



# **KNOCKAVOE SCHOOL & RESOURCE CENTRE**

## ***Pupil Attendance Policy***

**February 2025**

Position	Signed	Date
Principal	Sharon Cassidy	Sharon Cassidy 3/4/25.
Chair of Board of Governors	June Neill	June Neill 3/4/25



## **KNOCKAVOE SCHOOL - 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. Knockavoe School always promotes their Mission Statement of 'Reaching for a Brighter Future.'

### **Aims of the Policy**

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 has overall responsibility for school attendance; Teachers/Classroom Assistant's should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to their designated Head of Key Stage initially and if concerns continue then this will be brought by Heads of Key Stage to the Principal's 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 accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2024/13, which can be found at the following link: <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-202413-attendance-guidance-absence-recording-schools>

Knockavoe School is committed to working with parents/guardians/carers to encourage regular and punctual attendance (Appendix 1).

### **Role of Parent/Guardian**

Parents/guardians have a legal duty<sup>1</sup> 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.

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

It is a parent's/guardian'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

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<sup>1</sup> Article 45(1) of The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986



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.

Unless a prior arrangement has been agreed by both home and school, pupils are expected to be in school at the designated time, dependant on their mode of transport to school each day, for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and on your child's attendance record.

If your child appears reluctant to attend school please discuss the matter promptly with the class teacher, Head of Key Stage and/or Principal to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support and relevant and acceptable strategies are put in place. This may also involve the Education and Welfare Officer (EWO), who will ensure that the strategies used are appropriate and reflective of the individual pupil needs.

### **Role of Pupils**

Each pupil at Knockavoe School must attend school punctually and regularly. If you have been absent from school, a written note/email from a parent/guardian must be provided to your teacher when you return. Parents may be required to take on this responsibility if necessary.

### **Absence Procedures**

If a child is going to be absent from school, then a parent has a number of options so that this can be reported to the School:

- Inform Transport in the morning at pick-up time that your child will not be attending.
- Ring the School Office on 028718833199 (Option 1) and inform the Secretary or leave a message on the answering service.
- Email your child's teacher directly on the morning of the first day of absence.

Please note that any illness/absence periods should adhere to the PHA Guidelines which can be found at:

[https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance\\_on\\_infection\\_control\\_in\\_schools\\_poster.pdf](https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in_schools_poster.pdf)

Parents will also be required to fill out a 'Reason for Absence' form that will be sent out by the school secretary, if required, or when no reason has been provided.

### **Family holidays during Term Time**

Knockavoe School strongly 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.



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

Every case of pupil non-attendance will be addressed:

1. On an individual case basis and the specific situation taken into consideration, alongside parents, before any strategies are implemented.
2. If non-attendance continues then the School will seek the involvement of the Education Welfare Service (EWS) to support.
3. Individual strategies will be implemented for pupils who cannot attend school for medical reasons. Appropriate supports and possible referrals will be agreed with the EWO.
4. The school may also host a Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) meeting so that all professionals involved may provide support that best meets the needs of the pupil(s) involved.

### **Education Welfare Service**

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

If a pupil's absence causes concern, or if their attendance falls below 85% and there is also a concern, 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.

There will be a scheduled meeting with the Education Welfare Officer and relevant senior managers once per term to discuss current or ongoing attendance concerns.

### **Monitoring of Policy**

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually in consultation with our EWO.



# ATTENDANCE PROTOCOL FOR PUPIL ABSENCE



As per Pupil Attendance Policy, Parents should contact school office or email class teacher to inform them of reason for pupil absence.

Teacher should record pupil absence on SIMs using the correct code (see attached sheet). If unsure, consult with school office



**Day 2**

If there has been no contact with a parent, teacher will phone parent to enquire about reason for absence and ask for return to school date.

Record reason for absence on SIMS using correct code



**DAY 5**

Contact parent to enquire about pupil wellbeing and enquire about return to school date. Inform parent that school wishes pupil a speedy recovery and we look forward to the pupil returning soon.

Encourage parent to contact school if they need any support



**UP TO 4 WEEKS**

Offer meal pack Contact canteen & VP with pupil details

Weekly phone call / email from class teacher

Offer Homework Pack

Alert Head of Key Stage to pupil absence



**4 WEEKS+**

Offer meal pack Contact canteen & VP with pupil details

Remote learning options should be discussed with parent following consultation between teacher & SLT

Offer Homework Pack

Weekly phone call / email from class teacher

Referral to EWO following discussion with Principal





# Summary of Attendance Codes on current C2K system (Updated August 2024)

CODE	DESCRIPTION	CODE	DESCRIPTION
J/A	Present (after 12:45 PM)	X	Only staff should attend
A*	Artistic Endeavour	Y*	Exceptional Closure
B*	Bereavement	#	Holiday for all
C	Suspended	I	No attendance required
D	No reason provided for absence	1	Community Providers / EOTAS (organised by the EA)
E*	Family Holiday, agreement Do not use	2	Exceptional Teaching Arrangement / hospital
G*	Family Holiday (not agreed)	3	Elective Home Education
H*	Other Absence	4	Pupil Referral Unit
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	5	Another mainstream school (under Entitlement Framework – EF)
J*	Extended Leave	6	Training Organisation (under EF)
L*	Late (before registration closed)	7	FE College (under EF)
M*	Medical / Dental Appointments	8	Intensive Support Learning Unit
N	No reason yet provided for absence (temporary code only)	9	CAMHS / Mental Health Support
O*	Other Exceptional Circumstances		COVID-19 SPECIFIC CODES – SHOULD NO LONGER BE USED
P*	Approved Activity	{	COVID-19 Illness Confirmed Pupil has tested positive for COVID-19
R*	Religious Observance	}	COVID-19 Illness Suspected / Unconfirmed Pupil has tested negative for COVID-19 but has symptoms
S*	Study Leave	{	COVID-19 Self-Isolation – Vulnerable Pupil or Household member Pupil is self-isolating due to being a vulnerable member of a household or being a member of a household with a vulnerable member
U*	Late (after registration closed)	}	COVID-19 Self-Isolation – No evidence of learning from home Pupil has not been learning from home during self-isolation
V*	Educational Visit / Examination	I	COVID-19 Self-Isolation & Learning from Home Pupil has been learning from home during self-isolation
W*	Work Experience	I	COVID-19 Learning from Home – Social Distancing Pupil has been learning from home during self-isolation due to social distancing measures
Absence Category Colour Code			
Present / Approved Educational Activity		Unauthorised Absence	
Attendance not required		Attendance not required	

