Primate Dixon Primary School Promoting and Managing School Attendance

Policy & Practice

(reviewed December 2018)

PRIMATE DIXON PRIMARY SCHOOL

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PRIMATE DIXON PRIMARY SCHOOL

PROMOTING ATTENDANCE POLICY & PRACTICE

PRIMATE DIXON PS – MISSION STATEMENT

'EVERY CHILD IS MORE THAN GOOD ENOUGH'

In Primate Dixon Primary School we want to give every individual child opportunity to grow and develop to the best of their individual potential within a secure, caring, Catholic ethos.

We want to provide the very best primary education for every child in our school.

We want all our children to learn and grow to be the very best that they can be in every way.

We want our children to be confident and to know that they are always more than good enough.

We want our school to be a place where no one is left out and no one is left behind.

We want to ensure that there are no barriers to learning.

We aim for Best Practice in every part of our work.

We want to do this by working together in partnership – home, school and parish community.

The values of Primate Dixon Primary School are proudly declared in our School Mission Statement.

We take these Mission values very seriously.

We want all of the children in Primate Dixon **to want to come** to their school each day.

Their school is a place of welcome and warmth where every child is valued throughout the school day.

Their school day begins with a welcome greeting at playgrounds, school and classroom doors.

And in their school there are many opportunities and chances to learn and to play and to have the very best Primary school experience.

We want the children of Primate Dixon to have access to a stimulating curriculum that gives each one every chance to grow and learn to the best of their individual potential.

We want the children of the Primate Dixon to have every opportunity to take part in a wide range of creative, performance, music, sporting and other activity beyond the classroom both as individuals and as members of teams along with their friends and peers.

We want all of the children of Primate Dixon to be the best they can be!

THE SCHOOL DAY AT PRIMATE DIXON

School Gates open at 8.15am

Supervised School Hall until 8.45

Playtime 8.45

Whistle for Class 9.00

Class begins with Prayer, Registration and Discussion of the Work of the Day

Morning Break & Playtime

10.30 – 10.45 Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 (Primary 1 to Primary 4)

11.00 – 11.15 Key Stage 2 (Primary 5 to Primary 7)

Dinner/Lunch and Playtime

11.45 – 12.30 Foundation Stage (Primary 1 & Primary 2)

12.15 – 1.00 Key Stage 2 (Primary 5 to Primary 7)

12.45 – 1.30 Key Stage 2 (Primary 3 & Primary 4)

Hometime

1.30 Nursery

2.00 Foundation (Primary 1 & Primary 2)

3.00pm Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2 (Primary 3 to Primary 7)

ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN SCHOOL!

There are lots of factors that contribute to being successful.

These include children

- having opportunities and chances to do well
- being supported at home and in school
- having the best of textbooks, resources and other equipment in school
- and wanting to try their best in school and at home.

And to be successful in school children

- need to be at school every day
- need to be early for school every day
- and need to be in school all day.

The school day begins at 8.15am each morning.

Early arrivers come into school from that time and go to the hall until 8.45am.

At 8.45am all go to playgrounds and have 15 minutes of active play, football and other games.

This is a really excellent early social activity time and gives a great start to the school day.

We want every child who can, to be in for this early play time.

Class then begins each morning at 9.00am.

This really is the most important part of each school day.

After prayer and registration, teachers and classes discuss the work plan of the day and prepare themselves for their day.

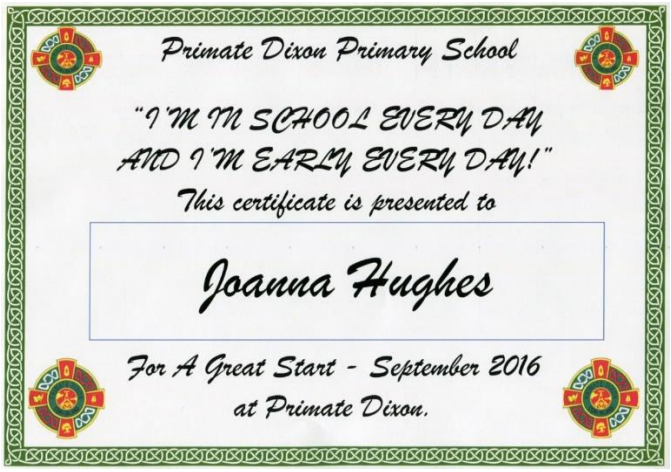
CHILDREN ARE EXPECTED TO BE IN CLASS FOR THIS VERY IMPORTANT TIME, 9.00 EACH DAY.

PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

We encourage every child to aim for full attendance.

In September each year we promote this with our

'In School Every Day & Early For School Fortnight'.



Every child gets multiple chances to earn their Certificate for this through September and into October if necessary. The target is that children have maximum opportunity to earn this.

Toast For All Promotion

On two weeks each year, the school has a Toast For All promotion.

This very popular and successful promotion takes place from 9.00 – 9.10 each day and children are offered toast and a drink in their classes. This is a very strong incentive for early arrival.

Other awards are in place through the year promoting and recognising good and improved attendance.

These include

- presentation of certificates at Assemblies
- Homework & Principal's Tokens
- Key Stage prizes to classes with the highest annual attendance rates
- other classroom rewards and recognition
- and facilitating EWO initiative programmes including Primary Attendance Matters (PAMS)
- school-based promotion of positive beginnings (Nursery/P1) and transitions (P7/Post-Primary) .

In their own Personal Pupil Goals, children themselves will also, at times, choose the aim of full attendance.

MANAGING & CHALLENGING NON-ATTENDANCE & CONNECTED ISSUES

Practice in managing attendance is intended to be positive. Practice is never intended to be punitive.

However, ultimately it is the aim that all children have not just acceptable but high levels of school attendance.

Having children in school each day for the beginning of class is a parent's responsibility.

Children are never challenged or admonished in school for absence and lateness.

These are matters that are appropriately addressed with parents.

Attendance is monitored by the School's Attendance Team of Principal, Vice-Principal and Senior Executive Officer each month.

Attendance review is carried out on a regular basis with the school's delegated Educational Welfare Officer.

Where attendance falls below 85%, concern is raised.

This will include written and telephone contact from school to parents.

This may also include action by the Educational Welfare Office. EWO action can include court action.

The school will support the Educational Welfare Office in carrying out its roles.

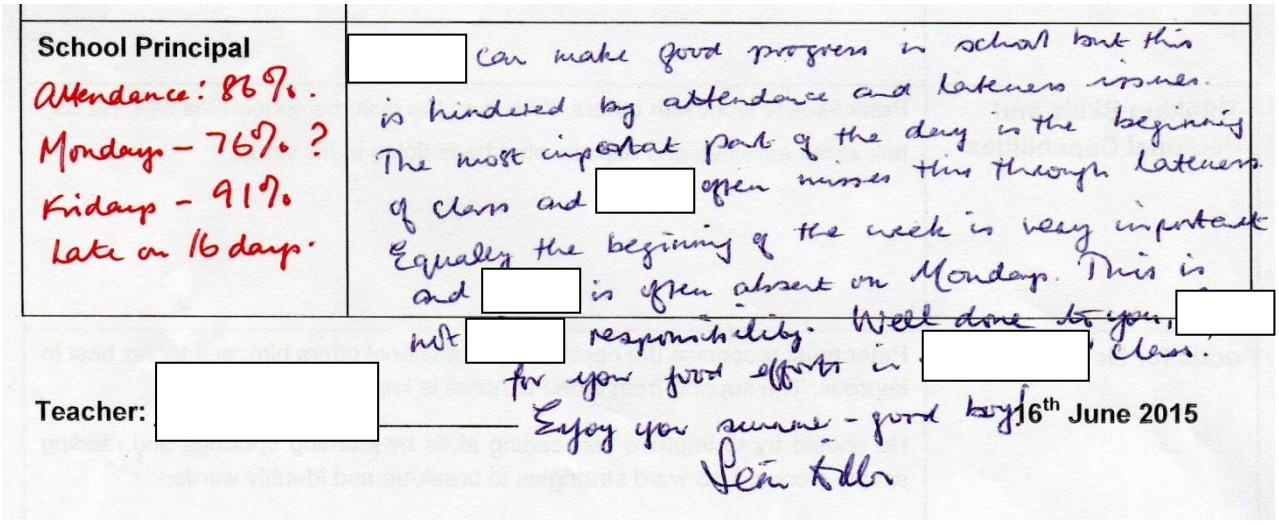
There will frequently be mitigating factors that explain absence levels.

