



O'Growney National School

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LEVELS AND STRATEGIES

To ensure and maintain a high level of attendance at school by all pupils.

The Board of Management, in consultation with staff and parents/guardians drew up this Policy on Attendance.

Rationale

The policy was drafted for the following reasons:

- The Board of Management wished to comply with legislation, such as:
 - The Education Act, 1998
 - The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000
- The Board of Management wishes to promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils' learning.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

O'Growney National School, Athboy endeavours to enable every pupil to actively participate in all school activities. Regular attendance helps to create a stable learning environment for all pupils, and the school hopes to promote co-operation among pupils, parents/guardians and staff in maintaining a high level of regular attendance through the school year.

Aims

- To raise awareness of the importance of regular school attendance
- To identify pupils at risk of leaving school early
- To promote and to foster positive attitudes to learning
- To ensure compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation.

Recording and Reporting of Attendance and Non-Attendance

The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded on our Aladdin System of each class on a daily basis, together with information provided from enrolment forms (Pupil's Name, Date of Birth, Address, Religion, Parents' Names and Parents' Occupations).

If a pupil does not attend on a day when the school is open for instruction, his/her non-attendance will be recorded by the class teacher. The roll call is taken at 10.00 am each morning. Any pupil not present will be marked absent for the day. A note from parents/guardians is required to explain each absence. Such notes will be retained by the class teacher. Parents/guardians must also provide a note if a child departs early during the school day.

In the event of a parent/guardian needing to take the child during the school day, the parent/guardian must sign the “Early Leaver Book”.

If a pupil arrives late to the school the child will sign “Late Book” and late arrivals will be noted on the Aladdin System. Parents/guardians are informed in writing on the end of year report of their child’s attendance as a percentage of the school year. Attendance is monitored by the Deputy Principal on a weekly basis. Parents / guardians are formally notified in writing when fifteen days absence has been recorded. Pupils whose non-attendance is a concern are invited to meet with the class teacher / Deputy Principal / Principal as appropriate and are informed of the school’s concerns. Any interventions regarding attendance will be recorded on the child’s profile on the “Aladdin” system.

The school must notify TUSLA where a child has missed 20 or more days in a school year.

Whole School Strategies to Promote Attendance

O’Growney N.S. Athboy endeavour to create a safe, welcoming environment for our pupils and their parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are consulted in drafting and reviewing policies with the aim of promoting a high-level of co-operation among the school community. The teaching staff collaborates in the planning and implementation of the primary school curriculum, so as to provide a stimulating learning environment for all pupils.

The calendar for the school year is published annually on our school website www.ogrowneyns.ie. It is hoped that this approach will enable parents/guardians to plan family events around school closures, thus minimizing the chances of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term. Certificates are presented to children who have achieved excellent attendance at the end of the school year.

Communciation

The school has developed a good relationship with the local representative of TUSLA and there is ongoing communication in relation to children who are at risk.

The school maintains communications with local pre-school and second-level schools in order to make the transition for pupils as easy as possible.

Strategies in the Event of Non-Attendance

Section 17 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), states that ‘the parent of a child shall cause the child concerned to attend a recognized school on each school day’.

Section 21 of the act obliges schools to inform TUSLA if a child is absent on more than 20 days in any school year, or if a child does not attend school on a regular basis.

In such cases the Education Welfare Officer (following all reasonable efforts by the Education Board to consult with the child’s parents and the Principal of the school) may serve a ‘School Attendance Notice’ on any parent who he/she concludes is failing or neglecting to cause the child to attend the school. A successful case taken against parent may result in a fine and/or imprisonment.

Reasons for absence are recorded and reported to the TUSLA 4 times during the school year through an online system. An annual report is submitted – not more than six weeks following the end of the school year – detailing the overall level of attendance at the school during that school year.

Transfer to Another School

Under Section 20 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), the Principal of a child's current school must notify the Principal of the child's previous school that the child is now registered in their school.

When a Principal receives notification that a child has been registered elsewhere he/she must notify the Principal of the pupil's new school, of any problems in relation to attendance at the pupil's former school and of such matters relating to the child's educational progress as he or she considers appropriate. This applies to pupils who transfer between primary schools and to pupils who transfer from primary to second-level education.

Success Criteria

The following will provide some practical indicators of the success of this policy:

- An increase in annual attendance rates
- Board of Management, Staff and parent/guardian awareness of their legal obligations under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management.

Implementation

This policy will be implemented immediately following ratification by the Board of Management and communication to the Parents' Association.

Review and Monitoring:

This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron, if requested. This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management.

Policy ratified by the Board of Management on Tuesday, 21st November, 2017.