



Attendance Policy

Introduction

This policy is the result of whole staff collaboration together with the Board of Management to encourage maximum participation in school for every pupil, and thus, to encourage and support good attendance in school.

Relationship to Mission Statement

We believe that an effective Attendance Policy will help to foster an appreciation of learning and raise awareness of the importance of regular attendance. Regular attendance is most important if a child is to achieve his/her full potential. Non-attendance, can result in a child regressing and feeling excluded from what is happening in the classroom and the school community.

Legislation

The Education Welfare Act 2000 promotes school attendance and Section 17 of the legislation states that it is a statutory obligation on parents to ensure their child attends a recognised school once registered in the school. Furthermore, where a child is absent from the school, the parent is required under the Act to notify the school/class teacher of the reason for the child's absence. The Act states that the relevant authorities will be informed of pupils who have been absent for **twenty school days or more** (this includes illness, holidays outside school holidays etc.)

Rationale

The aims of the Attendance Policy include:

- Encouraging pupils to attend school regularly and punctually
- Identifying acceptable reasons for absences
- Alerting parents to the importance of regular attendance
- Informing parents of the procedure for notifying the school of reasons for absences
- Informing parents of procedure for dealing with poor attendance
- Identifying pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems
- Identifying and removing insofar as is practicable, any obstacles to school attendance
- Informing the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined in the Act
- Compliance with requirements under Education Welfare Act 2000 and guidelines of the NEWB

Punctuality

School begins at 9.20am. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late.

Guidance for Parents

Section [(21) (9)] of the Act states that: "a pupil's absence can only be authorised by the Principal when the child is involved in activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved". The school principal cannot authorise a child's absence for holidays during school time. However, it is essential that parents inform the school of such arrangements. Parents/guardians are informed of procedures in relation to attendance and the importance of attendance.

Notifying the School of Absences

Reasons for pupils' absences must be communicated in writing or verbally, by parents/guardians to the school. Absence notes/Aladdin will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer upon request.

Affirming attendance

Parents/guardians can promote good attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance
- Notifying the school if a child cannot attend for any reason
- Working with the school and the NEWB to resolve any attendance problems
- Discussing planned absences with the school
- Refraining, if at all possible, from taking holidays during school time
- Showing an interest in their children's school day and their children's homework
- Encouraging them to participate in school activities
- Informing the school in writing or verbally of the reasons for absence from school
- Ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children's appointments (with dentists etc.), are arranged for times outside of school hours
- Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters
- Notifying the school, verbally or in writing, if their child is to be collected by someone not known to the teacher
- Signing out their child if they are withdrawn from school during the school day and indicate the reason for withdrawal. If the pupil returns to school on the same day this will also be recorded in the same book. It is located in the secretary's office.

School Principal

The school Principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations
- Inform the Educational Welfare officer if:
 - If a pupil is not attending school regularly
 - When a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during the course of a school year
 - If a pupil has been suspended for a period of six or more days
 - When a pupil's name is removed from the school register
 - Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer with concerns regarding a pupil
 - Promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.

Class Teacher

The class teacher will:

- Take the roll call on the Aladdin system each morning between 10am and 10:30am.
- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences.
- Only mark present those children that are physically in the school building during roll call. A note will be added to Aladdin to explain a late arrival.
- Contact parents in instances where absences are not explained verbally or in writing.
- Alert the principal of increasing absences of any child.
- Include the attendance for the academic year on the end of year report.

Timetable for Review

This policy was reviewed and amended in school year 2021/2022. It will be reviewed again in the year 2024/2025 as per the school's policy development plan.

Signed _____

Date _____

Chairperson, BOM