Individual circumstances, working with families, are always taken into consideration.

The school's Attendance Team also monitors lateness for school.

Where there is a persistent lateness pattern, the school will make telephone and written contact with parents.

Attendance and punctuality concerns are also individually flagged on Pupil Reports each year, sample below.


School Principal

Attendance: 86%.
Mondays – 76% ?
Fridays – 91%
Late on 16 days.

[redacted] can make good progress in school but this is hindered by attendance and lateness issues. The most important part of the day is the beginning of class and [redacted] often misses this through lateness. Equally the beginning of the week is very important and [redacted] is often absent on Mondays. This is not [redacted] responsibility. Well done to you, [redacted] for your good efforts in [redacted] class. Enjoy your summer - good luck

Teacher: [redacted]

16th June 2015

RESPONSIBILITIES – TEACHERS

RECORDING ATTENDANCE

Teachers record attendance twice each day

- at the beginning of class each morning
- and at the beginning of afternoon class.

Teachers also record any early leaving from class through the day.

Each pupil's record of attendance forms a legal document showing their attendance at school.

It is extremely important that this record is accurate and complete.

Teachers record

- absences using designated DE codes (See Appendix detailing Absence Codes) https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/Final-attendance-circular-2015.pdf
- reasons given by parents in explanation of absence
- lateness for daily registration
- where lateness is due to late bus arrival or adverse weather, lateness is not recorded
- early leaving from school and reasons that have been given for this

Teachers promote attendance and punctuality positively with pupils.

Children are never challenged or admonished in school in regard to attendance and punctuality.

These are matters that are addressed with parents whose responsibility this is.

Teachers support pupils appropriately after absence, especially extended absences, on return to school.

SHARING INFORMATION WITH PARENTS

At the end of each school year Attendance Records for the year are attached to Pupil Reports.

For the past three years, we have also issued these Certificates each term.

We want to give as much information as usefully possible to parents through the year.

This school has concerns that Attendance Certificates as produced by the SIMS Attendance Module is not a parent-friendly document.

Certificates contain a profusion of marks and items that are of little value to parents.

This school has suggested that a much simplified document, based on recorded SIMS information, should be available to parents summarising key information.

Parents have online access to a number of individual pupil information including

- Pupil Personal Folders
- Bug Club information
- Junior Librarian information
- Accelerated Reader and other information.

This school has suggested that parents should be able to access their child's attendance record online.

But very importantly, information needs to be presented in a parent friendly way.

RESPONSIBILITIES – PARENTS

Parents have a statutory duty:

'To ensure that children have an efficient education suited to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs' (Education & Libraries Order 1986)

In layman's language, this places the responsibility on parents that children should be at school.

Parents are responsible for informing the school about their child's absence as soon as possible, ideally on the first day of absence.

This can be done

- by a telephone call to the School Office (this information will be passed to the class teacher)
- by explanation note/letter on return to school.

If it is likely absence might be prolonged through illness or other reason, it is important to indicate this to the class teacher.

Appropriate work for the child will be available from the class.

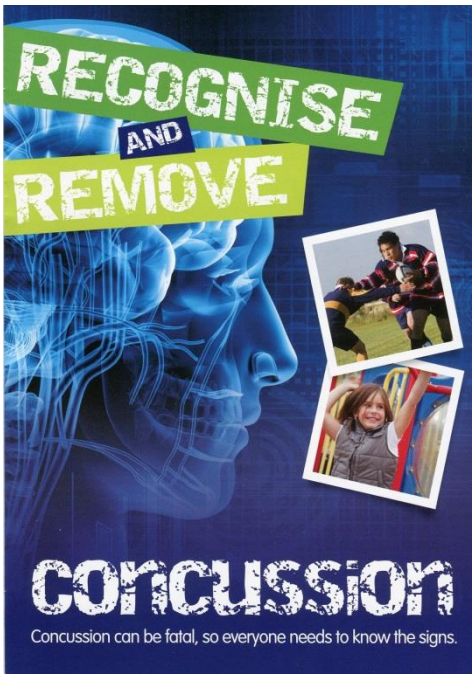
It is also important to tell us is a child is hospitalised for any reason.

