

# Ballywalter Primary School



## Policy and Procedures For Pupils Arriving At and Leaving School

Revised: April 2011

## **RATIONALE**

Ballywalter Primary School recognises the importance of pastoral dimension in the education of our pupils and makes provision for it through a range of school policies and procedures aimed at meeting the needs of individual pupils, ensuring their academic development and their physical and emotional welfare.

The Governors and staff of Ballywalter Primary School believe that pastoral care is at its most effective when it is fully integrated into the school's daily routines, its curriculum and extra-curricular activities, however, aspects of pastoral care such as keeping safe are taught through the statutory elements of PDMU (Strand 1 – Personal Understanding and Health)

Keeping children safe on the way to and from school is very important. The implementation of procedures to ensure pupils' safety when arriving and leaving school is a duty the school shares with parents.

## **THE SCHOOL DAY**

Parents are advised that Ballywalter Primary School opens at 8:50 am each day. The school day ends at 2:00 pm each day for pupils in P1 - P3. P4 are dismissed from school at 3 pm from Monday to Thursday and at 2 pm each Friday. School ends at 3:00 pm each day for pupils in P5 - P7 unless the pupil is attending after school clubs.

**The school is unable to ensure the safety of, and takes no responsibility for, pupils who arrive in school before 8:50 am, when members of the school staff will be on duty.**

Where children arrive excessively early, or frequently early, the school will contact parents to discuss arrangements. Where the school has concerns with regard to pupil attendance, drop offs, or pick ups, advice will be sought from the SEELB Educational Welfare Service.

# **PROCEDURES**

## MORNING DROP OFF TO SCHOOL

Upon entering the school grounds, pupils will be directed to go straight into the school building by the staff members on duty. Pupils will proceed straight to their classroom where the class teacher will be on duty. Adult supervision will remain in the playground area to ensure that pupils enter school directly.

After the bell is sounded at 9:00am the infant and KSI pupils' entrances will be closed by members of the school staff. Any pupils arriving after 9:00am should come to the front door, via the Stump Road entrance of the school, where they will be admitted to the building.

It is anticipated that, as adult supervision will be present in the classrooms and in the playground, that parents will not need to escort their children to the classroom door, unless they have an urgent message to pass on to the class teacher.

## ATTENDANCE CODES

Parents are asked to note that pupils who arrive after registration closes must be recorded as late on the school register. Punctuality is closely monitored by the class teachers and Head of Key Stages. Pupils who are frequently late will be referred to the Principal.

Good attendance is encouraged throughout the school. Parents should note that if their child's attendance falls below 80%, a referral may be made to the Educational Welfare Service. A representative from the Education Welfare Office visits school on a termly basis to review percentage attendance.

## REQUESTS FOR ABSENCE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Requests for absence during normal school hours (eg. for medical appointments, examinations, funerals etc) must be made in writing to, or by direct contact, with the class teacher.

In such circumstances, pupils may only be collected by a parent or carer. No child will be permitted to leave school unaccompanied, or with an older sibling, except under very special circumstances, and only when agreement has been reached between the Principal and the parent.

When pupils are returned to school during the day after such an absence, they should come to the front door, via the Stump Road entrance of the school, where they will be admitted to the building.

## PARENTAL ACCESS

Parents are legally obliged to ensure that their child attends school. However, where parents demand that they be allowed to remove their child from the school, the school has little option but to accede to the demand.

Where parents no longer reside together, the primary carer will be taken to be the parent with whom the child spends most time during the school week.

If the primary carer asks the school to restrict the access of the second parent, this can only be done where the school has received legal documentation to that effect, or direct advice from the police.

Where the primary carer asks the school to restrict the access of the second parent, in the absence of any such documentation, the school will contact the primary carer immediately, should a request be made to remove a child from school.

Where the primary carer is unavailable, and there are concerns about the child's well-being should they be removed, the school will seek advice from SEELB Child Protection, Educational Welfare or the police, according to circumstances. Where no such concerns exist, the school will release the child and continue efforts to contact the primary carer to notify them of the situation.

