



Attendance Policy

Ennis National School

Introductory Statement

We aim to ensure that the pupils in our school attend regularly and on time. The performance indicator by which we judge the success of our efforts is set each year by our average attendance figure. In the last three school years (2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17), our average attendance was 93.8%, 94.3% and 94.5% respectively. We are seeking to improve average attendance in this and subsequent years.

Aims

- To encourage consistent attendance at school by our pupils
- To raise awareness of importance of school attendance
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner that encourage pupils to attend school
- To comply with requirements under Education Welfare Act 2000/Guidelines from TUSLA

Guidelines

At Ennis National School, we define non-attendance as not being present in school at roll call at 10.20am (Exceptions being made for absences authorised by the Board of Management e.g. school tours, religious services arranged through the school, participation in sports arranged by the school etc.)

Attendance details are recorded on the class roll book. The class teacher also records the reason for absence (as provided by the parent) in the "Reasons for Absence" section of the school's online roll book. Attendance returns are made to the National education Welfare Board at the end of each reporting period by the designated postholder.

If a pupil is withdrawn from school during the school day the parent/guardian must sign out the pupil from the classroom and indicate the reason for the withdrawal.

If a pupil is not present by 10.20 a.m. and the school has received no notification from parents/guardians he/she will be marked absent whether or not the pupil arrives later. If the school receives notification from parents/guardians that a child will be late for school, that child will be marked present.

If a pupil arrives in school on time and is subsequently 'signed-out and later returns to school, then the child will be marked present. If the school receives notification from parents/guardians that a child has an appointment with a doctor or dentist and will be late for school that child will be marked present as long as the child attends.



Whole school strategies to promote attendance

Environment: The Board of Management strives to create a safe and welcoming environment for our pupils and their parents. Pupils who are late are welcomed by teachers and if any child is persistently late the issue is raised with the relevant parents. The pupil is not made to feel unwelcome if he/she arrives late for school. Parents are expected to have a note of explanation if a pupil is late.

Early intervention: Junior Infant teachers will speak to parents to inform them of procedures in relation to attendance and the importance of attendance.

Uniform: Pupils who arrive to school without a uniform/complete uniform will still be welcomed and the issue of uniform will not be addressed upon arrival in the classroom.

Lunches: If a pupil arrives to school without a lunch, the class teacher will text the parents or arrange for the school secretary to contact the parents so that the lunch can be brought to school.

Assessment: If pupils miss school on a day when they know there is a test the test is given when the pupil returns to school.

Reports: The school reports the total amount of days absent in a year to parents in the end of year reports/parent teacher meetings.

Rewards: At the end of each term, all pupils with full attendance shall be congratulated in their class and shall have their photograph taken to be displayed for parents/teachers/pupils in a communal area, thus encouraging full attendance amongst the rest of the school. At the end of the school year, there will a presentation of a certificate to all pupils who have had full attendance for the academic year.

Parents: The school communicates the requirements of schools and of parents under the Education Welfare Act to parents both in September and June each year.

Communication: Parent Newsletters will contain an update on average school attendance for the year to date. It will also detail classes with the highest average attendance. **Learning Needs:** The school provides a comprehensive support service to cater for pupils experiencing learning difficulties.

Strategies in event of non-attendance

Parents are made aware of the school's duties outlined in the Education Welfare Act in relation to reporting the non-attendance of a child to the National Education Welfare Board.

When a pupil is absent from school parents are expected to contact the school as soon as possible to inform the school as to the reason for the pupil's absence. The reason for absence will be recorded by the class teacher. Any attendance which is not explained is recorded as 'unexplained'.



Once pupils have missed 15 school days, a text message will be forwarded to parents informing them of the total number of days missed. Once pupils have missed 20 school days, their parent(s) will be contacted by the principal (or the designated teacher with responsibility for attendance) with a view towards encouraging attendance. Where a child misses 20+ days, text messages will be sent to parents for every five additional absences.

Where appropriate, the school will liaise with the National Education Welfare Board to provide home tuition while the pupil is out of school.

The school will report to the National Education Welfare Board when:

- a pupil is suspended from our school for a period of not less than 6 days,
- the aggregate number of school days on which a pupil is absent from our school during a school year is not less than 20,
- a pupil's name is, for whatever reason, removed from the register, or
- a pupil is, in the opinion of the principal, not attending school regularly

Roles and Responsibilities

- Class teachers have responsibility for recording daily attendance of pupils.
- A designated post-holder has responsibility for submitting the NEWB returns and for the promotion of whole school strategies to promote attendance.
- The designated post-holder formally meets the local Education Welfare Officer on an annual basis to discuss attendance, to follow up on cases of concern and to flag pupils where intervention may be required.
- Throughout the school year, the designated post holder will contact the local Education Welfare Officer where there are concerns about a child's non-attendance.

Policy Ratification

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Ennis National School at its meeting held on _____, 2018.