It is part of our policy and practice to always send a gift from school to any child who spends a night in hospital.

We have written to parents emphasising the need to let us know of any diagnosed concussion, so that we can be appropriately careful in school.

The DE Concussion Recognition Tool **'Recognise & Remove'** has been shared with parents.

We also emphasise the need to tell us of certain conditions that may pose a risk to other children in class who have very specific risk factors.



RESPONSIBILITIES – PRINCIPAL & SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

The Principal has, on behalf of the Board of Governors, overall responsibility for school attendance.

This includes

- deploying resources and delegating staffing in managing attendance matters
- providing required statistical information to statutory agencies
- reporting to the Board of Governors on attendance

The School Leadership Group, along with the Principal, will take a lead role in promoting all aspects of attendance including

- organising and presenting awards in recognition of good and improved attendance
- meeting with class teachers to discuss absence, punctuality and any other connected concerns
- meeting parents to discuss attendance and connected issues
- organising appropriate training for staff
- leading policy evaluation, review and development
- collating and reporting attendance information
- work closely with EA Educational Welfare Officers

RESPONSIBILITIES – OFFICE STAFF

Office staff have a key role in the administration of attendance.

This includes

- maintaining a written log of late arrivals each morning
- operating the CLASP system
- receiving phone messages from parents
- ensuring messages are passed to teachers
- collating absence and registration data

The school's Senior Executive Officer plays a lead role, along with School Leadership, in liaising with Educational Welfare Officers.

CONSULTATION

The views of all school partners are always welcome on this and all School Policy & Practice.

Primate Dixon Attendance Policy has been developed in consultation with

- Pupils
- School Council
- Parents
- Staff
- Governors

Policy has been shared on the school website and copies are available from the Secretary's Office.

Annual Policy Review will be led by the Principal and School Leadership Team.

ABSENCE CODES: GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	STATISTICAL MEANING
/\	Present: / = (AM): \ = (PM)	Present
A	Artistic Endeavour	Authorised absence
B	Bereavement	Authorised absence
C	Suspended	Authorised absence
D	No Reason Provided for Absence	Unauthorised absence
F	Agreed Family Holiday	Authorised absence
G	Not Agreed Family Holiday	Unauthorised absence
H	Other Absence	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
L	Late (Before registration closes)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No Reason yet provided for absence (Temporary code only)	Unauthorised absence
O	Other exceptional circumstances	Authorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study Leave	Approved educational activity
U	Late after registration closes	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational Visit (Residential)	Approved educational activity
W	Work Experience	Approved educational activity
X	Only staff should attend	Attendance not required
Y	Exceptional Closure	Attendance not required
*	Not on roll	Attendance not required
#	Holiday for all	Attendance not required
!	No attendance required	Attendance not required
1	Alternative education provision (Organised by EA)	Approved educational activity
2	Home/Hospital tuition (Organised by EA)	Approved educational activity
9	CAMHS	Approved educational activity

Further explanation of Codes is available at

https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/Final-attendance-circular-2015.pdf

Primate Dixon Primary School

4 School Lane

COALISLAND BT71 4NW

Telephone 028 8774 6044

XX XXXXX XXXX

REFERENCE:

XXXXX XXXXXXXXX (DOB)

XXXXXXXXXXX

Coalisland

BT71 XXX

Dear Parents

It is very important that **XXXXXX** is in school every day to make the progress XX is capable of.

Along with the Educational Welfare Service, we monitor the school attendance record of pupils.

So far this year **XXXXXX** has been absent on **XX days out of XXX school days** up to today, XX XXXXXX.

When attendance falls **below 85%,** the Educational Welfare Officer investigates this.

XXXXXX's attendance at school this year is **XX%.**

It is essential that a phone call or note explaining the reason for any absence is passed to the school.

I would be grateful for your support in ensuring that **XXXXXX** is at school each day for class.

