

## Attendance Policy

### Introduction

While there is a strong tradition of good attendance in our school, changing social habits and patterns require us to monitor attendance and to put strategies in place to counteract poor or irregular attendance.

### Aims and Objectives:

Our aim is to ensure and maintain a high level of attendance at school by all pupils.

- Encouraging full attendance where possible
- Identifying pupils at risk
- Promoting a positive learning environment
- Raising awareness of the importance of school attendance
- Fostering an appreciation of learning

### Compliance with School Ethos:

In Saint Patrick's National School, we want every pupil to actively participate in all school activities. Regular attendance helps to create a stable learning environment for all pupils, and the school hopes to promote co-operation among pupils, parents/guardians and staff in maintaining a high level of regular attendance and punctuality throughout the school year.

### Current Practices

- Individual attendance is recorded daily on the school administration system and reasons for absences are noted
- When a child is absent parents should notify the school via Aladdin connect school with a reason for absence

### The explanations of absences, using the following codes as set down by the NEWS:

A Illness

B Urgent Family Reasons (eg: Bereavement)

C Expelled

D Suspended

E Other (eg: Holidays, Religious Observance, Emigration)

F Unexplained

G Transfer to another school (written confirmation received from other school)

- Attendance is monitored by the Principal and if a child is absent without explanation, parents will (1) receive a text from Aladdin system and (2) if this text does not prompt a response then another text from the Aladdin system is sent

- Parents are discouraged from taking children out of school for holidays during school time. The school calendar is published at the beginning of the school year and it is hoped parents can use this to plan holidays.
- Parents will receive a text message from the school when 10 days absence has been recorded and thereafter we have regular communication with them and provide them with updates on their child's attendance if it is a cause for concern.
- Absences of 20 days or more are submitted to NEWB at the end of each quarter and parents are informed by letter
- We ask parents to value every minute that the children spend at school. Children should be at the school no later than 9:30am and we also request parents not to collect children early, unless for a specific appointment. We record all instances where children are collected early. This enables us to keep a record of such absences and make parents aware of how much time is being missed.
- If a child has an essential appointment during the school day, you must notify your child's teacher using the Aladdin App. Ideally children should only be collected during the official break times to minimise disruption to teaching and learning.
- The class teacher will monitor punctuality. Lateness is usually not the child's fault but if a child is late more than three times in a fortnight then a letter is sent to parents requesting their co operation in improving punctuality. If the problem persists the Principal will then contact parents in an effort to resolve any difficulties.
- When a child transfers to another school, the new school informs us in writing and the child is then taken off our register.

## Promoting Good Attendance

The school promotes good attendance by

- Creating a safe and welcoming and happy environment
- Displaying kindness, compassion and understanding
- Holding regular and open class-level discussions with the children on the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.
- Being vigilant so that risks to good attendance such as disadvantage, bullying etc. are identified early
- Encouraging strong home school links so that parents feel free to discuss family problems
- Publishing attendance policy and reminders in the Newsletter
- Addressing parents at the AGM and Pre Enrollment parents on the importance of attendance and punctuality

### Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- Notifying the School if their children cannot attend for any reason.
- Working with the School and education welfare service to resolve any attendance problems;

- Making sure their children understand that parents support and approve of school attendance;
- 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.
- Praising and encouraging their children's achievements.
- Instilling in their children, a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth.
- Informing the school by text or email 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.

### **Pupils**

- Pupils have the clear responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence.

## **Sick Children at School**

Please do not send sick children to school for the following reasons:

- Children are unable to cope with the demands of school when they are unwell.
- Infection spreads rapidly in the confinement of the classroom.
- Children with broken limbs/sprains/fractures will not be allowed to go onto the yard/play sports until cleared by their doctor.
- When a child complains of feeling ill, teachers will in the first instance try to make phone contact with parents. Failing this they will then try to contact those on the emergency contact numbers list. For this reason, it is essential that you let us know if your contact details change at any time.

## **School work when Absent**

It is school policy not to assign work when a child is sufficiently unwell to be absent from school.

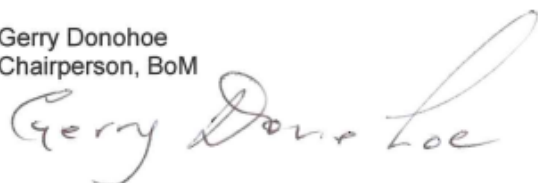
Success criteria and review dates:

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy will be judged to be effective if attendance figures can return, at least, to pre-Covid levels. It will be reviewed every year.

Ratified on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Gerry Donohoe  
Chairperson, BoM

Handwritten signature of Gerry Donohoe in cursive script.

Mary Farrell  
Principal

Handwritten signature of Mary Farrell in cursive script.