

St Lachteens National School
Attendance Policy
Ratified by BoM March 19th 2015

Attendance Policy

Aims:

St Lachteens National School is committed to providing a learning environment that will foster all children's learning and encourage them to attend school regularly. Our aim is to provide a stimulating day, with clear guidelines and structures, so that children feel welcome and nurtured while attending school. We believe that our pupils will benefit from this education through regular attendance. In so far as possible, we aim to have full attendance from all of our pupils.

Casual absences (for whatever reason) are discouraged as they have a direct impact on children's learning. We aim to support children and parents in achieving good attendance.

Among the many strategies/measures we use to ensure regular attendance are:

- We aim to provide a warm, welcoming and supportive learning environment for our pupils, one in which they are valued and respected and in which provision is made for their learning needs.
- We hold open class-level discussions with the children on the importance of regular attendance.
- We publicly and positively affirm those children who have excellent attendance. They are awarded termly with attendance certificates.
- We praise and reward those who are making a serious effort to improve their attendance.
- We have regular communication with parents and provide them with updates on their child's attendance if it is a cause for concern. Class teachers may update at Parent Teacher Meetings, if absences are 14 days or more a letter is issued, if absences continue to accumulate parents may be contacted by the Principal/Deputy Principal
- Our class teachers and support teachers seek to ensure that children who may be experiencing learning difficulties are actively supported and encouraged with appropriate teaching. Homework is tailored to the individual needs of these pupils.
- Our school's code of behaviour takes a positive approach to fostering good behaviour.
- We ask parents to value every minute that the children spend at school and therefore make sure that the children are in school for 9.20.
- In the same way we ask parents not to ask to let the children off early, unless for a specific appointment. We use a sign-out sheet for children who are collected early by a parent. This

enables us to keep a record of such absences and make parents aware of how much time is being missed.

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000 provides a framework under which attendance at school can be dealt with by law. As a result of the Act, the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) has been established and has appointed Education Welfare Officers.

Under the regulations of the Act, the school is obliged to:

- Keep a record of pupils' attendance, (this is done in the class roll books).
- Submit to the NEWB the names of all pupils who miss 20 or more days from school.
- Keep a written record of pupils' absences.

Under the Act, parents are required to:

- Send their children to school each day.
- Notify the Principal, in writing, the reason for a child's absence.

The school keeps a record of all such absences. To facilitate both parents and teachers in the maintenance of such records, pupils in Junior and Senior Infants are provide with standard Absence Forms that are to be returned to the child's teacher after a day/days missed. Further copies are available if required. Pupils from Rang 1 – 6 have templates in their school journals that can be utilised. Parents/Carers are responsible for providing the class teacher with absence notes. At the end of the academic year each class teacher gives absence notes received to the Principal.

National Education Welfare Board Codes for Category of Absence

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)