

# Carniny Primary School



# Attendance Policy



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## Attendance Policy

Carniny Primary School recognises that punctual and regular attendance is an essential prerequisite to effective learning and is therefore committed to maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality. To this end we in Carniny actively promote a teaching and learning ethos which encourages all pupils to attend whatever their level of ability or need.

Children are expected to attend school for 190 school days each year. Attendance is recorded on the Computer Attendance Module twice daily (morning and afternoon sessions) and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved activity off site or absent. If a pupil is absent every half day absence has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Only the school can authorise the absence, not parents/carers. For this reason information about the cause of each absence is required in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no leave has been given. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping pupils off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a registration mark for morning session.

Children who are representing the school in a competition or perhaps taking a music, dance or drama examination organised by the school will be recorded as having attended school. Absences due to attendance at non-school organised activities (drama, dance, music) will be recorded as an Authorised Absence.

There are three steps parents should follow in relation to any absence planned or unplanned, brief or otherwise:

- A- Contact the school by telephone on the first morning of the absence and inform the school the reason for and expected length of the absence
- B- Keep the school informed if the absence is going to be more prolonged than initially anticipated
- C- On return to school provide teacher with written explanation for the absence

Medical/Dental appointments where possible should be taken outside school hours. If an appointment has to be made during school hours a written explanation must be provided stating clearly the time of the appointment. If a child attends an appointment during school hours a present mark is awarded providing the child returns to school for the remainder of the school day

It is hoped parents/carers, school staff and statutory authorities can work closely to overcome any problems which may affect a pupil's attendance. If a pupil is reluctant to attend it is never a good idea

to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This will only give them the impression that attendance does not matter, and may make matters worse.

Parents are furnished with details of the school holidays at the beginning of the school year. The school discourages parents from taking children on holidays during term due to the impact on pupils' learning. Parent/Carers must contact the school prior to booking any holiday to explain the need to remove a pupil from school during term time. The contact should be in the form of a letter addressed to the Principal. Any holidays in term time are considered unauthorised absences. Children will not be given work by their teacher to complete during the holiday absence.

All children should be in school by 8.45am. A full attendance involves being present the entire school day. A record is kept of all late arrivals. Children arriving after 8.45 report to the office to have their time of arrival recorded and those arriving after 10.00am and 1.00pm will be marked absent for the appropriate session. If a child goes home in the morning due to illness he/she will be marked absent for the afternoon session.

Class teachers have an important role to play in managing attendance by marking the attendance register each day, collecting absence notes and identifying pupils with irregular attendance patterns. Teachers can speak to pupils about their attendance and to parents about their child's attendance. They will also promote class attendance through curriculum activities.

In the course of the school year the Principal monitors pupils' attendance. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% parents will receive a letter from the school informing them of their child's attendance level. When attendance falls below 85% the school is obliged to bring the matter to the attention of the school's Educational Welfare Service which will offer support in resolving the attendance issue. The school will also communicate with Parents whose child has more than five late arrivals during a calendar month (Appendix 2). The Board of Governors is made aware of any attendance issues.

The school continues to operate its own Full Attendance Award Scheme. Certificates are awarded to those pupils who have not missed a day during the school year. The school also awards certificates to those children who have 2 - 6 consecutive years full attendance. A prestigious trophy is awarded to any pupil who achieves 7 Years Full Attendance. Names of children receiving attendance awards are published in the Annual General Report in the Autumn term.

Carniny Primary's School Attendance Policy will be monitored annually by the Principal and the outcomes of any evaluation recorded in the Annual Report of the Board of Governors.



# Carniny Primary School



Principal: Mr C R Ross MA BSc Adv Dip Ed PQH (NI)  
Vice-Principal: Mr I Somerville BEd NPQH  
Chair of Governors: Dr S Russell

61 Old Cullybackey Road  
Ballymena  
Co Antrim  
BT435JR

Telephone: 028 2564 3814

Website: [www.carninyprimary.co.uk](http://www.carninyprimary.co.uk)

1<sup>st</sup> February 2018

The Parent of: xxxxxxxxxx

Dear Parent

In Carniny Primary we are committed to maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality.

It is now school policy to inform parents if their child's attendance falls below 90%.

At (date of month/year) xxxxxx attendance was at 81.41%.

The Educational Welfare Service requests details of pupils whose attendance fall below 85%.

I understand there may be a genuine reason for his/her absence from school. However I trust you will ensure your child's school attendance is a priority.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Ross  
Principal

February 2018



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The Parent of: \*\*\*\*\*

Dear Parent

In Carniny Primary we are committed to maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality.

It is now school policy for parents to be notified if a child has more than 5 late arrivals in a calendar month.

\*\*\*\*\* has been late for school (arriving between 8:45am and 10:00am) on \*\* occasions during the month of January 2015.

A late arrival is disruptive for both the child who has arrived late and the remainder of the class.

With this in mind I ask you to ensure that \*\*\*\*\* arrives at school by 8:45am each day.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Ross  
Principal

February 2018