



Attendance Policy

Policy Details

Name of Policy: Attendance Policy

Date Developed: 2016

Signed by

Date Reviewed: February 2024

Chairperson: *Ceraldine Kelly*

Ref Code:

Principal: *Donna Kirby*

Edition:

Date commenced: 12.02.2024

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Scoil Mhuire gan Smál is committed to providing education in a fair and equitable manner to all its students.

1.2 Whilst there is a strong tradition of good attendance at Scoil Mhuire gan Smál, it is important that parents/guardians are fully aware of their obligations to ensure that their children have consistent and punctual attendance at school.

1.3 Scoil Mhuire gan Smál Attendance Policy is based on the obligations arising from the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 (section 22) and on the guidance provided in the 'Developing the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance: Guidelines for Schools – Tusla 2016'.

1.4 This policy also takes into account the updated DES requirements for recording and reporting on school attendance as per circular 33/2015.

2. Policy Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all pupils enrolled in Scoil Mhuire gan Smál.

3. Policy Purpose

3.1 Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually.

3.2 Share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community.

3.3 Inform the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined in the Act.

3.4 Identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.

3.5 Ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance/participation.

3.6 Develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.

3.7 Identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.

4. Role of the School

4.1 The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school.

4.2 Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.

4.3 Pupil attendance is recorded daily.

4.4 Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated.

4.5 Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored.

4.6 School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to:

- The Education Welfare Board
- The Education Welfare Officer
- The Board of Management

5. Punctuality

- 5.1 The school yard is supervised from 9.10am-9.20am daily. Pupils are encouraged to come to school between these times. On wet mornings, the pupils may enter the school building and proceed to their classrooms where they are supervised until the bell goes at 9.20am and the school day begins.
- 5.2 Children are required to be in their classrooms not later than 9.40am.
- 5.3 All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time.
- 5.4 The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. The principal is obliged under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 to report children who are persistently late to the Education Welfare Board.

6. Role of Parents/Guardians

- 6.1 Section [(21) (9) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 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”.
- 6.2 The school principal cannot authorise a child’s absence for holidays during school time. However it is essential that parents/guardians inform the school of such arrangements.
- 6.3 Reasons for pupils’ absences must be communicated in writing, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. To facilitate this, such communication should be in the homework diary, or via email, databiz, or a note to the class teacher/principal.
- 6.4 If a child is absent, when the child returns to school they should give/send a written note to the class teacher which contains the child’s name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence. These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school.
- 6.5 The school may contact parents/guardians when a written explanation for the child’s absence is not received by the school.

7. Parents/Guardians can promote attendance by:

- 7.1. Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- 7.2. Notifying the school if their children cannot attend for any reason.
- 7.3. Working with the school and education welfare service to resolve any attendance problems.
- 7.4. Making sure their children understand that parents support the school’s Attendance Policy.
- 7.5. Discussing planned absences with the school.
- 7.6. Refraining, if at all possible, from taking holidays during school time.
- 7.7. Showing an interest in their children’s school day and their children’s homework.
- 7.8. Encouraging them to participate in school activities.

- 7.9. Praising and encouraging their children's achievements.
- 7.10. Instilling in their children, a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth.
- 7.11. Informing the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school.
- 7.12. Ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children's appointments (with dentists etc) are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- 7.13. Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.
- 7.14. Notifying the school if their child/children, particularly children in junior classes, are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher.

8. Role of Pupils

- 8.1. Pupils have the clear responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually.
- 8.2. Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence.
- 8.3. Pupils are responsible for promptly passing on absence notes from parents to their class teacher.
- 8.4. Pupils are responsible for passing school correspondence to their parents, on the specified day.

9. 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:

- 9.1. The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- 9.2. The school will promote development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children.
- 9.3. Support plans for pupils, who have special educational needs, are in place in accordance with Department of Education guidelines.
- 9.4. Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils.
- 9.5. A special reward system is in place for promoting good attendance at school. (certificates are awarded at the end of the school year for full attendance and 181/182 days)
- 9.6. The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be utilised.
- 9.7. 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.
- 9.8. Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.

10. Role of the Class Teacher

The class teacher will:

- 10.1. Maintain a record of attendances in accordance with procedure.
- 10.2. Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences.
- 10.3. Contact parents in instances where absences are not explained in writing/inform the principal.
- 10.4. Promote a reward system for pupils with exceptional attendance.
- 10.5. Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- 10.6. Inform the Principal of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.

11. Record/Communication

- 11.1. 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.
- 11.2. Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer from another primary school will be sought directly from the previous school.
- 11.3. Attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils transferring to a second level school will be sent to the school, if requested, once enrolment has been confirmed. This forms part of the pupils' Education Passport to Secondary School.
- 11.4. After 10 days absence is recorded, the electronic system will inform us of this. At 15 days absence, the school secretary will notify parents/guardians of this level of absence.