

DECEMBER 2017

# Long Tower Primary & Nursery School Attendance Policy



---

**Our Children First**

## **Attendance Policy**

Longtower Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils. We embrace the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department of Education.

### **School Procedures**

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. The school uses Attendance Manager by SIMS to collect, store and monitor all aspects of pupil attendance. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

### **Lateness**

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 9.00 am. The registers will remain open for 15 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorized absence code will be entered.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

If children have to miss school for illness or any other reason, then parents must send a note of explanation. Parents should try to arrange doctor or dentist's appointments for outside school hours whenever possible. If you require your child out of school early, a note should be sent to the class teacher.

Children are encouraged to play outside at break and lunch times, except in bad weather. If your child is not feeling well and you would prefer him / her to stay in the classroom, then a note must be sent to the class teacher explaining this. An indication of the duration would be appropriate and helpful.

## Role and Responsibilities

### **Responsibilities of Parents**

Parents are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. The school will work in close collaboration with the parent to resolve any attendance issues.

- ✚ To ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually
- ✚ To inform the school as soon as possible, on the first day of their child's absence
- ✚ To provide a written explanation for any absences on the child's return to school
- ✚ To avoid taking holidays during term time
- ✚ To work alongside the school to support pupil attendance.

### **Responsibilities of school:**

- ✚ To ensure its registration system is accurate and consistently used by staff.
- ✚ To analyse data regularly and identify the actions that need to be taken
- ✚ To follow up unexplained absences
- ✚ To promote good attendance and punctuality
- ✚ To work in partnership with families and the Education Welfare Service
- ✚ To set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance
- ✚ To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy

### **Responsibilities of the Educational Welfare Service:**

- ✚ To monitor registers regularly
- ✚ To identify pupils/families with attendance difficulties
- ✚ To agree time-limited action which needs to be taken by the school or EWO
- ✚ Provide advice and work in partnership with school and parents

### **Monitoring Attendance**

- ✚ Attendance is monitored regularly by the principal, and vice-principal.

- ✚ Teachers should inform the principal if they notice patterns of absence
- ✚ Attendance data will be discussed with the EWO as and when required
- ✚ An annual attendance target will be set and reviewed each year
- ✚ Each term the principal will report to the governors on pupil attendance
- ✚ Individual pupil attendance will be reported to parents at the end of the school year. The following grades will be used:

100%	-	Outstanding
98 -99.9%	-	Excellent
96 – 97.9%	-	Very Good
94 – 95.9%	-	Average
90 – 93.9%	-	Satisfactory
Under 90%	-	Unsatisfactory

### **First Day Absence**

The child will be marked absent according to the codes laid out in Appendix 1.

### **Continuing Absence**

If there is no contact from parent, or explanation for the absence, after the third day, the school will attempt to contact the parent by telephone, or e-mail or letter.

### **Ten Day's Absence**

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Education Welfare Office. (E.W.O.)

### **Frequent Absence**

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. Initially the class teacher will speak with the parent. If this is unsuccessful the principal or vice-principal will speak with the parent. If this too is unsuccessful the school will send parents a letter, informing them that they are seeking advice from the school's Education Welfare Officer (E.W.O.) Rose O' Brien.

## A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

## Promoting attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

*Holidays in term time*

***Holidays during term time are to be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement.***

Signed by : \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson Board of Governors

Signed By \_\_\_\_\_ Principal

Date:

## APPENDIX 1

### Absence Codes: Guidance for Schools

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
<b>A</b>	Artistic Endeavour	Authorised Absence
<b>B</b>	Bereavement	Authorised Absence
<b>C</b>	Suspended	Unauthorised absence
<b>D</b>	No reason provided for absence	Approved Education Activity
<b>F</b>	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>G</b>	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised Absence
<b>H</b>	Other Absence	Unauthorised Absence
<b>I</b>	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised Absence
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers closed)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised Absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence
<b>O</b>	Other Exceptional Circumstances	Authorised Absence
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised Absence
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Approved Educational Activity
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	Only Staff Should Attend	Attendance not required
<b>Y</b>	Exceptional closure	Attendance not required
<b>*</b>	Pupil not yet on roll	Attendance not required
<b>#</b>	Holiday For All	Attendance not required
<b>!</b>	No Attendance Required	Attendance not required
<b>1</b>	Alternative Education Provision (organised by the ELB)	Approved Education Activity
<b>2</b>	Home/hospital tuition (organised by the ELB)	Approved Education Activity
<b>3</b>	Elective Home Education	Approved Education Activity
<b>4</b>	Pupil Referral Unit	Approved Education Activity
<b>5</b>	Another mainstream school (under Entitlement framework – EF)	Approved Education Activity
<b>6</b>	Training organisation (under EF)	Approved Education Activity
<b>7</b>	FE College (under EF)	Approved Education Activity
<b>8</b>	Intensive Support Learning Unit	Approved Education Activity
<b>9</b>	CAMHS	Approved Education Activity

