



## 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 potential. *Knockavoe School* will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

“Working together, we provide a high quality education within a stimulating, nurturing, rights respecting environment. We inspire all pupils to attain their full potential and take their rightful place within society.” Mission Statement

### Aims

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at *Knockavoe School*.
2. To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
3. To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.
4. To promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service.

### Role of the School

The Principal at *Knockavoe School* has overall responsibility for school attendance; (*teachers/designated staff*) should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to 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 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.

To enable our school to accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2015/02, which can be found at the following link:

<http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/support-and-development-2/school-attendance/recording-pupil-absences.htm>

*Knockavoe School* is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

The school management team (SMT) and Principal will do they can to assist, support and encourage parents/guardians in their encouragement of their child attending *Knockavoe* on a regular and consistent basis.



## **Role of Parent**

Parents 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.

### **Article 45(1) of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986**

If a child is registered in school, their parent has a legal duty to ensure that they regularly attend that school.

It is a parent'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.

Pupils are expected to be in school for the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that your child is punctual for school or school transport if applicable. 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.

## **Role of Pupils**

Each pupil at Knockavoe School must 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**

All Parents/Guardians are required to complete the attached absence notification form which provides a clear reason for any absence.

## **Family holidays during Term Time**

*Knockavoe 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. Permission must be sought from the Principal before parents/guardians take pupils out of school for family holidays. Each situation will be looked at in consultation with parents/guardians and the Special Education Department at EA (WR) will be kept informed of any such absences and reasons for same, if granted by Principal.

## **Procedures for Managing Non-attendance**

*Parents/ guardians will be contacted if their child has a level of attendance that gives cause for concern. Levels of attendance falling below 85% will normally result in a letter to the parents/guardians and a reminder to promote good attendance with the pupil. If there is no improvement in the level of attendance over a period of time (usually 4 weeks) then a further letter may be sent inviting parents/guardians to a meeting with the Principal or other member of the Leadership Team.*

*\*Where there are special circumstances resulting in pupil attendance falling, then it is important that the school is notified so that a record can be furnished to the Education Welfare Officer during their meetings with the Principal.*



### **Education Welfare Service**

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

If a pupil's absence causes concern, or if their attendance falls below 85%, 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 which is in the best interests of the pupil.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Principal

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Chair, Board of Governors

Date \_\_\_\_\_