the E.W.O.

**Educational Welfare Service**

The Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service have a legal responsibility 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.

Our attendance target for every pupil is 95% or above

The following comments: excellent, satisfactory, poor, very poor and unacceptable will be reported on each child’s annual school report. In addition, the number of late arrivals to school will be noted.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 100% Attendance | 0 days missed | Excellent |
| 95% Attendance | 9 days of absence  1 week and 4 days of learning missed | Satisfactory |
| 90% Attendance | 19 days of absence  3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed | Poor |
| 85% Attendance | 28 days of absence  5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed | Very poor |
| 80% Attendance | 38 days of absence  7 weeks and 3 days of learning missed | Unacceptable |
| 75% Attendance | 46 days of absence  9 weeks and 1 day of learning missed | Unacceptable |

**Rewards Attendance**

End of term certificates will be awarded to pupils with no record of lateness for that term (written explanations of unexpected situations will be taken into consideration; pupil must have remained in school all day).

Prizes are awarded at the end of the year to children whose attendance sits at 95% or above.

ATTENDANCE POLICY SUMMARY

**Regular** and **punctual** 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.

Lateness

During the school year 2020/2021, the record of pupils arriving late to school significantly increased. Pupils are expected to be in school at 8.55 am. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and recorded on your child’s attendance record. Punctuality to school will be closely monitored. If an unexpected situation arises, which will leave the pupil late, parents should provide an explanation via e-mail/written message or phone call (please leave message). Certificates will be awarded to pupils that have no record of lateness for that term (written explanations of unexpected situations will be taken into consideration). Punctuality to school will also form part of your child’s Annual School Report.

What do I do as a parent if my child is absent?

On the first day of absence, parents MUST inform the school before 10.00 a.m. personally, by phone/e-mail.

Provide the class teacher with a written explanation for your child’s absence on the first day of their return to school. **Only Absence Notes from the school website will be accepted**. These can be found on the school website/Parent Area. Pupils returning to school without an explanation for their absence will not be permitted into the school building.

Attending an appointment

A note requesting permission to get out of school MUST be sent to school either with child or via e-mail. Please do not phone school to request permission to attend an appointment.

Family holidays during term time

Queen Elizabeth II Primary School discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on pupils’ learning. Such absences will be recorded as ‘G’ (Family holiday, not agreed). Teachers are not expected to provide planned work which the child will miss due to his/her absence, during the absence. The teacher may provide missed written activities and reading book on the child’s return to school, to be completed at home.

Absence notes can be e-mailed to: srobinson243@c2kni.net

A full copy of the Pupil Attendance Policy has been included along with this booklet. Please do take time to familiarise yourself with the content.

Additional copies of Absence Notes have also been included.

EDUCATION AUTHORITY – Southern Region

**Queen Elizabeth II (Pomeroy) Primary School**

Principal : Mrs S Robinson 3 Edendoit Road,

Pomeroy,

DUNGANNON

Co. Tyrone.

Telephone : (028) 87758548 BT70 2RW.

**The Parents of :**

*Insert Date*

Dear Parent,

**Re : Attendance Record (Absence Notes)**

I am writing to you with regards to your child’s attendance at Queen Elizabeth II (Pomeroy) Primary School.

Unfortunately your xxxx attendance has fallen significantly below that which would normally be expected at this stage of the academic year.

Whilst I realise that he may have been ill on a number of occasions, I cannot overemphasise the importance of regular attendance. Unfortunately, as your son’s attendance has fallen below the minimum requirement, the Educational Welfare Service is now expressing concern.

With this in mind, I would appreciate it if you could ensure that you provide notes to explain all future absences.

Thank you for your anticipated co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

S Robinson

Principal

EDUCATION AUTHORITY – Southern Region

**Queen Elizabeth II (Pomeroy) Primary School**

Principal : Mrs S Robinson 3 Edendoit Road,

Pomeroy,

DUNGANNON

Co. Tyrone.

Telephone : (028) 87758548 BT70 2RW.

***The parents of :***

*Insert Date*

Dear Parent,

**Re : Education Welfare Service – Referral Notification**

I am writing to you with regards to XXXXX’s attendance at Queen Elizabeth II (Pomeroy) Primary School.

Unfortunately, XXXXXXX’s attendance has dropped below  **XX%,** as he has missed **XX days** since he started back to school in September XXXX. In addition, as no written explanation has been provided for a number of the absences, his case has come to the attention of the Education Welfare Service.

While I realise that XXXXXX may have been ill on a number of occasions, I cannot overemphasis the importance of regular attendance and communication.

As XXXXXXXX’s attendance for the XXXXX academic year gave rise to concern, and his attendance this term has now fallen below 85%, the Education Welfare Service require the school to make a referral. Consequently, I am left with no alternative but to refer his case to the Education Authority – Southern Area’s Educational Welfare Service.

Yours sincerely,

S Robinson

Principal