

**St Paul's National School,
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Attendance Policy

Introduction

All partners involved in the education of pupils in St Paul's N.S. aim to foster a culture of best possible school attendance for all pupils. This strategy will encourage an appreciation of the importance of attendance in order to maximise the learning potential of each pupil.

Rationale:

The rationale underpinning the formulation of this policy is as follows:

- To support all pupils and ensure their right to education
- To ensure all parents are aware of the necessity of regular, punctual attendance.
- To fulfil legislative requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Aims of the Attendance Policy:

- a) To create an awareness of the importance of attendance at school
- b) To promote a positive attitude towards learning
- c) To comply with requirements under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000/ Guidelines from TUSLA Education Welfare Services: Child and Family Agency
- d) To complement the school's 'Statement of Strategy for School Attendance'

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000:

The legislation governing school attendance in Ireland is the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Parents are required to ensure that their children from the age of 6 to 16 attend a recognised school on each day that the school is open and classes are in progress.

Where the pupil is absent from the school, the pupil's parent should send in a school 'note of absence' on his/her return. These notes will be kept as records of absence in each pupil's file in the school.

Schools are obliged to keep a register of the pupils attending the school. They must also maintain attendance records for all pupils and inform the relevant authorities 'TUSLA: Educational Welfare Services-Child and Family Agency' if a child is absent for more than 20 days in a school year.

The school must also inform 'TUSLA: Educational Welfare Services-Child and Family Agency' if a pupil is not attending regularly or if a student has been suspended or expelled.

Under Section 22 of the Education Welfare Act, 2000, The Board of Management must prepare and submit to 'TUSLA: Educational Welfare Services-Child and Family Agency' a 'Statement of Strategy for School Attendance'.

TUSLA Educational Welfare Services - Child and Family Agency

TUSLA Educational Welfare Services - Child and Family Agency is the national agency established to ensure that every child attends school regularly, or otherwise receives an appropriate minimum education. 'A Statement of Strategy for School Attendance' must be submitted to TUSLA Educational Welfare Services - Child and Family Agency at attendancestrategies@tusla.ie

Defining and Recording Non-Attendance:

Our school defines non-attendance as not being present in school at roll call at 10.50a.m. (exceptions being made for absences authorised by the Board of Management, for example: school tours, religious services arranged through the school or other activities arranged by the school).

Non-attendance is recorded as per Department of Education and Skills Guidelines in the approved roll book. Absence Notes are stored in each pupil's file. At the end of each reporting period, the appropriate data is forwarded to TUSLA Educational Welfare Services - Child and Family Agency.

Strategies to Promote Attendance:

- It is endeavoured to make each pupil feel welcome, safe and comfortable in the school.
- The school uniform gives each pupil a sense of pride and belonging.
- An attendance award is presented at the end of each school year to pupils who have full attendance throughout the year.
- Pupils are encouraged to fully participate in all school activities and equal access is given to all.
- Enforcement of the Code of Behaviour and the Anti- Bullying Policy should encourage all pupils to feel good about coming to school.
- Through the Learning Support Policy it is endeavoured to help each pupil to achieve his/her potential and in so doing maintain a positive attitude towards school attendance.
- Parents are informed of the Role of TUSLA Educational Welfare Services - Child and Family Agency and the necessity to return absence notes to the school.
- The Board of Management of St Paul's N.S. encourages parents not to take children out of school to go on holiday during term-time.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Role of the Board of Management:

-To prepare a 'School Statement of Strategy for School Attendance' and to submit this to the Patron and to TUSLA Educational Welfare Services - Child and Family Agency.

Role of Parents:

- To encourage a positive attitude towards school
- To encourage a pride in good attendance
- To notify the school in writing of the reasons for a pupil's absence in accordance with the Education Act. Copies of standardised absence notes are circulated to parents for their convenience at the beginning of each school year.
- A pupil who is unwell should be kept at home until well enough to return to school

Role of the Teaching Staff:

- To record pupil attendance in the Leabhar Rolla daily
- To record class attendance in the Leabhar Tinrimh daily
- To ensure all absence notes are stored in the pupils' files
- To assess the level of absenteeism at the end of each term and to follow up through informal communication with parents when deemed necessary
- To send a standard letter to parents when a pupil has been absent for 20 days
- To inform TUSLA Educational Welfare Services - Child and Family Agency in writing
 - when a pupil is absent in excess of 20 school days in a school year
 - when a pupil is suspended
 - when a pupil is not attending regularly

Monitoring and Review:

This policy, in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, in conjunction with 'The Statement of Strategy for School Attendance', will be regularly reviewed by representatives of the Patron, the Board of Management, parents and teachers.

Modification Clause:

The Board of Management reserves the right to modify details of the Attendance Policy at short notice. Such modification may be needed in an ever-changing environment and social context.

Policy Ratified on: _____

Signed by: _____

Dated: _____

Referral Checklist prior to EWO led process

	Date	Outcome
Informal Discussions		
Formal Correspondence		

*St Paul's N.S.,
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Dear _____,

It has come to the school's attention that _____ has been absent for 20 days so far this school year. According to the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, the school is obliged to report this to 'TUSLA: Education Welfare Service, Child and Family Agency'. You are required to respond to the school in writing on receipt of this letter.

Yours faithfully,
