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# Acceptable use of the Internet Policy



Alyson Carson and Charleen  
McKimm

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# Attendance Policy

## INTRODUCTION

In Bloomfield Primary School our mission statement says that we want to “Nurture the Future” and 2 of our aims focus on our desire to “Nurture happy and creative learners” and to “Nurture family and community life”.

We have a primary responsibility for the care and welfare of all the pupils in our charge. We will carry out this duty through our Safe Guarding of Children Policies, which demonstrate how we aim to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, valuing individuals for their unique talents and abilities, in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential.

One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them to appreciate and understand the need to be in school; to see the value of education and learning, and to ultimately encourage them to be life-long learners.

## I AIMS

- I.1 The purpose of this policy and the procedures for attendance is to monitor efficiently the attendance of our pupils and to reward positive outcomes, with the hope that children will be encouraged to improve attendance where necessary. It is also to inform parents of their role in ensuring that their children attend school. The procedures that we have put in place also allow for open and objective lines of communication between school and families regarding the attendance of their child/ren at school.
- I.2 As a school our ethos is to be proactive and therefore we believe it is important to educate our pupils about the need for good attendance at school and to reward positive behaviour.
- I.3 Commitment is one of the positive character traits that we focus on as part of our “Zappy” PDMU programme and attendance will be focussed on as part of this programme.
- I.4 Positive rewards for attendance are as follows:
  - ✓ Through our “Bloomfield Building Blocks” scheme we promote attendance and positive behaviours through the awarding of a green block. Each child MUST be in school to be awarded a green block. Each green block is worth 5 minutes of golden time which involves the children taking part in a fun activity of their choosing.
  - ✓ Certificates for 100% attendance will be given out once a year in the full school assembly.
  - ✓ The Principal holds a “tea-party” for the classes in Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 with the best overall attendance throughout the year.

## 2 ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL AND PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 2.1 There are often genuine reasons for a child's absence from school.
- ✓ Sickness
  - ✓ Injuries e.g. broken leg
  - ✓ Scheduled medical/dental appointments (as far as is possible try to schedule these for after school hours)
  - ✓ Wedding of an immediate family member (inform the school in advance)
  - ✓ Bereavement
  - ✓ Taking part in competitions, examinations or tournaments relating to their progression in skills beyond the school e.g. gymnastics, instrumental exams, ballet exams etc.
- 2.2 School must be provided with a reason for any absence in writing (including those above).
- 2.3 School will provide 1 reminder for parents/guardians to provide a reason in writing.
- 2.4 If no reason is provided the absence will be recorded as an unexplained absence
- 2.5 If it is becoming apparent that any of the above will be requiring more than 3 days absence, then it is important that the school are notified by phone and if necessary arrangements can be made for work to be sent home so that your child does not miss out on vital areas of their learning.
- 2.6 It is important that each child's absence is explained in writing by the parents on the child's return to school.
- 2.7 If you *know* that your child is going to be off school for any reason then please inform the school in advance in writing.

### **3 HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME**

- 3.1 The Principal must be informed in writing if a child is being taken out of school for a Holiday during term time.
- 3.2 As a school we do not support a child being kept off for school to celebrate a birthday or for a family holiday during term time. On these occasions your child's absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

### **4 MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE**

- 4.1 On a half termly basis the attendance figures will be analysed and the names of all children whose attendance is below 87% will be printed. Based on those figures at that time the teachers will be asked if reasons have been given by parents/guardians as to why the figures are below 87%.
- 4.2 Parents will be contacted via letter (see Appendix Letter 1) in the following circumstances:
- a) if illness has not been explained via a letter on return to school
  - b) if a child has been on holiday during term time (see Appendix Letter 2)
  - c) if there are far too many single days of absence e.g. every Friday and/or a pattern is starting to emerge
  - d) if there are too many "lates" on their child's attendance record.
- 4.3 Parents will be asked to attend a meeting with the Principal if the attendance is between 80-85% in the first term or less than 87% with no valid reason.
- 4.4 Opportunities and strategies for the child's attendance to improve will be given.
- 4.5 A child will be referred to the Education Welfare Service if parents have made no attempt to explain their child's absence; have not engaged in intervention strategies or have not met with the Principal when asked.