If you wish to discuss this letter with me please contact the school to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely

CC EA-S Educational Welfare Office, Dungannon

Primate Dixon Primary School

4 School Lane

COALISLAND BT71 4NW

Telephone 028 8774 6044

XX XXXXX XXXX

REFERENCE:

XXXXX XXXXXXXXX (DOB)

XXXXXXXXXXX

Coalisland

BT71 XXX

Dear Parents

It is very important that **XXXXXX** is in school for the beginning of class every day.

Class begins each day at 9.00 am. At this time, teachers discuss the work programme for the day with pupils.

XXXXXX has come into school after 9.15am on **XX** mornings this year.

As a result he has missed many hours of morning class.

It is also very important for **XXXXXX** to be at school every day in order to make the progress he is capable of.

Along with the Educational Welfare Service, we monitor the school attendance record of pupils.

So far this year **XXXXXX** has been absent on **XX days out of XXX school days** up to today, XX XXXXXX.

When attendance falls **below 85%,** the Educational Welfare Officer becomes involved in following this up.

XXXXXX's attendance at school this year is **XX%.**

It is essential that a phone call or note explaining the reason for absence is passed to the school.

I would be grateful for your support in ensuring that **XXXXXX** is at school each day and here for the beginning of class.

If you wish to discuss this letter with me please contact the school to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely

CC EA-S Educational Welfare Office, Dungannon

Primate Dixon Primary School

4 School Lane

COALISLAND BT71 4NW

Telephone 028 8774 6044

http://primatedixon.coalisland.ni.sch.uk/

XX XXXXXXX XXXX

REFERENCE: **XXXXXXXXXXXX (DOB)**

XXXXXXXXXX

Coalisland BT71 XXX

Dear Parent

It is very important for children to be at school every day, unless there is a genuine reason for absence, so that they can make all the progress they are capable of.

Our School Reports included attendance records up to XX XXXXX XXXX.
Up to that date XXXXXXXXXX was absent from school on 26 days. Attendance for the school year was 83%.
I added comment about this to XXXXXXXXXX School Report.
It was noted that attendance on Mondays (XX%) and Fridays (XX%) were especially low.

Over the full school year to end of June XXXX, XXXXXXXXXX **was absent on 42 days (76%).**

Pupil attendance is monitored each month by the Education Authority Educational Welfare Office. Where attendance falls below 85% the EWO service becomes involved in following this up.

We want to ensure, along with you, that XXXXXXXXXX has every opportunity to do well in school. As I have said, in order to do so, he needs to be at school every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence.

We are confident that, given improved attendance, XXXXXXXXXX can make much more progress in school.

I would be grateful for your support in ensuring that XXXXXXXXXX is in school each day in the new school year.

If you wish to discuss this letter with me, please contact the school to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely

CC EA-S Educational Welfare Office, Dungannon

Primate Dixon Primary School
4 School Lane
COALISLAND BT71 4NW
Telephone 8774 6044
http://primatedixon.coalisland.ni.sch.uk/

XX XXXXX XXXX

REFERENCE: **XXXXXXXXXXX (DOB XX/XX/XXXX)**
XXXXXX
Coalisland BT71

Dear Parent

The beginning of class, 9.00am, is the most important part of every school day.
At this time teachers complete registration and talk to children about the work planned for that day.
When children come into school late they miss this very important part of the day's class.

Our recent School Reports included attendance records up to **XX XXXXX XXXX**.
You will have seen that on XXXXXXX's Report, I added comment regarding late arrival at school.

You will see there that XXXXXXX arrived late for school on XX days.
Over the full school year to June XXXX, XXXXXX was late for school on XX days.

Children come into school from 8.45am each morning and have 15 minutes of play before class.
This is also a very important part of the school day and I would encourage XXXXXX to be in school for this.

We want to ensure, along with you, that XXXXXX has every opportunity to do well in school.
I would be grateful for your support in ensuring that XXXXXX is in school each day for the beginning of class from September for the new school year.

Attendance and lateness are monitored each month by the Educational Authority Educational Welfare Office.

If you wish to discuss this letter with me, please contact the school to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely

CC EA-S Educational Welfare Office, Dungannon