

## PARENTS

### When can children be absent from school?

Reasonable reasons for absence can include when he or she:

- Is ill.
- Has an unavoidable medical or dental appointment.
- Is taking part in a religious event.
- Is representing their country in an event.
- has an exceptional family circumstance, e.g. wedding or a funeral
- It has been authorised by the Principal/Vice Principal.

### Some unacceptable reasons for absence:

- Birthdays.
- Visiting relatives.
- Shopping.
- Hair appointment.
- Looking after other members of the family.
- Long weekend breaks.
- When there is reason to doubt the explanation
- Truancy before or during the school day

### Holidays during term time

In St. Colman's Primary School & All Saints' Nursery Unit we actively discourage parents from taking a child on holiday during term time. It causes disruption to the child's education and means that the child is missing out on essential work which the rest of the class is doing. In some cases the child may find it very difficult to catch up on this work.

If parents do decide to take their child on holiday they should contact the Principal prior to booking the holiday to seek authorisation.

They should ensure on their return that the child tries to catch up on all work missed.

K. O'Neill  
Principal

### What may happen if a child does not attend regularly?

The law states that parents are responsible for ensuring their children's regular and punctual attendance at school. The staff in St. Colman's Primary School & All Saints' Nursery Unit will work with parents, providing support to assist them in getting their child to school each day and on time but if this is unsuccessful a referral will have to be made to the Education Welfare Officer. Home visits will be made by the EWO to any pupils causing concern.

The EWO will try to resolve the situation by agreement but if the child's attendance fails to improve, these Officers can fine parents up to £1000 for each child who fails to attend regularly. The Education Authority also have the option of applying for an Education Supervision Order in respect of the child. It is important that parents cooperate with the school and the Education Welfare Officer in order to resolve any difficulties early before any legal action becomes necessary.

### Incentives in St. Colman's Primary School & All Saints' Nursery Unit to improve attendance and Punctuality

- Visits by the Principal who will talk in general to the children about attendance and punctuality and will talk to individual pupils when required.
- Letters of referral will be sent home to parents
- The Principal will phone parents if they have a concern about a child's attendance.
- Random absence checks will take place
- Children who have 100% attendance will receive a certificate at the end of the year
- Posters about attendance displayed

## St. Colman's PS and All Saints' NU

# Annaclone



## *Attendance Policy* (Summary)

### *School Address:*

*St. Colmans' PS & All Saints' NU  
Monteith Road  
Annaclone  
BT32 5LS*

*School Phone Number: 028 3026 4996*

*Email: [info@stcolmans.annaclone.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stcolmans.annaclone.ni.sch.uk)*

*Web: <http://www.stcolmansandallsaints.co.uk/>*

*Twitter: @stcolmanssps*

SCHOOL/CLASS ATTENDANCE TARGET:  
**95% or better**

**Principal: Mr K O'Neill**  
B.Ed PQH (NI)

# WELCOME

**Department of Education Attendance Target: 95%**  
**School Attendance 2017/18: 96.1%**

Welcome to St. Colman's Primary School & All Saints' Nursery Unit.

The information in this leaflet should help familiarise you with the Attendance Policy of the School.



## Rationale:

The importance of regular school attendance and good punctuality cannot be overestimated. Regular attendance is a pre requisite to a good education and securing it is high priority for our school. By failing to attend school regularly, pupils diminish the value of education provided for them. It affects their ability to achieve their full potential and of developing social skills. Frequent lateness also has a dramatic effect on a child's education. A child who is late for school, finds it more difficult to settle that day, they miss vital work, which then has to be caught up. It also disrupts lessons for the teacher and the rest of the children in the class.



What Zone Are You In?

## Aims:

- To encourage parents to ensure their child(ren) are at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.
- To work in partnership with parents to establish good attendance patterns.
- To develop a positive reward system to encourage good attendance.
- To keep parents informed about their child's attendance and punctuality.
- To encourage children to be independent and come to school every day, on time and with the correct resources.
- To liaise with the Education Welfare Officer with regard to attendance.
- To improve rates of attendance for all pupils in school

## Why is school attendance and punctuality important?

- It is required by law.
- Children need to attend school regularly to keep up with their work and promote social development.
- A good education will give your child the best possible start in life and enable him or her to make the best of the opportunities available.
- Children need to develop good habits in readiness for later life.
- Employers of school leavers will take into account the young person's school attendance and punctuality record before making a job offer.
- Young people who are away from school without good reason are at risk of becoming victims of crime or abuse.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Roles and responsibilities of the Principal:

- The Principal is responsible for managing pupil attendance within school
- The Principal rewards 100% attendance at the end of each year, with pupils presented with a certificate for full attendance
- Each term, Principal reviews the registers and identifies any patterns of attendance that are of concern (SIMS). Where appropriate visits are made to the family home by the Education Welfare Officer.
- Monitor punctuality
- To work closely with the EWO to monitor attendance through SIMS.
- To send initial letters home to parents whose children are beginning to show signs of frequent absenteeism.
- To refer children to the EWO if there is a pattern to their non attendance or if their attendance falls below 85%, who have no significant reason for their absence.
- Each year a report on school attendance is provided for the consideration of the Board of Governors.
- Support parents who are having difficulty getting their child to attend each day

### Roles and responsibilities of the Board of Governors:

- To consider the Principal's report on school attendance each year.

### Roles and responsibilities of Staff:

- To ensure the register is maintained accurately at the commencement of each school session. Registers are legal documents and can form evidence base in court cases.
- To report any notable and concerning patterns of absence to the Principal. They in turn may contact Education welfare Officer,
- In the Reception Class to establish good habits with attendance

### Roles and responsibilities of Parents and Guardians:

- Parents should ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.
- If their child is genuinely unable to attend school, Parents and Guardians are expected to contact school at the start of each day of absence to provide a reason for absence. On the child's return to school, a letter signed by the Parent or Guardian or a phone call, explaining absence should be provided.
- If their child starts avoiding school, parents and guardians should contact the school straightaway and work with them to sort things out.
- If their child needs to miss school, for example for a religious festival or some other special occasion, the parent or guardian should seek the school's agreement well in advance and give full details.
- Parents and guardians are requested to make routine medical or dental appointments outside school hours.
- Parents and guardians are discouraged from taking holidays during term-time. However, if this is a necessity, parents and guardians are required to apply to the Principal for authorised holiday absence prior to booking the holiday.

### Roles and responsibilities of Pupils:

- To attend school every day, arriving on time and ready for work.