

School Attendance Policy for St. Peter's N.S.

Vision and Values

At St. Peter's N.S. we aim to ensure that each child reaches their full potential in all areas of learning and development. In order for this to happen, it is essential that all children attend school as much as possible. We encourage and promote good attendance and punctuality.

Rationale

The Board of Management wishes to comply with legislation, such as: The Education Act, 1998 and The Education Welfare Act, 2000. The Board of Management wishes to promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils' learning. In St. Peter's N.S., we will endeavour to enable every pupil to actively participate in all school activities. Regular attendance helps to create a stable learning environment for all our pupils, and the school hopes to promote cooperation among pupils, parents/guardians and school personnel in maintaining a high level of regular attendance through the school year.

Aims of our attendance policy

- Encourage regular school attendance and punctuality.
- Inform the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined in the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.
- Identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- Develop links between the school and the families of those children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
- Ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation, circulars and statutory guidelines.

General Information Regarding Attendance

The school attendance/absence of individual pupils is recorded on a daily basis on the school data management system, Aladdin. Class attendance data is recorded daily in electronic format on Aladdin. The annual attendance/absence of each individual pupil is recorded in electronic format also.

Non-attenders must provide an explanation from their parent/guardian with reason for absence outlined. This should be communicated using the Aladdin Connect App. The school keeps a record of all absences using the following codes as set down by the NEWB:

- A Illness
- B Urgent Family Reasons (e.g. bereavement)
- C Expelled
- D Suspended
- E Other (e.g. holidays, religious observance, emigration)
- F Unexplained
- G Transfer to another school (written confirmation received from other school)

Recording Attendance

With the introduction of the Primary Online Database (POD), we record pupil enrolment and attendance details in electronic format. Each class teacher will record attendance/absence on the system, typically by 11 am daily. Parents should enter the reason for a child's absence on Aladdin.

Reporting Attendance to Parents/Guardians and Educational Welfare Services (TUSLA):

- Parents are notified in writing on the end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year.
- Parents of pupils whose non-attendance is a concern are contacted by the Principal/Deputy Principal and are informed of the school's concerns.
- The school is obliged to inform the Educational Welfare Services (TUSLA), where
 - a child has missed 20 or more days in a school year
 - where attendance continues to be irregular after discussion with parents/guardians
 - where a pupil is removed from the school register
 - where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more.

In the event of contact with the Educational Welfare Services, they will investigate the concern with parents/guardians and support a transition to improved attendance.

Punctuality

School begins at 9.00am. The school doors are open from 8.50 am and children can enter the school from this time. The entry doors will be closed shortly after 9.00 am. If a child arrives at school after the doors have closed, it is the duty of the parents/guardians to ensure that the child enters school safely via the hall door. Lateness causes a disturbance to the class and is also time missed from the teaching and learning environment.

Leaving school early/Returning to school

If parents would like their child(ren) to leave the school early, they will need to provide the teacher with a note explaining this via Aladdin. They will also need to be collected at the office. If they return to school (e.g. following an appointment), they will do this via the office.

Strategies to promote good school attendance.

The Board of Management is committed to providing a positive school atmosphere, which is conducive to promoting good school attendance. Parents/guardians are consulted in drafting and reviewing policies (through the Parents' Association) with the aim of promoting a high level of cooperation among the school community. The teaching staff collaborates in the planning and implementation of the primary school curriculum, to provide a stimulating learning environment for all pupils.

New entrants and their parents/guardians are invited to engage in an induction process, through which the school's policies and procedures are explained. Policies are available to view on our school website. There is a focus on the value of regular attendance and on the importance of developing good attendance habits from Junior Infants onwards.

The school will promote development of self-esteem and self-worth in the children through the Wellbeing programme. Support for pupils, who have special educational needs, are in place in accordance with Department of Education guidelines.

Irregular attendance and punctuality are monitored and investigated promptly. The assistance of TUSLA Officers will be utilised where necessary in serious cases of poor attendance. Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.

The school calendar is published before the end of each school year for the following school year. It is hoped that parents will use this to plan holidays. Parents are discouraged from taking children out of school for holidays during school time.

A record is kept of pupils who arrive at school after the appointed time or leave the school early. It is recorded on our internal school database Aladdin.

The school avail of the assistance of the Education Welfare Officer. Pupils with a poor attendance record are, insofar as is practical, supported in an effort to improve their attendance.

Roles and Responsibilities

School staff

In St. Peter's N.S., we recognise the importance of good school attendance for children's social and academic development. The Principal, Deputy Principal, Teachers and other School Staff, in consultation with Parents, and the BOM are responsible for the implementation of this policy. It will be the responsibility of the Principal Teacher/Deputy Principal to monitor overall school attendance levels in the school.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians can promote good school attendance by:

- ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- informing the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school.
- working with the school and Education Welfare Service to resolve any attendance problems.
- 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 children 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.
- ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children's appointments (with dentists etc), are arranged for times outside of school hours.

Class Teachers

Class teacher will:

- maintain the school roll on Aladdin in accordance with procedure.
- encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.

- monitor individual pupil's attendance/punctuality and identify and report ongoing concerns for 'at risk' pupils.
- inform the Deputy Principal/Principal of concerns they may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.

Record/Communication

Children transferring from/to St. Peter's N.S. to other primary schools:

Subject to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act, children's attendance (as well as other academic/behavioural records) will form part of the transfer information between schools.

Attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils transferring to a post-primary school will be forwarded to the school, on request, once enrolment has been confirmed.

Evaluation

The success of this Attendance policy is measured through:

- pupils who are happy and fulfilled in a positive learning environment
- pupil, parental and staff feedback
- maintained and improved rates of school attendance and punctuality in St. Peter's N.S.
- increased Parent/guardian awareness of their legal obligations in relation to school attendance and punctuality under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.
- positive reinforcement of 'very good school attendance' and 'improved school attendance' at all class levels.
- monitoring and tracking of pupils who are 'at risk of ongoing patterns of poor school attendance' by Class Teachers.
- good practice and procedures in relation to electronic recording of daily pupil attendance (Aladdin System).
- ongoing liaison with the Educational Welfare Officer/TUSLA to address cases of concern at an early stage.

Implementation/Ratification and Review:

This policy was ratified by St. Peter's N.S. Board of Management on _____

Chairperson's signature Bairry O'Flynn Date: 10/3/25