



# School Attendance Policy



**An Edmund Rice School**

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The drafting of this policy was a collaborative school process involving staff and Board of Management.

### **Rationale**

The main factors contributing to the formulation of a revised policy are:

- To promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils' learning
- To comply with requirements under Education Welfare Act 2000

### **The aims of the attendance policy in O Connell Primary are to:**

1. Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually.
2. Share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community.
3. Inform the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined in the Act.
4. Ensure links with school completion in particular for children at risk of developing school attendance problems.
5. Ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance/participation.
6. Develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
7. Identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance,

### **The school will ensure that:**

- The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school.
- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Pupil attendance is recorded daily.
- Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated.
- Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored.
- Children with poor punctuality will be encouraged to attend school on time through incentives & rewards.
- School attendance statistics are reported to TUSLA.

### **Compliance with School Ethos**

This policy complements the school ethos of nurturing potential in a caring environment where the welfare of children is paramount.

### **Punctuality**

School yard is open from 8.30am and children are required to be in their lines not later than 8.50am. Children enter the school accompanied by the teacher/sna at 8:50am. All pupils and staff are expected to be on time. The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. Communication via the HSCL & Principal will be made with home in event of consistently poor punctuality. The Principal is obliged to report children who are persistently late to the Education Welfare Officer.

### **Guidance for Parents / Guardians**

Section 21.9 of the Education 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.

If a child is absent, the parent will log into their account on Class Dojo giving the date and the reason for absence. This will be recorded on each child's Aladdin profile.



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

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- 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 via class dojo 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, in writing, the school if their child/children, particularly children in junior classes, are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher.

### **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.

### **A strategy for promoting good school attendance**

The Board of Management is committed to providing a positive school atmosphere which is conducive to promoting good school attendance. In this regard:

- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- The school will promote development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children.
- Support for pupils, who have Special Educational Needs, are in place in accordance with Department of Education & Science guidelines.
- Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils.
- The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be utilised when necessary.
- The attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance, and the class teacher will notify the Principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any child.
- Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.
- The Assistant principal 2 will make monthly reports to the principal regarding attendance and punctuality.

### **Actions to address poor attendance**

- Contact between the school and parent/guardian to express concern (principal).
- Specific meeting in school with parent/guardian to identify problems and agree interventions (principal)
- Concerns and agreements communicated in writing to parent/guardian.
- Use of appropriate in-school interventions (e.g. attendance charts/attendance report, incentives, rewards etc).

### **School Principal**

The School Principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations.
- Inform the Education Welfare Service:
  - 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 roll.
  - Organize attendance initiatives such as "drive for 5" & attendance clinics.
- Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Service of concerns regarding a pupil.

- Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff

### **Class Teacher**

The class teacher will:

- Maintain the class roll daily on Aladdin in accordance with procedure.
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Inform the Principal of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.
- Help promote and organize attendance initiatives such as "Drive for 5".
- Notes will be sought from pupils when they return to school after an absence. If after two days the teacher has not received an explanation from the parent/guardian he/she will notify the office.
- As part of the school's Code of Behaviour, Discipline for Learning, the class teacher will emphasize the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- Attendance points will be awarded daily on class dojo.
- When a pupil is regularly absent for 1/2 days per week, without a valid reason, the class teacher will notify the office and contact parents on class dojo.
- In the case of targeted pupils, teachers will inform the office before 9.30am if anyone is absent without an explanation. Contact will be made with home in this event.
- Attendance will be a priority topic at parent/teacher meetings.
- Attendance will be part of the agenda in the regular consultations between class teachers and the Care Team.
- Pupils' attendance details will be part of the annual School Report to parents.

### **Strategies for Improving Attendance.**

The school will use all or some of the following strategies to foster regular and punctual attendance as well as to tackle cases of irregular attendance.

#### **(1) Rewards:**

Rewards are given in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.

- Pupils are given daily attendance points on Class Dojo.
- Certificates are awarded at the end of each term or attendance.
- Trophies are awarded at the end of year assembly or full attendance.
- Pupils also receive extra P.E. and extra computer time, school outings as rewards for good attendance.
- Bicycle to be raffled at end of year for pupils with full attendance.

### **Records/Communication**

Subject to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer to another primary school will be passed to the Principal of the school, by post, as soon as we receive written notification of transfer.

Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer from another primary school will be sought directly from the previous school.

'Education Passport' of pupils transferring to a second level school will be sent to the school, if requested, once enrolment has been confirmed.

**Ratified by Board of Management Nov 22**

**Signed:** Chris Purcell

22/11/2022

**Chris Purcell**  
**Chairperson, Board of Management**

Signed: Michael McHugh

22-11-22

**Michael McHugh**  
**Principal**

