



## MALLUSK INTEGRATED PRIMARY 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. *Mallusk Integrated Primary School* will endeavour to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

### **Aims**

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Mallusk Integrated Primary 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**

At Mallusk Integrated Primary School, we understand the impact of poor attendance on a child's attainment. The Principal, Mrs Kinsella, has overall responsibility for school attendance; teaching staff should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to her attention.

The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets.

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

**Mallusk Integrated Primary School is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.**

### **Role of Parent**

Parents have a legal duty 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. (Article 45(1) of The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986).

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that children should only miss school for reasons which are unavoidable or justified, such as illness or days of religious observance.

It is a parent's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence on the first day of absence. This will 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 9am for registration and the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure their child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and on each pupil'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 Pupil**

Each pupil at Mallusk Integrated Primary School must attend school punctually and regularly.

### **Family Holidays During Term**

At Mallusk Integrated Primary School, we understand the difficulties of choosing to holiday during school holiday periods. However, we believe in the importance of continuity of learning and so we discourage 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. Provision of work is at the discretion of the class teacher.

### **Procedures**

We remind parents of the need for regular and punctual attendance. We ask each parent to inform us by phone or by e-mail on the first day of absence, with a written note upon return to school.

Teachers record absence with a note (authorised absence), unauthorised absence and lateness, using the C2k codes detailed in the appendix.

Parents are provided with attendance information at parent interviews during the year and on the end of year report.

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

In line with our Pastoral Care, SEN and Positive Behaviour Policies, we endeavour to motivate and reward children, to provide for their individual needs and for their social and emotional well-being. Children will be encouraged to take pride in and responsibility for their learning. We hope that our ethos and positive learning environment will provide support and encouragement for all pupils, so that they feel that school is an important and stimulating place to be.

Absence will be monitored and followed up initially in an informal way by the class teacher either by phone call or by appointment, after 5 days of absence. If pupils become persistent absentees, the Principal will also follow up with a phone call and arrange a formal meeting to discuss this with parents and pupil. Parents will be reminded of their legal responsibilities for ensuring their children's regular and punctual attendance.

If a pattern of absence becomes a cause for concern, a letter will be issued to reiterate the legal obligations of a parent and the action taken, or to be taken, by the school. The Principal will refer to the Education Welfare Service for support.

### **Education Welfare Service**

Education and Library Boards (ELBs) through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) have a legal duty to make sure that parents meet their responsibility towards their children's education.

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

## Appendix

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>STATISTICAL MEANING</b>
/\	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	Family Holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
G	Family Holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence
H	Other Absence	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	Authorised Absence
L	Late (before registration closed)	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 closed)	Unauthorised Absence
V	Educational Visit	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 the ELB)	Approved Educational Activity
2	Home/hospital tuition (organised by the ELB)	Approved Educational Activity
3	Elective Home Education	Attendance not Required
4	Pupil Referral Unit	Approved Educational Activity
5	Another mainstream school (under Entitlement Framework – EF)	Approved Educational Activity
6	Training Organisation (under EF)	Approved Educational Activity
7	FE College (under EF)	Approved Educational Activity
8	Intensive Support Learning Unit	Approved Educational Activity
9	CAMHS	Approved Educational Activity

