**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.

Saint Eugene’s Primary Schoolwill strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

**Mission Statement**

Central to the ethos of St Eugene’s Primary School is the determination to provide a learning & thinking environment within a safe, supportive, stimulating, happy and co-operative school community.

**Aims**

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Saint Eugene’s 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 Education Welfare Service.

**Role of Staff**

1. Teaching Assistants note absence of pupils in each classroom at 9.15am daily. (Paper version) and deliver to office.
2. Teaching Assistants or teachers note medical appointments, speech therapy app. or other reasons for removal or late coming to school and inform office
3. Teachers note lateness + time of late-comers in morning and absences in afternoon session and return daily to office.
4. School Secretary inputs all data into SIMS.net

**Role of the School**

The Principal at St Eugene’s Primary School has overall responsibility for school attendance; teachers/secretary 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 meetings on a regular basis.

Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded at the beginning of morning and afternoon registration.

To enable our school to record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2015/02

<https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/Final-attendance-circular-2015.pdf>

St Eugene’s Primary School is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance. The school encourages good attendance by praise and recognition of good and improving attendance and encouragement for those whose attendance is in need of improving.

A monthly/termly reward system and public acknowledgement is in place.

**Role of Parent/Guardian**

Parents have a legal duty to ensure:

*Every child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient full time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.*

*(***Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986)**

It is a parent/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 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 at 9.15 am for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness (after 9.15am and up to 9.30am) is recorded at registration and recorded on your child’s attendance record.

Children arriving for school after 9.30am are recorded using a ‘u’ code which marks them as absent for the morning session.

A similar process occurs for the afternoon session.

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 St Eugene’s Primary School has a duty to ensure that they 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.

All pupils will try to ensure they are ready for their school day by

1. Going to bed early and sleeping well during the school week
2. Getting up in good time to eat breakfast and get ready for school
3. Travelling to school in time and keeping as safe as they possibly can.

**Absence Procedures**

1. The school takes note of all phone calls relating to pupil absence and requests a written note on the pupils return.
2. The school will request evidence of medical appointments if numerous appointments in school time begin to have a detrimental effect on the child’s work.
3. If a child’s attendance is below 85% and the cause is unknown, the principal will contact the parent to arrange a meeting to discuss any issues arising, how the school might help and begin to work towards a better attendance.
4. If a child’s attendance is below 85% and the cause is known eg ‘broken bone, flu, medical disorder etc, the principal will discuss with the parent how the school might help to support and improve the child’s attendance.
5. The school will use the advice and expertise of the EWS to improve the school attendance.

**Family holidays during Term Time**

St Eugene’s Primary 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.

**Procedures for Managing Non-attendance**

If Absence Procedures have been rigorously tried yet fail to bring improvement, the school will follow the Service Level Agreement with the Education Welfare Service (Appendix 1) and make a referral to them. The school will put in place, with the EWS support, an intervention process of regular review, monitoring and evaluation supporting agreed procedures for resolving difficulties.

**Education Welfare Service**

Education and Library Boards through the 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.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Principal

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chair, Board of Governors