

LARNE GRAMMAR SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. 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.

Larne Grammar School will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure. This is in keeping with the ethos and vision of the school.

Ethos

“Larne Grammar School promotes positive moral values in a climate of high expectations and achievement among all the individuals and groups based on mutual respect. Pupils exhibit self control, personal responsibility and self worth, developed in the classroom and through a wide range of extra curricular activities. Pupils learn, grow and succeed in an atmosphere of praise and encouragement which promotes a sense of belonging and enjoyment for everyone.”

Vision

“Larne Grammar School will strive to be a community-based centre of excellence whereby high quality teaching and learning will serve to enhance the lives of all, enabling pupils to achieve their potential in a spirit of mutual respect and support.”

2. AIMS

- 2.1 To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Larne Grammar School
- 2.2 To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- 2.3 To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.
- 2.4 To promote good relationships with Educational Welfare Service.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The School

- 3.1.1 The Principal of Larne Grammar School has overall responsibility for school attendance. Class Tutors should initially raise concerns regarding pupil attendance with the relevant Year Head. Year Heads should then liaise with the Vice Principal (Pastoral) who will ensure the Principal is informed.
- 3.1.2 The Board of Governors will provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring that it is placed as an agenda item at each meeting.
- 3.1.3 Teaching staff will regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded at the beginning of Registration and at the start of each lesson throughout the course of the school day.
- 3.1.4 Larne Grammar School will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2019/14 to ensure that pupil attendance is recorded and monitored in a consistent way.

3.2 Parents

- Larne Grammar School is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.
- 3.2.1 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 he/she have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.”
Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986
- 3.2.2 If a child is registered in Larne Grammar School, their parent has a legal duty to ensure that they regularly attend the school.
- 3.2.3 It is the responsibility of parents/guardians 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.
- 3.2.4 Pupils are expected to be in school for registration at 8.50am and to arrive punctually for the beginning of all classes. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child(ren) arrives punctually to school. Lateness is recorded at registration and will be recorded on the pupil’s attendance record.
- 3.2.5 In the event of a pupil appearing reluctant to attend school the parents/guardians should discuss the matter promptly with the relevant Class Tutor or Year Head to ensure that the school is able to provide appropriate support.

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3.3 **Pupils**

3.3.1 Every pupil of Larne Grammar School has a duty to ensure that they attend school punctually and regularly.

3.3.2 In the event of absence from school, it is the responsibility of the pupil to provide their Class Tutor with a written note from their parent/guardian explaining the reason for the absence, on their first day back at school.

3.4 **Education Welfare Service**

3.4.1 Education and Library Boards through the Education Welfare Service have a legal responsibility to make sure that parents meet their responsibility towards their child(ren)'s education.

3.4.2 Regular attendance is an essential requirement for educational attainment 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.

4. ABSENCE PROCEDURES

4.1 Details of the procedures regarding attendance, absence and exeat are contained in the School's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.

5. FAMILY HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

5.1 Larne Grammar 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.

6. PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING NON-ATTENDANCE

6.1 Attendance will be recorded and monitored through SIMS Lesson Monitor.

6.2 Pupil attendance will be recorded during Registration period by the Class Tutor and at the start of every period by the subject teacher.

6.3 A designated member of staff will have responsibility for the administration of attendance within SIMS and for signing in pupils who arrive late into school after registration closes.

6.4 Following a period of absence pupils are required to provide their Class Tutor with a written note from their parent/guardian explaining the reason for the absence. The Class Tutor provides the designated member of staff with the reason for absence and this is recorded within SIMS.

6.5 If no information has been provided by parents/guardians by the third day of a pupil's absence, a letter is posted home by the school to request an explanation for the absence.

6.6 The Vice Principal (Pastoral) generates a monthly attendance report from SIMS. This report identifies the names of pupils whose attendance is below 85%. These details are passed on to the relevant Year Head to investigate the reasons for the attendance pattern.

6.7 If necessary, the Vice Principal (Pastoral) will make contact with the parents/guardians of those pupils whose attendance is causing concern.

6.8 In the event of the attendance of a pupil of compulsory school age falling below 85% without appropriate mitigating circumstances, the pupil will be referred to Education Welfare Service. The School will work with EWS and other appropriate external agencies to provide support to the pupil and his/her parents/guardians in order to improve school attendance.

6.9 The School will seek to support pupils (and their parents/guardians) with specific attendance issues through procedures relating to school age mothers, long-term illness and school refusal.

7. REVIEW & EVALUATION

This Policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly and amended in the light of further DE guidance and/or changes to the school's procedures.