



Scoil San Treasa Board of Management

The Rise, Mount Merrion, Co. Dublin A94EK75



Attendance Strategy/Policy

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1. Introduction

Scoil San Treasa has a very good record for regular attendance of pupils. This policy document was devised to ensure and maintain the high level of attendance at school by all pupils.

2. Rationale

"At Scoil San Treasa, our mission is the provision of primary education of the highest quality for all our pupils in a happy, safe, Christian environment. While we value high academic achievement, the social, personal and moral development of our pupils is of primary importance and we view the school as a learning organisation which is open to change and innovation while it cherishes the best educational, cultural and religious traditions of our society. Acknowledging that their parents are the primary educators of our children, we are inspired by a shared vision of excellence and we espouse a partnership approach in its pursuit."

(Scoil San Treasa's Mission Statement")

3. Aims and Objectives

As regular attendance at school is an important factor in enabling our pupils to derive maximum benefit from school, promoting good attendance supports our Mission Statement. The purpose of this Attendance Policy is to:

- Meet the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 22 with regard to our school's Attendance Strategy.
- To support and sustain the appreciation of learning that is currently in evidence in our school and to highlight its importance for all
- To heighten awareness of the importance of school attendance and punctuality
- To clarify procedures around matters relating to attendance – registration, daily attendance records.
- To ensure awareness of and compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation
- Summarise our approaches to promoting good attendance and addressing attendance related matters

4. Compliance with school Ethos

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

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- All staff have an input into the implementation of the policy.
- Class teachers are responsible for recording daily individual attendance on Aladdin.
- The school secretary ensures that weekly attendance data is recorded on Aladdin and filed.
- The Principal is responsible for making returns to Túsla Child and Family Agency.
- The Principal will prepare a report on attendance for the Board of Management on a termly basis or as the need arises
- It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management. All stakeholders in the education of the pupils will take responsibility for implementing the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance.

6. Punctuality

The school is open to receive pupils from 8:40am and formal instruction begins at 9:00am. It is very important that children arrive in school before 9:00am and the time from 8:40am-9:00am provides great opportunities for children to settle in, interact with peers, and engage in informal play/learning.

- All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time.
- Late arrival of pupils will be recorded on Aladdin by the class teacher.
- The class teacher 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 Túsla Child and Family Agency.

7. Recording and Reporting Attendance

- The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded on the Aladdin administration software, on a daily basis by the class teacher.
- If a pupil does not attend on a day when the school is open for instruction, the non-attendance will be recorded by the class teacher on Aladdin.
- The roll call is taken at 9.40am each morning. Any pupil who is not present at this time will be marked absent. If a pupil arrives late after this time, this is recorded on Aladdin by the class teacher.
- After the class teacher completes the roll for their class (approx. 9:40am), the parent of a child who is absent will receive a notification on their Aladdin app. The reason for children's absence can be entered by parents/guardians via Aladdin Connect. This has replaced the practice of having to provide a written note to the school. (Follow the simple steps on the app to input the reason for the absence – Appendix 1).
- Late arrivals and early departures are discouraged unless absolutely necessary.
- Parents/guardians must provide a written explanation if it is necessary for a child to depart early during the school day.
- Class attendance data is recorded daily on the Leabhar Tinrimh (Attendance Book) on Aladdin.
- Attendance is monitored by the class teacher and/or principal if necessary.
- Parents/guardians are made aware of the requirements of the NEWB particularly the by-law relating to absences of more than 20 days per school year. They 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 invited to meet with the Principal during Parent/Teacher meetings 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.

8. Strategies to promote good attendance and punctuality

- Scoil San Treasa was established to provide primary education to the parishioners of Mount Merrion. However, pupils of different persuasions attend and their religious outlook is respected. The Catholic ethos of the school is inclusive and all pupils are equally welcome. We strive to provide a welcoming and supportive learning environment for our pupils, one in which they are valued and respected and in which cognisance is taken of their learning needs.
- Scoil San Treasa's Parents' Association supports the work of the school and parent volunteers assist in a variety of ways e.g. library volunteers, orchestra coordinators. This, combined with supportive parish and community links enhances the level of pupil, family and parish/community engagement with the school. The Board of Management directs energy and available resources towards maintaining and improving the school building and the general school environment. All of this generates a positive backdrop for school attendance.
- Pupils in Scoil San Treasa enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum. Provision is made for a wide range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Such opportunities enhance pupils' engagement with school life and can directly and positively influence attendance.
- Positive achievements are emphasised and celebrated throughout the school in a range of ways, including, for example, assemblies, displays, awards, announcements, website mention and praise.
- Pupils needing additional support in their overall learning are identified as early as possible and available resources are used to put appropriate supports in place.
- Our Mission Statement underpins our various school policies – for example, our Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding and our Anti-Bullying Policy. These policies support a positive and respectful atmosphere in our school.
- In line with Department of Education (DoE) requirements, systems are in place to register pupils accurately and efficiently, and to record attendance, absences (and matters re punctuality, as warranted), and transfer to other schools.
- School hours of opening and matters relating to attendance and punctuality are addressed in the induction materials for parents/guardians of incoming junior infants and are also referenced in the pupil's homework journal. There is a focus on the value of regular attendance and on the importance of developing good attendance habits from Junior Infants onwards.
- Punctuality and good attendance is encouraged and positively reinforced by teachers informally in their classes.
- The school calendar is published on the school website.

