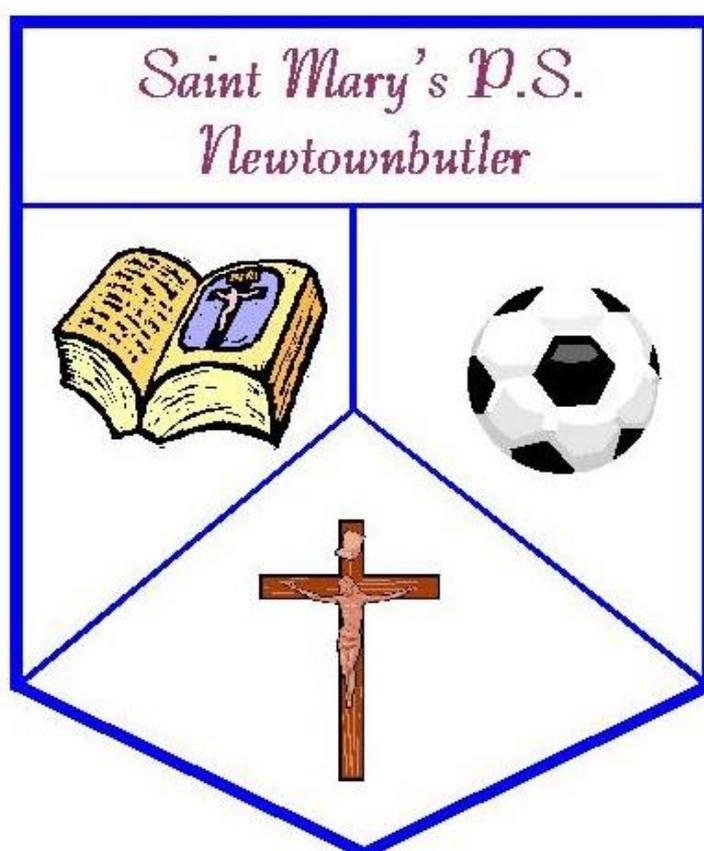


St. Mary's Newtownbutler



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.

St Mary's will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure as they learn, play and work together.

MISSION STATEMENT

St Mary's seeks to establish an educative community, centered on Christ so that His values and Gospel message pervade the whole life of our school.

Our vision for St. Mary's is that we as a staff, parents and governors will endeavor to have a school where dignity and worth of each individual is uppermost, where good relations are established and cemented in an atmosphere of respect, caring and commitment and where educational experiences have a relentless focus on learning for now and the future.

Aims

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at St Mary's 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 Education Welfare Service.

Role of the School

The Principal at St Mary's has overall responsibility for school attendance; teachers 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 each meeting.

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

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

St Mary's is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance. An award system is in place to celebrate good attendance.

Role of Parent/Guardian

Parents/guardians have a legal duty¹ 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, via the school website absence reporting button. 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 St Mary's for registration at 9.10am 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 St Mary's Primary School has a duty to ensure that they attend school punctually and regularly. If you have been absent from school, it should have been reported via the website 'report absence' button. If your parent / guardian informed the school verbally, then a written note must be provided to your teacher when you return.

Absence Procedures

Parents should inform the school in advance, of any appointments which will require their child to be absent or to leave during the school day.

Attendance of all pupils is monitored on an on-going basis by teachers and reviewed by the Principal on a half-termly basis.

Family holidays during Term Time

St Mary's P.S. 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

Class teachers will make contact with home after 3 days of unexplained absence.

When the attendance records are reviewed on a half-termly basis, those pupils for whom attendance has dropped below 90% will be considered on an individual basis. Where a child is known for example to have had a long-term illness, this will be noted and no further action taken at this point. In most cases however, if attendance has dropped below 90%, then the issue will be brought to the attention of the parents or guardians. This will take the form of a conversation or a letter as appropriate and a record will be kept in the child's file. Efforts will be made to resolve the situation through collaboration between the school and home.

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 Education Welfare Service (EWS), if appropriate.

Education Welfare Service

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

The EWS will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance.

Approved by Governors:

_____ (Chairperson)

December 23



EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS –

Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning.

Attendance percentages can be misleading.

100% Attendance	0 Days Missed	Excellent
95% Attendance	9 Days of Absence 1 Week and 4 Days of Learning Missed	Satisfactory
90% Attendance	19 Days of Absence 3 Weeks and 4 Days of Learning Missed	Poor
85% Attendance	28 Days of Absence 5 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed	Very Poor
80% Attendance	38 Days of Absence 7 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed	Unacceptable
75% Attendance	46 Days of Absence 9 Weeks and 1 Day of Learning Missed	Unacceptable

For some parents, 90% may seem like an acceptable level of attendance, but the reality is that 90% attendance means that your child will miss half a school day each week or 19 days of school during the school year – that's nearly 4 school weeks.



Give your child the best start in life – every school day counts.