



# Glengormley High School

## Pupil Attendance Policy

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February 2018



## **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.

Glengormley High School will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

"Glengormley High School aims to provide a welcoming and caring environment where everyone is respected, valued and encouraged to achieve their full potential.

We set high standards of learning, celebrate success and strive to promote the partnership between school, parents and the community in preparing our young people for adult life."

## **Aims**

The aim of this policy is to ensure an effective system for recording attendance, recording reasons for non-attendance and efficient systems in place to respond to issues related to attendance.

- to strive to achieve the Northern Ireland average for attendance for non-selective post primary schools, as set out by the Department of Education
- to improve attendance by actively involving parents, carers, pupils and outside agencies through advice, support and guidance
- to improve attendance to help impact positively on achievement of all pupils
- to improve attendance and punctuality which will enhance the pupils sense of belonging to the school community
- to develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities of personnel in school in relation to attendance and punctuality
- to ensure compliance with all statutory requirements as laid down by the Department of Education
- to promote good relations with the Educational Welfare Service
- to instil good habits and values for adult and working life
- to raise pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance
- to develop an attendance reward schemes which recognises pupils' attendance achievements

## **Role of the School**

The Principal has overall responsibility for school attendance; The Pastoral Learning Leaders should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to his 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 2017/15, which can be found at the following link: [www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201715-attendance-guidance-and-absence-recording-by-schools](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201715-attendance-guidance-and-absence-recording-by-schools)

Glengormley High School is committed to working with parents/guardians to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

## **Principal will:**

- set attendance targets in accordance with the Schools Development Plan
- monitor the progress of attendance
- liaise with the Board of Governors in relation to attendance
- ensure that strategies to promote and implement the policy in school are in place

- determine whether to authorise any requests by parents to take their child out of school for an extended period of time
- approve decisions on alternative school provision for pupils to EOTAS

**Vice Principal will:**

- meet with the Pastoral Learning Leaders in relation to attendance and punctuality in school
- support the work of the Pastoral Learning Leaders in the monitoring of attendance and punctuality
- regularly review the pupils who are being supported by the Education Welfare Service
- meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer to update and monitor pupil attendance below 85% and pupils whose attendance has dropped significantly due to medical, social, emotional or disengagement issues
- liaise with external agencies and feed back to Pastoral Learning Leaders and other relevant staff
- feedback information to SLT and Principal in relation to attendance and punctuality
- seek approval from the Principal on alternative school provision for pupils with medical or disengagement issues
- monitor provision for pupils in EOTAS eg attendance, progress and visits to placements
- arrange regular attendance meetings for Pastoral Learning Leaders
- make use of attendance data to monitor the progress, identify trends and set targets for improvement
- co-ordinate the work of the Home Liaison Officer
- adhere to any guidance provided in the Department of Education Circulars in relation to attendance

**Pastoral Learning Leaders will:**

- manage the work of the form tutors in their group in the monitoring of attendance and punctuality
- ensure the accuracy of attendance records on SIMS of pupils within their group
- regularly review the attendance of pupils in their group who are being supported by the Education Welfare Service
- meet regularly with the Vice Principal to update and monitor pupil attendance
- when required, complete Education Welfare Service referrals for pupils
- liaise with the Home Liaison Officer in relation to pupils in their group who may require a home visit
- issue correspondence in relation to pupils attendance/punctuality to parents
- facilitate meetings with pupils/and or parents in relation to attendance and punctuality
- make use of attendance data to monitor the progress, identify trends and set targets for improvement for pupils in their group
- co-ordinate the provision of work for pupils who are unable to attend school due to exceptional circumstances
- use a variety of interventions/strategies to overcome poor attendance, lack of engagement and underachievement for pupils in their group

**Home School Liaison Officer will:**

- develop relationships with parents and students and to act as a resource person to both
- work with Pastoral Learning Leaders and link with parents of identified pupils on a weekly basis
- work with pupils and address barriers which prevent them from attending school
- use a variety of interventions to overcome poor attendance, lack of engagement and underachievement at school
- link in with the schools Education Welfare Officer to assist with home visits of pupils who have been referred
- monitor the changes in attendance of pupils who have been supported by the Home School Liaison Officer
- provide regular feedback to the Pastoral Learning Leaders

**Form Tutors will:**

- accurately record pupil attendance each morning
- ensure office sends a text on the first day of pupil absence. By day three a phone call home should be made if no response from the parent/guardian on the reason for absence.
- follow up with pupils and parents in relation to reasons for absence
- make use of attendance data to monitor the progress and identify trends in their form class
- collect absence notes, question reasons and record in SIMS the reason for pupil absence
- send all absence notes to the school office. These should be filed in the pupil's school folder
- inform the Pastoral Learning Leaders of attendance and punctuality concerns in their form class
- informally meet with pupils whose attendance is of concern and discuss strategies to improve attendance/punctuality

**Classroom Teachers will:**

- register pupils using SIMS lesson monitor for each class
- if concerned or suspicious regarding the absence of a pupil, inform the Pastoral Learning Leader without delay

**Office Administrator (Attendance) will:**

- complete the monthly attendance returns to the Education Authority
- liaise with the Pastoral Team on issues relating to attendance records eg non-marking of rolls
- daily checks to ensure AM and PM roles are marked
- removal of pupils names from the SIMS register, as requested by the Vice Principal
- transfer the pupils SIMS record to their new school, when required

**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.

1 Article 45(1) of The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986

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 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 8.40am for registration which begins at 8.45am 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 or Principal to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

**Role of Pupils**

Each pupil at Glengormley High 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/carers are required to complete the absence pro-forma in the school diary which provides a clear reason for any absence.

### **Family Holidays During Term Time**

Glengormley High 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. Only in exceptional circumstances will a holiday be authorised.

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

The Education Authority 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.

- Below 92% Letter A
- Below 85% Letter 1
- Letter 2 after little or no improvement
- Referral to EWO

### **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.

Signature – Principal

Signature – Chair, Board of Governors

Date