



Attendance Policy

Drumbaragh National School, Drumbaragh, Kells, Co. Meath A82NP98
Roll Number: 10801Q

Drumbaragh National School in response to changing demographics, increased Child Protection responsibilities, arrival of newcomer pupils, and changing attitudes to education has updated the Attendance Policy. This policy aims to:

- ensure pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- ensure pupils attendance is recorded daily.
- encourage full attendance where possible.
- identify pupils at risk.
- promote a positive learning environment.
- raise awareness of the importance of school attendance.
- foster an appreciation of learning.
- enable learning opportunities to be availed of.
- identify pupils at risk of leaving school early.
- ensure compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation.
- identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.

Compliance with School Ethos

This policy complements the school ethos of nurturing potential in a caring environment where the welfare of children is paramount.

Punctuality / Late Arrivals / Early Removal

Classes begin at 8.50am. All pupils are asked to be at the line for ten to nine. Any pupil arriving after 9am will be recorded as late by the class teacher on Aladdin noting the number of minutes late.

Late arrival causes a disturbance to the class, to teaching, and the general learning environment. Pupils arriving late to class must explain lateness to class teacher so that it may be noted on Aladdin. Under the school Access & Exit Procedures, parents are reminded that all pupil arriving late to school must be accompanied to the class to ensure there is a formal handover of care by the parent/guardian. In the event of a regular pattern of late arrival, parents will be contacted by the class teacher or principal to establish the cause of this regular pattern of arrival. Where the school is not satisfied that the situation has been addressed and an educational welfare issue exists due to the continued absence of the pupil a report will be made to the National Educational Welfare Board (TUSLA).

Parents are obliged to ensure their children attend school for the entirety of the school day. If a parent requires that their child be removed before the end of the school day, the pupil must be signed out of the school by that parent/guardian. All 'early removals' will be recorded by the school. If a pattern of early removal develops the class teacher/principal will contact parents to highlight the negative impact on pupil learning of early removals and that such is an educational welfare issue.

Registering, Recording, & Reporting Attendance

When a pupil is enrolled in Drumbaragh National School, they are registered in the Clárleabhar (Register). Following Circular 0028/2013, a pupil can only be registered by their name as it appears on the Birth Certificate. The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded daily in the Leabhar Rolla (Roll Book) on the school data management system, 'Aladdin'. All Roll Books are maintained on Aladdin. Rolls are called at 10a.m. each morning. The Roll Books are printed and bound at the end of each year.

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. A pupil will be marked either absent or present at the time of roll call, late arrivals and early removals are noted on Aladdin. A pupil's name must be struck off the Leabhar Rolla for the following reasons:

- (a) As soon as the principal receives written notification of transfer.
- (b) On the first Monday following an absence of 20 consecutive days.

Education (Welfare) Act 2000

Parents are reminded that the school must have a written letter excusing a pupil's absence. The reason for absence must be recorded. Parents are requested to inform the school of the specific reason a pupil is absent. Where an absence letter is not received, the school must record the absence as 'Unexplained' when reporting to the 'Educational Welfare Board'. Parents are also reminded that the school is legally obliged to report pupils who have missed 20 days or more the NEWB/Child and Family Agency. The school will make every effort to inform a family in writing when 15 days absence has accumulated. A meeting between parents and principal may be set up if deemed necessary. The school will also inform when 20 or more days absence has occurred and that a report may be made to the NEWB/TUSLA/CFA. These procedures apply to all pupils regardless of reason for absence. In the event of extenuating circumstances, the school will inform the NEWB of such circumstances and that no immediate educational welfare concern exists.

National Education Welfare Board/ TUSLA / Child & Family Agency

Education Welfare Officer is informed if:

- 1) A child is expelled.
- 2) A child is suspended.
- 3) A child has missed more than 20 days.
- 4) The school has an educational welfare concern regarding attendance.

The NEWB/Child & Family Agency is furnished with the total attendances in the school year through the Annual Report Form which is completed on-line. Section 21 of the Act obliges schools to inform the Education Welfare Officer 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 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 the parent may result in a fine and/or imprisonment.

Reasons for absence are recorded and reported to the NEWB/CFA five times during the school year online. 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.

Promoting Attendance

The school promotes good attendance by:

- creating a safe welcoming environment which strives to ensure our pupils are happy.
- providing high standards in the teaching and learning environment.
- identifying risks to good attendance such as disadvantage, bullying etc. early.
- rewarding good attendance with certificates/rewards.

Identifying at Risk Pupils

Traditionally, school attendance in our school is good although the last few years have identified an increase in total days absent. However, the staff remains vigilant so that 'at risk' students are identified early and can be categorised as:

- Those who miss more than 10 days in a school year.
- Those who are removed early on 10 or more occasions in a school year.
- Those who are significantly late to school on 15 or more occasions in a school year.

Induction of New Pupils/Families

New entrants and their parents/guardians are invited to engage in an induction process, through which the school's policies and procedures in relation to attendance are explained. There is a focus on the value of regular attendance and on the importance of developing good attendance habits from Junior Infants onwards.

Acknowledgement for Excellent Attendance

At the end of each school year the school will award certificates to the pupils with the best attendance; pupils who have missed no day of school and those who have missed 3 days or less.

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 previous Principal receives notification of this registration the new Principal must be notified of issues in relation to attendance and the child's educational progress at the former school as appropriate, applying also to primary to secondary school transfers.

A school cannot remove a pupil from the school roll until such time as the new school remits confirmation of enrolment. In the event whereby such notice is not provided, the principal may refer the issue to the NEWB/ TUSLA/CFA to investigate and confirm the whereabouts of that child.

Communication with Other Schools

When a child transfers from Drumbaragh National School to another school, the school's records on attendance and academic attainment will be forwarded on receipt of written notification of the transfer. When a child transfers into Drumbaragh National School, confirmation of transfer will be communicated to the child's previous school, and appropriate records sought. Pupils transferring from Drumbaragh National School to a post primary school will have their Sixth Class School documentation forwarded on receipt of notification of enrolment.

Communication with Parents

The school highlights times procedures for dropping off and collecting children regularly in our monthly newsletter. Attendance is highlighted with regularity on our monthly calendar - reminding families of the attendance procedures and the implications of non-attendance as per the *Education Welfare Act 2000*. Parents of new children are informed about these matters upon enrolment.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have input into the implementation of the policy. Class teachers record individual patterns of attendance in the Leabhar Rolla on 'Aladdin'. The deputy principal has responsibility for monitoring attendance and reporting to the school staff and parents on attendance patterns and will also have responsibility for promoting regular attendance. It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management.

Responsibility of Parents

Parents 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 & E.W.O to resolve attendance problems.

- Ensure their children understand that parents support good school attendance.
- Discussing planned absences with the school.
- Refraining 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.
- Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.
- Notify the school if their child/children are to be collected by someone unknown to the teacher.

Evaluation

The success of any Attendance Policy is measured through:

- Improved attendance levels as measured in attendance records.
- Positive perceptions by pupils about our school
- Positive parental feedback
- Teacher vigilance.

Ratification and Review

This Attendance Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 24th March 2021.

The policy will be reviewed during the 2023/24 school year.