- Parents/guardians are encouraged, insofar as is possible, to arrange children's appointments (e.g. dental check-ups) for times outside of school hours. Parents should contact the school in advance of any occasion on which their child needs to be taken from school early.
- If a child is absent, the reason for the absence should be entered by parents/guardians on Aladdin Connect. This has replaced the practice of having to provide a written note to the school.
- Scoil San Treasa has a very good record for regular attendance of pupils. It is understandable that it is not always appropriate or possible for a child to attend school (for example, for reasons of ill health or a family bereavement).
- The school authorities discourage taking children out of school for holidays and parents/guardians are reminded that, in line with the Education Act, the Principal is obliged to report absences exceeding 20 days in the school year to TÚSLA.
- Concerns relating to punctuality and/or attendance are communicated to/discussed with parents/guardians by the relevant teacher/s and/or principal as the need arises, with a view to improving overall outcomes for the pupil. Teachers alert the principal to significant punctuality and/or attendance concerns. The end-of-year report includes reference to attendance and punctuality.

9. Role of Parents/Guardians in Supporting School Attendance

Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance
- Working with the School and TUSLA Child and Family Agency to resolve any attendance problems
- Making sure their children understand that parents/guardians support good 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.
- Participating in and supporting school activities
- Praising and encouraging their children's achievements
- Instilling in their children a positive sense of self-worth
- Noting the reasons for absence from school on Aladdin
- Contacting the school if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters
- Notifying the school if their child/children, particularly children in junior classes, are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher

10. Role of Túsla

TUSLA Child and Family Agency is informed if:

- A child is expelled for 6 days or more
- A child is suspended for 6 days or more
- A child has missed more than 20 days of school

TUSLA Child and Family Agency is furnished with the total attendances in the school year through the Annual Report Form which is completed online.

11. Communication with Other Schools

- Under Section 20 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), the Principal of a child's current school must notify the Principal of the child's previous school, via POD (Primary Online Database) that the child is now registered in their school.
- When a Principal receives notification that a child has been registered elsewhere they must notify the Principal of the pupil's new school of any problems in relation to attendance at the pupil's former school and of such matters relating to the child's educational progress as considered appropriate. This applies to pupils who transfer between primary schools and to pupils who transfer from primary to second-level education.
- When a child transfers into Scoil San Treasa confirmation of transfer will be communicated to the child's previous school via POD, and appropriate records sought.

12. Communication with Parents/Guardians

- Parents/guardians are made aware of the requirements of TUSLA Child and Family Agency particularly the by-law relating to absences of more than 20 days per school year.
- The school is obligated to inform TUSLA Child and Family Agency of all pupils who accumulate an aggregate of 20 school days in any one school year.
- Parents/guardians of pupils whose non-attendance is a concern should contact the class teacher to collaborate on attendance supports for the pupil.
- Parents/guardians are notified in writing on the end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year.
- The class teacher and Principal have responsibility for communications with Parents/Guardians regarding attendance.
- All pupil absence must be explained by the parents/guardians to the teacher using Aladdin Connect. If Aladdin Connect is unavailable, a phone call can be made to the school office to explain the reason for absence. This message will be passed on to the class teacher and recorded in Aladdin.
- When an explanation for absence is not provided, the class teacher will record this on Aladdin as unexplained.
- Parents/guardians must also contact the school via Aladdin Connect if a child is late or needs to leave early during the school day. If Aladdin Connect is unavailable, the parent/guardian can contact the school office via phone call. Reasons for late arrival or leaving early will be recorded on Aladdin.
- Attendance records and statistics are kept safely and securely on Aladdin only.

13. Evaluation

The success of the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance is measured through:

- Improved attendance levels as measured through Aladdin records and statistics
- Happy confident well-adjusted children
- Positive parental feedback
- Teacher observation and reports

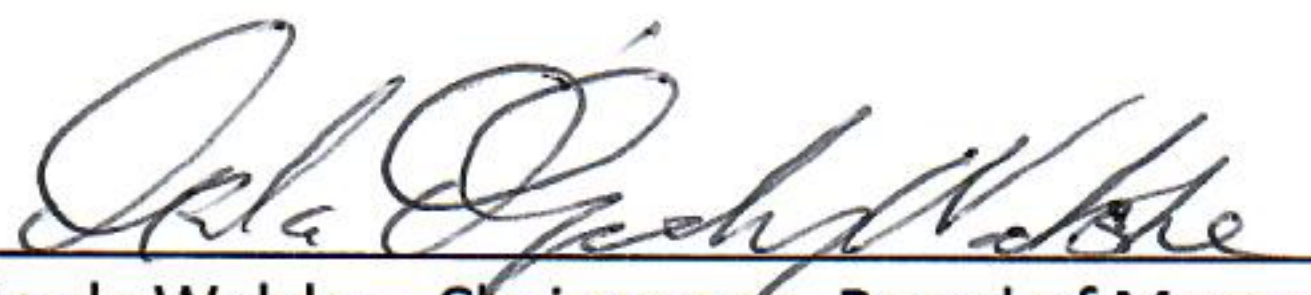
14. Review

The Statement of Strategy for School Attendance will be evaluated on an ongoing basis by representatives from the relevant sections of the school community and will be reviewed every three years.

15. Ratification and Communication.

This policy was devised by the teaching staff of Scoil San Treasa in consultation with the parents/guardians of pupils in the school, the Board of Management and with reference to relevant circulars from the Department of Education.

It was ratified by the Board of Management on 22nd May 2023 and it will be reviewed when deemed necessary by the Board of Management.

Signed  Date 22/5/2023
Orla O'Grady Walshe - Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed  Date 22.05.23
Frances Mullin - Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

16. References

Don't let your Child Miss Out - NEWB 2004
Education Welfare Act 2000
Education Act 1998
Section 29 Education Act
Empty Desks - CDU Mary Immaculate