## AFTERNOON PICK UPS

### P1 – P3 PUPILS

Pupils from P1 – P3 will be dismissed from the Infant Door by the class teacher. A parent or carer **must** collect the child from the door. Pupils will not be permitted to walk to the school gate unaccompanied to meet their parent. Parents must inform the school of any changes to pick up arrangements that may occur eg: if you are running late, or if you are unexpectedly sending another parent/friend to collect your child in your place. Parents must ensure that their child understands their pick up arrangements for each day.

We are aware that a small number of P1-P3 pupils currently walk home unaccompanied. Pupils will only be permitted to walk home unaccompanied if a permission slip is completed with the class teacher.

Parents are asked to note that it is important to pick pupils up on time each day. Young children become distressed quite easily if their parent is not there at the allotted time. In addition, our teaching staff have afternoon classes/directed time sessions to complete, and chronic lateness is deemed inconsiderate to all.

### P4 – P7 PUPILS

To encourage independence, pupils from P4 – P7 will be dismissed from the steps in the playground at the back of the school. A class teacher will remain on duty in the playground to ensure that all pupils leave the school grounds safely. Please note, if a pupil is due to be picked up by a parent or carer, and that person is not there when the pupil is dismissed, the pupil must return to the teacher on duty and inform them. The teacher will then contact the parent to ensure that the child is collected safely.

Parents **must** ensure that their child understands their pick up arrangements for each day and should inform the school if these change unexpectedly.

## AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

Parents will be asked to specify in writing the arrangements made for their child to return home at the end of an after school activity. Staff organising after school activities will maintain a register of children which will be taken at the start of the school day. In the event of a child being registered

'present' in school but not attending the arranged activity, without a note to that effect, the school will contact parents.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

School Member	Responsibilities
<b>P1 – P3 Pupils</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To remember their pick up arrangements on a daily basis</li> <li>▪ To walk along the paths around the school and not on the grassy areas</li> <li>▪ To leave the school grounds in a safe and orderly manner</li> </ul>
<b>P4 – P7 Pupils</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To remember their pick up arrangements on a daily basis</li> <li>▪ To walk along the paths around the school and not on the grassy areas</li> <li>▪ To leave the school grounds in a safe and orderly manner</li> <li>▪ To come back into the school grounds and report to the teacher on duty, or another member of staff, if their parent/carer has not arrived to pick them up</li> <li>▪ To follow appropriate road safety procedures</li> </ul>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To ensure that their child is aware of the pick up arrangements each day</li> <li>▪ To make arrangements for their P1-P3 child to be picked up by a parent or carer each day at the infant door</li> <li>▪ To make appropriate arrangements for their P4-P7 child at the end of the school day or after school clubs</li> <li>▪ To ensure that their child has appropriate road safety awareness</li> <li>▪ To inform the school of any unexpected changes to pick up arrangements</li> </ul>
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure P1-P3 pupils are dismissed to a parent or carer from the infant door each day</li> <li>• To ensure that P4-P7 pupils leave the school grounds safely at the end of the school day or after school clubs</li> <li>• To inform pupils of any unexpected changes to their pick up arrangements that have been communicated to the school</li> <li>• To contact the parent/carer of any child not picked up at the designated time</li> <li>• To inform the Principal of any issues arising from the pick up procedures</li> </ul>
<b>Management (Principal, SMT, BOG)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that all policies and procedures are implemented and reviewed as appropriate</li> <li>• To support staff and parents in the implementation of the policy and procedures</li> <li>• To deal with issues fairly in accordance with legislation and SEELB guidelines</li> <li>• To consult with external agencies (where appropriate), including Educational Welfare and PSNI</li> </ul>

## REVIEW AND MONITORING

Ballywalter Primary School is engaged in continuous monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of our provision for pastoral care. We will review our procedures and practice as required to ensure the best possible standards of care and welfare for the pupils in our school. This may result in a change of organisation, method or content as required for individual circumstance. Monitoring and review will be achieved through consultation with parents, staff and governors and through direct observation of procedures. We value the contribution that can be made by our teachers, parents and pupils to affect appropriate change when necessary.