

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Ballyfacey N.S.

18257N

The school's vision and values in relation to attendance:

It is the aim of all stakeholders at Ballyfacey N.S that all pupils have as close to full attendance at school as possible. To this end Ballyfacey N.S aims to be a safe, caring and stimulating place of education for all pupils. Children who are unwell are not expected to attend school.

The School aims are to:

- (1) Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually.
- (2) Share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community.
- (3) Inform parents of their role and responsibility in successfully achieving high levels of attendance for their child(ren).
- (4) Identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- (5) Ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance/participation.
- (6) Develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
- (7) Identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.
- (8) Operate in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

The school will ensure that:

- The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school.
- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Pupil attendance is recorded daily by class teachers at 10:30 a.m. and uploaded to the Aladdin attendance system used in the school.
- Notes are requested from parents explaining why their child was absent from school. These notes are kept on file. Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated.
- Pupil lateness is also monitored by class teachers and the Principal.
- If required, a letter informing parents that their child has been absent from school on 20 occasions is sent home by the Principal. Pupils who have been absent from school on 20 occasions are reported to TUSLA and parents.
- Parents are contacted by phone when pupils do not return to school as expected.
- **School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to:**
 - Tusla.
 - The Education Welfare Officer.
 - The Board of Management.

Punctuality:

School is open from 9.10 a.m. and children are required to be in their classrooms not later than 9.30 a.m. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. The school will contact

parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. The Principal is obliged under The Act, to report children who are persistently late, to the Education Welfare Board.

Guidance for Parents:

Section [(21) (9)] of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 states that: “a pupil’s absence can only be authorised by the Principal when the child is involved in activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved”. The school principal cannot authorise a child’s absence for holidays during school time. However, it is essential that parents inform the school of such arrangements.

Reasons for pupils’ absences must be communicated in writing, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. To facilitate this, such communications should not be in the homework diary, but on a separate page or sheet of paper. If a child is absent, when the child returns to school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher, which contains the child’s name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence. These notes will form a record, which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. The school will contact parents when the school does not receive a written explanation for the child’s absence.

Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- Notifying the school if their children cannot attend for any reason.
- Working with the school and Education Welfare Service to resolve any attendance problems.
- Making sure their children understand that parents support and approve of 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.
- Encouraging them to participate in school activities.
- Praising and encouraging their children’s achievements.
- Instilling in their children, a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth.
- Informing the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school.
- Ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children’s appointments (with dentists etc), are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.
- Notifying, in writing, the school if their child/children, particularly children in junior classes, are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher.

Pupils:

- Pupils have the clear responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence.

- Pupils are responsible for promptly passing on absence notes from parents to their class teacher.
- Pupils are responsible for passing school correspondence to their parents, on the specified day.

A strategy for promoting good school attendance:

The Board of Management is committed to providing a positive school atmosphere, which is conducive to promoting good school attendance. In this regard:

- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- The school will promote development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children.
- Support for pupils, who have special educational needs, are in place in accordance with Department of Education & Science guidelines.
- Our school provides fun exciting school days to promote school attendance.
- Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils.
- The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be utilised.
- The class teacher will monitor the attendance rates of pupils in the first instance, and the class teacher will notify the Principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any child.
- Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.

School Principal:

The School Principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations.
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer:
 - If a pupil is not attending school regularly.
 - When a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during the course of a school year.
 - If a pupil has been suspended for a period of six or more days.
 - When a pupil's name is removed from the school register.
- Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil.
- Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.

Class Teacher:

The class teacher will:

- Maintain the daily attendance in accordance with procedure.
- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences.
- Contact parents in instances where absences are not explained in writing.
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.

- Inform the Principal of concerns he/ she may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.

Record/Communication

Subject to the restrictions of Data Protection Procedures, attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer to another primary school will be passed to the Principal of the school, by post, as soon as we receive written notification of transfer. This transfer of information is subject to Parental consent. Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer from another primary school will be sought directly from the previous school. Attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils transferring to a second level school will be sent to the school, if requested, once enrolment has been confirmed. This transfer of information is subject to Parental consent.

The most recent review of this policy was carried out by the Board of Management on the 14th of March 2022. It will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the Board and shall be reviewed again in the school year 2024-25 (unless an earlier review is deemed necessary).

Signed: Deumas O'Sule
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Tomnie O'Connor
Principal

Date: 14/3/22