## SUMMARY

% attendance STAGE	School's Action	Parent's Response
<87% REMINDER	When a child's attendance falls below 87% we send home a letter informing the parent.	Fill in the response form and in the coming months make every effort to improve attendance.
80-87% INTERVIEW	If there has been no improvement from the REMINDER stage or attendance is already between 80% and 85% will be invited to an interview with the principal. Pupils will be put on an Attendance Reward Scheme to encourage improved attendance. They will also be put on an Attendance Phone List – When they are not in school their parents will be phoned by I I am.	The parent will make an appointment with the Principal at their earliest convenience. At this interview the parent will complete an attendance concern interview record form.
<80% REFERRAL	If attendances have never been explained; efforts have not been made to engage with the school or Principal and School Support Strategies; <u>or</u> attendance figures are VERY low then the school will immediately refer a pupil to the Education and Welfare Service for support.	Work closely with the Educational Welfare Officer and the school to improve their child's attendance.

# ATTENDANCE LETTER

Pupil's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent,

As a school we seek to maximise the learning of every child. Good attendance is vital to a pupil making the required progress. (Please read the information enclosed with this letter)

We, therefore, are adopting a robust approach to tackling poor attendance. Here is our new 3 stage strategy:

STAGE	SCHOOL'S ACTION	PARENT'S RESPONSE
<b>REMINDER</b>	When a child's attendance falls below 87% we send home a letter informing the parent.	Complete the form enclosed to explain the low attendance and return it to school. Make every effort to improve attendance. You can, if you wish, also make an appointment to meet the Principal.
<b>INTERVIEW</b>	There has been no improvement in the coming month/s, and the attendance is between 80 and 85%. The parent/guardians will be invited to an interview with the Principal.	The parent will phone to make an appointment with the Principal at their earliest convenience. If an appointment is not made within 14 days, and attendance continues to fall then a referral may be made to the Education Welfare Service (EWS).
<b>REFERRAL</b>	Attendances have never been explained; efforts have not been made to engage with the school or Principal and School Support Strategies; <u>or</u> attendance figures are VERY low then the school will immediately refer a pupil to the Education and Welfare Service for support.	Work closely with the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) and the school to improve their child's attendance. You can, if you wish, also make an appointment to meet the Principal.

At present your child's attendance is \_\_\_\_\_%. This is considered by the school as an issue for concern. Therefore you are receiving this letter as:

**A REMINDER** : complete the form enclosed

**A REQUEST FOR AN INTERVIEW WITH THE PRINCIPAL**

You must now arrange to meet with the principal at a mutually agreeable time. If you do not arrange to meet with Mrs Bishop within 14 days of receiving this letter and attendance figures have not improved your case will be considered for forwarding to the Education Welfare Service.

**TO INFORM YOU THAT A REFERRAL HAS BEEN FORWARDED TO THE EWS.**

We are aware that some children may have very genuine reasons for such absences e.g. a serious illness, family circumstances etc. However a holiday taken during term time is **NOT PERMITTED** and is an **UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**.

I hope as a parent you recognise that this focus on attendance is to keep you informed and help us to work as a strong partnership to improve your child's learning and happiness.

Please phone the school on 028 91 271186 to make your appointment as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Bishop (Principal)

# REPLY SLIP

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class: P** \_\_\_\_\_

I have received a letter regarding my child's attendance for the year so far. I acknowledge the fact that it is at \_\_\_\_\_%.

The reason for this figure is:

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**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



# REPLY SLIP

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class: P** \_\_\_\_\_

I have received a letter regarding my child's attendance for the year so far. I acknowledge the fact that it is at \_\_\_\_\_%.

The reason for this figure is:

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**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



# Attendance Interview Record

Pupil's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Stage on attendance procedure: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/s present; \_\_\_\_\_

Others present: \_\_\_\_\_

Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June

Stakeholder	Comments	Action
Parent:		
School:		

Parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

School signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# End of Year Attendance Report

Pupil's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent,

This year your child's attendance dropped below 90%. As you have already been informed via letter or/and interview we have been monitoring your child's attendance ever since for an improvement.

When your child was first identified this year as having attendance below 90% it was \_\_\_\_%.  
By June 2010 your child's attendance was \_\_\_\_%.

As a result of your child's improving/declining attendance next year:

- a. Your child will be removed from our attendance monitoring procedure. Yes/No
- b. Your child's attendance will continue to be monitored.

We recognise the key partnership between home and school. Attendance is one essential area that requires good communication and cooperation. Please see this procedure as a genuine effort to keep you informed and show our interest in your child's education. We are aware that sometimes, due to serious illness or family circumstance, that a child's attendance will be low due to genuine reasons.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

R Dowie  
(Principal)



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# End of Year Attendance Report

Pupil's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Any comments:

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I have received my child's end of year attendance report.

Parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*'Nurturing the Future'*

R Bishop B.Ed.(Hon.) PQH(N.I.)  
Tel.: 02891271186 E-Mail: [rbishop354@c2kni.net](mailto:rbishop354@c2kni.net)