

Attendance Policy.

1. Introduction Statement.

The policy was formulated by Teachers, Parents' Council and Board of Management.

2. Rationale.

Why do we need an Attendance Policy?

- To help identify children whose attendance record is problematic.
- To identify the reasons for this.
- To put in place procedures/programmes that will help to address this problem with a view to helping children to make the most of their education so that they may live positive and fulfilling lives.
- To comply with the Education Welfare Act 2002.

3. Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school:

The fundamental objective of this policy is to ensure that children will view school as being a positive experience resulting in a high standard of attendance. To this end the BOM shall seek, by school policies, to nurture a shared vision of education amongst all partners.

4. Examples of steps taken to achieve a high standard of attendance.

- Every child made to feel welcome
- Positive re-enforcement of good behaviour and academic excellence (c.f. Code of Good Behaviour).
- Building of children's confidence through implementation of a child-centred curriculum
- Active involvement of parents in their children's education.
- This will be facilitated by the following:
 - ✓ Parent/Teacher meetings
 - ✓ School reports
 - ✓ Active Parents' Council
 - ✓ Newsletters
 - ✓ School Information Booklet
 - ✓ N.E.W.B. Information Booklet

- Home/School Liaison Co-ordinator.
- Parents will be encouraged to abide by the norms of the Education Welfare Act 2002.
- Parents requested to inform school of any medical/family conditions that may affect a child's attendance at school.
- If absences due to same is prolonged the school will endeavour to supply homework to such children through contact with parents.
- On- going training and up skilling of school staff will be priority in order to meet the needs of children, particularly children most in need.
- Children with specific needs in literary and numeracy will be identified at the earliest possible stage and strategies put in place to adequately address these needs.
- Primary responsibility for this will rest with the class teacher with assistance from:
 - ✓ School Principal
 - ✓ Special Needs Department
 - ✓ N.E.P.S.
 - ✓ N.E.W.B.
 - ✓ Home/School Co-ordinator
 - ✓ H.S.E.
- Individual Education Programmes, where deemed necessary, will be put in place for such children.
- Constant vigilance of staff in monitoring of children who may be at risk from abuse – emotional, physical, sexual and which may affect school attendance.
- Any such concerns will be dealt with in accordance with the school policy on Child Protection.
- Teachers who may be concerned with a child's attendance will inform the principal of same who will then contact the parents and/or Welfare Officer.
- Teachers will also be vigilant in regard to children being bullied in school, resulting in such children being reluctant or afraid to come to school.
- Such bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-bullying Policy.
- Teachers will endeavour to draw up a daily time-table that will be as attractive as possible in encouraging children to attend school.
- The school will provide an After School Homework club for children who will most benefit from it.
- Assistance will be provided by supervising adults to the children when needed with their homework.
- The school will provide a free healthy lunch (resources permitting) to children.

National Education Welfare Board.

- The school will comply with the norms of the Education Welfare Act 2002.
- The school will keep records of children's attendance in accordance with this act and duly submit attendance data to the N.E.W.B.

- The advice and assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be engaged when necessary.

School Inspectorate.

- The school will avail of the advice and assistance of the school's inspector in addressing the matter of school attendance if and when it is deemed appropriate.

Children's Absences.

1. If a child is absent from school parents/guardians should inform the school as soon as possible. This can be done by phoning the school secretary on (052) 21964.
2. When a child returns to school parents are required to give a written explanation as to the reason/s for absence.
3. Where possible a doctor's certificate should be furnished.
4. The school should be informed of any illness that may impact on a child's education or that may have health and safety implications for the school authorities.

Roll of Home/School Co-ordinator.

The Home/School Co-ordinator will use some of the following strategies in supporting good school attendance.

- The thrust of the scheme is preventative rather than curative.
- Aims to build a relationship with the marginalised/disadvantaged and those families whose children's attendance would be problematic through home visits, personal contact, parent courses and involvement on local committee.
- Aims to build awareness of parent role in promoting and supporting education in the home and through involvement in maths, literacy and science for fun programmes in the school.
- That through working with teachers, principal and family that parents understand importance of regular attendance and that each day counts.
- Through encouraging and facilitating parents to become involved in lifelong learning and providing an opportunity for personal development and to raise awareness in parents of their own capacity to enhance their children's learning and educational experience.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Sanction:

This policy has been sanctioned by the school's B.O.M. after due consultation with staff, parents, Board members and students.