



Pupil Attendance Strategy Policy

SCOIL NAOMH IOSAIF

Pupil Attendance Strategy Policy

Introduction

Regular school attendance is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential.

St Joseph's National School will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

The main factors contributing to the formulation of the policy can be summarised as follows:

- To promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils' learning.
- To conform to legislative requirements such as the Education Welfare Act 2000 and the Education Act 1998.
- To recognise the role of the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) / TUSLA
- To address the various levels of attendance as noted in our 2016 WSE report

Aims and Objectives

The policy is geared towards:

- Ensuring that pupil attendance is recorded daily using Aladdin software and transferred to POD (Pupil Online Database).
- Encouraging full or near full attendance.
- Raising awareness of the importance of school attendance and share its promotion.
- Foster an appreciation of learning and enabling learning opportunities to be availed of.
- Identifying pupils at risk of learning disadvantage through poor attendance.
- Ensuring compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation.
- Identifying and removing, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance

Roles and Responsibilities

- All staff have an input into the implementation of the policy and the promotion of good attendance.

- Class teachers record individual patterns of attendance along with reasons for absences if known on the Aladdin Database in line with circular 0033/2015.
- The principal has responsibility for overseeing that all attendance is recorded timely and accurately.
- The Principal has responsibility for maintaining the Leabhair Tinreamh.
- The Principal will through writing contact parents or guardians when their child has a high level of absenteeism or has reached the 20 days of absenteeism and the NEWB has been notified. (draft letters attached)
- Quarterly returns are made to the NEWB/TUSLA
- Those with poor attendance need to be monitored in partnership with parents/guardians to improve attendance.
- It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management.

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. The Principal is obliged under the Education Welfare Act, to report children who are persistently late, to the Education Welfare Board.

Recording and Reporting Attendance

- The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded on Aladdin Data base. Monthly averages and annual attendance are all available on Aladdin, along with information on (Pupil's Name, Date of Birth, Address, Parents' Names) and information also needed and transferred for POD Cir 0033/2015
- If a pupil does not attend on a day when the school is open for instruction, his/her non-attendance will be recorded by the class teacher. The roll call is taken by 10.30am each morning. Any pupil not present will be marked absent for the day and a reason if known will be filled in by class teacher.
- A note from parents/guardians is required to explain each absence. Such notes will be retained by the class teacher.
- Parents/guardians must inform the school or provide a note (usually in the school diary) if a child departs early during the school day.
- Parents/guardians are made aware of the requirements of the NEWB/TUSLA particularly the by-law relating to absences of more than 20 days per school year and are written to when a return of 20 days absence has been made about their child.

- Parents/ Guardians are notified in writing on the end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year.
- Pupils whose non-attendance is a concern are invited to meet with the Principal and are informed of the school's concerns.
- The school must inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing, where a child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular, where a pupil is removed from the school register and where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more.

** Forms available on

<http://www.tusla.ie/services/educational-welfare-services/information-for-schools-inc-absence-reporting/download-reporting-documentation>

National Education Welfare Board / TUSLA

The NEWB is furnished with the total attendances in the school year through the annual Report Form which is completed online.

The school must inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing, where a child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular, where a pupil is removed from the school register and where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more.

Whole School Strategies to Promote Attendance

- St Joseph's NS endeavours to create a safe, welcoming environment for our pupils and their parents/guardians. The teaching staff collaborates in the planning and implementation of the primary school curriculum, so as to provide a stimulating learning environment for all pupils. Promotion of an open line of communication with Parents/guardians with the aim of promoting a high level of co-operation among the school community.
- Teachers are vigilant with regard to early identification of 'risk students'. Risk students can be categorised as those who miss more than 5 days in a 20 day period without an accompanying note of explanation from parents/guardians. Appropriate contact can take place between the school and the parents/guardians when this occurs. A meeting between parents and the Principal may be set up if deemed necessary. Absences of more than 20 days are automatically referred to the Education Welfare Officer and this is notified to parents.
- The calendar for the school year is issued annually in September and is distributed to all parents. It is hoped that this approach will enable parents/guardians to plan family events around school closures, thus minimising the chances of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term.

- We will award certificates to pupils who have full attendance during the school year. These certificates will be given at Summer. Children who miss no days for the entire year will receive a medal at the end of the school year.

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 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 in writing 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.

Communication with other schools

- When a child transfers from St Joseph's NS to another school, the school's records on attendance, academic progress etc. will be forwarded on receipt of written notification of the transfer.
- When a child transfers to St Joseph's NS confirmation of a transfer will be communicated to the child's previous school, and appropriate records sought.
- Pupils transferring from St Joseph's NS to a post primary school will have their records forwarded on receipt of confirmation of enrolment.

Evaluation

The success of any Attendance Policy is measured through:

- Improved attendance levels as measured through Aladdin, Leabhar Tinreamh records and statistical returns.
- Happy, confident, well-adjusted children.
- Positive parental feedback.
- Teacher vigilance.

Review and Implementation

- This version of a Pupil Attendance Strategy Policy was drawn up in January 2017 and will be reviewed in 2019.
- The Attendance Policy is available on request from the school.
- The Attendance Policy was formally approved by the Board of Management at its meeting on **09/02/2017**

Signed: **DAVID FLAHIVE**



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Roll No 18832V

Scoil Naomh Iosaif
Caisl an na Mainge
Co Chiarra 

Dear Parents,

I am obliged to write to you to inform you of _____ attendance at school. _____ has been absent _____ of _____ school days.

Under the law, every child must attend school regularly up to sixteen years of age or complete at least three years post primary education whichever comes later. When a child is absent, you as parent must let the school know the reason for the absence every time. It is school policy to do this in writing.

If you wish to discuss _____ attendance, please contact the school to arrange an appointment to meet with _____ as soon as possible.

Thank you for you co-operation in this matter,

Yours truly,

Principal



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Roll No 18832V

Scoil Naomh Iosaif
Caisl an na Mainge
Co Chiarra 

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you regarding _____ attendance at school who has been absent _____ of _____ school days.

Because _____ has now been absent for 20 days, the school must pass the information to the National Educational Welfare Board. An Educational Welfare Officer may therefore be in contact with you to discuss the matter further.

Under the law, every child must attend school regularly up to sixteen years of age or complete at least three years post primary education whichever comes later. When a child is absent, you as parent must let the school know the reason for the absence every time. It is school policy to do this in writing.

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