

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 8 NOVEMBER 2005

GUIDELINES FOR PUPIL REGISTRATION IN SCHOOLS AND CHILDREN ATTENDING NURSERY

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the Education Committee of revised Guidelines for pupil registration in all schools and for children attending nursery.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Following the tragic events in Livingston involving the death of Rory Blackhall, the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) are currently reviewing the Guidelines for pupil registration in schools. However, the authority wishes to issue revised guidelines to all establishments until further guidance is available from SEED.
- 2.2** In addition, the recent tragic event in Edinburgh brought further focus to early years establishments. It should be noted however, that there is no statutory obligation on parents with regard to attendance at nursery.
- 2.3** A working group consisting of head teachers and senior authority staff have prepared the revised guidelines. Consultation has taken place with interested parties as relevant.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF REVISED GUIDELINES

- 3.1** Existing guidance is detailed in East Ayrshire Standard Circular 5 on Attendance. This is also consistent with the current advice issued via the SEED Circular on attendance.
- 3.2** The revised Guidelines are attached as Appendix 1. In summary, the key points of the revised Guidelines are:
- All parents/carers will be reminded of their responsibilities and duties
 - Every educational establishment is, as at present, required to have clear procedures in place for pupil registration in schools and children's attendance at nursery
 - All establishments with school age children will undertake to make contact with parents/carers/emergency contacts in the event of unexplained absences
 - In nursery establishments parents may not bring their children on any one day for many reasons e.g. birthday, family outings etc. If an unexplained absence takes place in a nursery the Head will assess whether the parent/carer requires to be contacted on day one. If, however, an absence continues for longer than two days contact will be made.
 - Each special school will make specific arrangements according to their pupil and parent/carer population.

- If a child is on the Child Protection Register **immediate** contact will be made with Social Work Services.

3.3 All secondary schools, with the exception of Cumnock Academy, are implementing the use of an automatic electronic communication system for such matters. Cumnock Academy have deployed an additional member of staff for this task. Given the additional cost that would be involved, other establishments will not be using an automatic electronic system, but will make use of existing support staff.

4. FINANCIAL/LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The additional time required for the above activities will be met from within existing resources.

4.2 Depending on the outcome of any revised guidance from SEED, it may be necessary to amend these revised Guidelines in due course.

5. COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended that members:

- (i) accept the revised Guidelines on pupil registration in schools and children attending nursery;
- (ii) request that all educational establishments be informed of the revised Guidelines; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

JMcC/EO'N
24 October 2005

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Members requiring further information should contact John McCarney, Head of Service: Schools Support (01563 576126).

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: JOHN MCCARNEY

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES

REVISED GUIDELINES ON PUPIL REGISTRATION IN EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

1. These guidelines are in addition to those outlined in Standard Circular 5 (issued February 2005) which details present guidelines.
2. A standard letter will be issued to all parents/carers from the authority stating parental responsibilities as follows:
 1. accurate contact details must be kept up to date
 2. parent/carers must inform establishment of their child's absence by 9.15am on the morning of the absence, where possible
 3. verbal notification should be followed by written confirmation of absence, in school age establishments.
3. Every establishment is required to have procedures in place, which are clear and communicated to all staff.
4. It is vital that a log of action/outcomes is kept on such absences in each establishment.
5. In all educational establishments, where a child is known to be on the **Child Protection Register** immediate contact should be made with Social Services.
6. Early Years – the Head will assess whether to make contact on day one. However, if an unexplained absence continues for two days, contact must be made on day three.
7. For school age children, the school office must be informed immediately after registration of any absences - name of child and reason if known. A nominated person will undertake to make contact with parents/carers/emergency contacts in cases of unexplained absences. An appropriate effort will be made to contact the person responsible for pupil; this would depend on individual circumstances e.g. child protection issues. A record will be kept of these actions.
8. Primary Schools – the same procedure as outlined above should be followed for afternoon absences.
9. Special Schools – each establishment will make specific arrangements based on their own circumstances and based on paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 above. These arrangements should be agreed with the relevant Head of Service.
10. Secondary Schools – Guidance staff must be kept informed of absences and will follow up absences as and when appropriate.

October 2005