

Killen Primary School



Attendance Policy

January 2025

Date: January 2025

Kids Pathway to Success

KPS Ethos statement

We at Killen Primary School believe pupils should have access to a safe, happy, stimulating environment in which they reach their full potential, socially, emotionally and academically. Furthermore, the values of respect, kindness, equality and mutual understanding are the foundations of the school.

KPS Vision

Killen Primary School strives to be a safe, welcoming, child-centred, inclusive school family celebrating success for all. We encourage each child to be confident and develop a sense of responsibility for themselves and respect for others in the community.

Rationale

The Board of Governors have adopted the following policy to maintain the current high percentage of pupil attendance at our school.

Killen Primary School believes regular attendance at school is crucial to allow every child to fulfil their potential.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We believe high attainment depends on good attendance.

Attendance is recorded twice daily on sims.net. A full attendance requires a child being present for the entire day. If a child is sent home due to illness, they will be marked absent for the afternoon session.

Key Reasons for children to attend school:

- To learn
- To have fun
- To make new friends
- To experience new things in life
- To achieve
- To develop new skills
- To build confidence and self-esteem
- To have the best possible start in life

Aims

1. To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm
2. To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school
3. To maintain and develop effective communication between home and school

Role of Governors

To review this policy regularly and place attendance on governor agenda meetings as a regular item.

To approve School Holidays/Closures as early as possible and issue school calendar to parents giving them the opportunity to plan for the following year.

Role of Principal

1. To ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy
2. Issue to all families, DE School Attendance Matters – A Parent's Guide (Appendix 1)
3. To monitor school attendance at the end of every month
4. Contact parents/guardians of these pupils with attendance rates approaching 85% via telephone to discuss this attendance if the absence is other than explained by illness
5. Send a letter to parents/guardians, if attendance falls below 85% without a valid reason, parents are free to discuss this with the principal. Allow for a period of review and monitor if attendance improves.
6. Refer pupil to EWO if pattern of attendance does not continue to improve
7. Monitor daily pupil register for attendance marks showing late marks (Register after 9.15am)
8. Contact parents to discuss Late marks
9. Refer pupil to EWO if late pattern continues.
10. If no reason has been given for absence, clerical officer will call home asking for reason for absence

Role of Clerical officer

1. Record pupil attendance on Sims.Net
2. Use the correct codes depending on reason for absence
3. Monitor individual and class attendance on a monthly basis
4. Keep the Principal informed of attendance figures, trends and reports
5. Compile attendance data for EWO when required
6. Prepare annual % attendance figure
7. Pass on telephone messages giving reasons for absence to relevant teacher
8. If the school has not been informed by the third day of absence the clerical officer will telephone home

Role of Teachers

1. Let the clerical officer know who is absent and reason given
2. Keep absence letters with class register. Teachers can also be notified via telephone call or Seesaw.
3. Watch for patterns and communicate concerns with Principal
4. If no absence note is given on return to school, the teacher will request from parent a note/reason via a telephone call/message via Seesaw
5. Pass attendance letters/daily register to Clerical officer

Role of Parents/Guardians

- To ensure their child goes to school when they are well
- Ensure their child arrives at school on time
- Arrange medical/dental appointments outside of school hours when possible
- Inform school if their child is absent from school by telephoning on the first day of absence
- Send an absence note/telephone call/message via Seesaw to school with the child when they return explaining the reason for the absence
- Take family holidays outside term time. **Holidays taken during the school term are unauthorised absences, even when the school has been notified of the holiday**
- Attend parent evenings and school events
- Discuss any problems or difficulties with school – staff want to help and support

Role of Education Welfare Service (EWS)

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.

Appendix 1 – DE School Attendance Matters

Appendix 2 – Copy of Killen PS letter to parent/carer



Department of
Education

www.deni.gov.uk

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SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MATTERS **A Parent's Guide**





WHY ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL IS SO IMPORTANT –

If a child of compulsory school age is registered at a school it is essential that they attend their school regularly and maintain a pattern of good attendance throughout their school career.

Excellent attendance at school is important to allow a child or young person to fulfil their potential.

Below are just some of the key reasons why it is so important children attend school:

- ☑ To learn.
- ☑ To have fun.
- ☑ To make new friends.
- ☑ To experience new things in life.
- ☑ To develop awareness of other cultures, religion, ethnicity and gender differences.
- ☑ To achieve.
- ☑ To gain qualifications.
- ☑ To develop new skills.
- ☑ To build confidence and self-esteem.
- ☑ To have the best possible start in life.



**Miss School -
Miss Out!!**



**Key
Point**

Young people who regularly miss school without good reason are more likely to become isolated from their friends, to underachieve in examinations and/or become involved in anti-social behaviour.



WHAT THE LAW SAYS –

Under Article 45 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 (“the 1986 Order”), it is the duty of parents who have a child of compulsory school age¹ to ensure their child receives efficient, full time education suitable to their age, aptitude, ability and to any special educational needs they may have. Such education may be provided by regular attendance at school or otherwise, for example home education.

Paragraph 3 (1) of Schedule 13 to the 1986 Order states that it is the duty of a parent of a registered pupil of a school to secure their regular attendance at school. This applies to all children of compulsory school age who are on the roll of a 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 £1,000 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.

Key Point

Education is not an option – it’s compulsory.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS –



You can demonstrate your commitment to your child’s education by not taking holidays during term time. Any child or young person who is absent from school due to a holiday will miss out on important learning and will fall behind with their school work.

In each Academic Year there are only a maximum of 190 statutory school days – this allows plenty of time for holidays to be arranged outside term time.

Holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence.

Key Point

Avoid taking family holidays during the school term.

¹ www.deni.gov.uk/index/schools-and-infrastructure-2/admission-and-transport/pupils-and-classes/compulsory-school-age.htm



EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS –

Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning.

Attendance percentages can be misleading.

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

For some parents, 90% may seem like an acceptable level of attendance, but the reality is that 90% attendance means that your child will miss half a school day each week or 19 days of school during the school year – that's nearly 4 school weeks.



Give your child the best start in life – every school day counts.



Dear _____ ,

We have carried out an attendance report to identify pupils whose attendance has fallen to or below 85% as advised by the Education Welfare Officer. As yet your child **has not** been referred to the Education Welfare Service however her attendance of _____, a total of _____ days absent is very concerning. If attendance does not improve, we have no alternative but to refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer.

Whilst the Education Welfare Service is mindful that at times life events/sickness can impact slightly on a child's attendance we wanted to draw your attention to this matter. A high level of attendance at school will help ensure your child is reaching their true academic potential.

I will continue to monitor attendance and will carry out another review in a months time to determine if there has been an improvement.

If you would like to contact the school regarding this issue, please contact the office to arrange a suitable time.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C. Goan
Principal