



St. Raphaela's Primary School

Attendance Policy

Introduction:

Changing social habits and patterns necessitated the updating of the school's Attendance Policy. The re-drafting was a collaborative process involving staff and Board of Management, following initial drafting by a representative group.

Rationale:

The main factors contributing to the formulation of a revised policy could be summarised as follows:

- a) The changing fabric of society
- b) The roll of the N.E.W.B
- c) Levels of disadvantage
- d) Legislative requirements such as the Education Welfare Act 2000
- e) Changing attitudes to education

Aims and Objectives:

The revised policy is geared towards:

- Encouraging full attendance where possible and punctuality
- Identifying pupils at risk
- Promoting a positive learning environment
- Enabling learning opportunities to be availed of
- Raising awareness of the importance of school attendance
- Fostering an appreciation of learning

Compliance with School Ethos:

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

Roles and Responsibilities:

All teachers have an input into the implementation of the policy. Class teachers record individual patterns of attendance, and the Principal and secretarial staff make returns to N.E.W.B.

Policy Content:

Recording:

Individual school attendance is recorded in the Leabhair Rolla of each class, and class data is recorded in the Leabhair Tinreamh. All children attending, and data on their parents, is recorded in the school register.

A note from parents/guardians is required to cover each absence and these are dated and kept by the teacher for a year. Parents are made aware of the requirements of the N.E.W.B., particularly the byelaw relating to absences of more than 20 days per school year.

School Strategies:

- Traditionally, school attendance is strong in our school and has not been adversely affected by social changes. However, staff remain vigilant so that risk students are identified early. Risk students can be categorised as those who miss more than 5 days in a 20-day period without an accompanying note of explanation from parents/guardians. Appropriate contact takes place between school and parent/guardians via either letter or note in the homework diary when this occurs. A meeting between parents and Principal may be set up if deemed necessary. Absences of more than 20 days are automatically referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Communication with other Schools:

- When a child transfers from St. Raphaela's N.S. to another school, the school's records on attendance, academic progress etc. will be forwarded on receipt of written notification of the transfer.
- When a child transfers into St. Raphaela's N.S., confirmation of transfer will be communicated to the child's previous school and appropriate records sought.
- Records of pupils transferring from St. Raphaela's N.S. to a Post-Primary school will be forwarded on receipt of confirmation of enrolment.

Communication with Parents:

The school circulated the N.E.W.B. information booklet "Don't Let Your Child Miss Out" to all parents in February 2005. The school also informs all parents of the implications of non-attendance as per the Education Welfare Act 2000. This information is disseminated by regular school circulars. Parents of new children are informed on enrolment.

Promoting Attendance:

The school promotes good attendance by:

- Creating a safe and welcoming environment
- Ensuring children are happy
- Displaying kindness, compassion and understanding
- Being vigilant so that risks to good attendance such as disadvantage, bullying, etc. are identified early
- Sometimes rewarding good attendance with certificates.

National Education Welfare Board:

The Education Welfare Officer is informed if:

- a) A child is expelled
- b) A child is suspended
- c) A child has missed more than 20 days in a school year.

The N.E.W.B is furnished with the total attendances in the school year through the Annual Report Form.

Evaluation:

The success of any Attendance policy is measured through:

- Improved attendance levels
- Happy, confident and well-adjusted children
- Positive parental feedback
- Teacher vigilance.

Implementation/Ratification and Review:

This policy has been in operation in St. Raphaela's N.S since September 2005 and was updated in April 2008. It will be reviewed again in May 2011.

Signature Date
Chairman of the Board of Management

References

1. Don't let your Child Miss Out - NEWB 2004
2. Education Welfare Act 2000
3. Section 29 Education Act