

ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES

to be read in conjunction with the Attendance Policy

In St Laurence's NS, we value the individuality of all our children and respect their right to access all areas of learning. We work to enable them to develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that are necessary for their self-fulfillment and their development into active and responsible adults.

St Laurence's NS decided to review its attendance strategies because:

- It is a priority area identified by the Principal
- It is a requirement under Education Welfare Act 2000
- The school needs to encourage pupils to be in attendance

Aims

In St Laurence's NS we aim:

- To foster an appreciation of learning
- To raise awareness of the importance of school attendance
- To identify pupils at risk of early school leaving
- To enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To promote positive attitudes to learning
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner that encourages pupils to attend school
- To comply with requirements under Education Welfare Act 2000/Guidelines from NEWB.

Strategies to encourage good attendance

- **Caring Environment** - St Laurence's NS, at all times, aims to ensure that children are taught in a safe secure and caring environment where their intellectual, physical and spiritual development are catered for
- We try to create a welcoming environment for pupils and parents. Teachers consistently try to encourage good attendance in their respective classrooms
- **Special Needs** – pupils needing support are identified as early as possible and the appropriate support systems put into place. We emphasise positive achievements and do all we can to enhance self-esteem
- **Homework Support** – The homework club exists to support those pupils whose home circumstances dictate that there is neither the environment conducive to completing homework nor the expertise at home to help with homework. Having completed homework removes a possible excuse for avoiding attending school
- **Rewards** - Certificates are issued for perfect and improved attendance at the end of the school year and, if appropriate, at other times.

Communication

- **Parental Support** - It is the policy of St Laurence's NS to encourage and maintain open communication between home and school and to encourage parents in their role as primary educators of their children. The Principal and teachers are always available, on an appointment basis, to meet parents.
- Attendance is one of the issues addressed at meetings for new parents when their child is enrolled in St Laurence's NS
- It is also covered in the information pack given to all parents of Junior Infant children
- At the beginning of each school year, Junior Infant parents attend a general meeting of parents and one of the issues addressed is that of the importance of regular school attendance among a range of other topics
- Parents are made aware of the requirements of the Education Welfare Act at pre-enrollment information meetings.

School Records

A roll call is taken every day and should a child be absent, they are required to have an explanatory note from their parents. This may be recorded in the home school diary. The Education and Welfare act 'obliges the parents of an absent child to notify the school of the cause of absence not later than the third day of absence'. Notes or record of non- attendances are duly dated and need to be kept.

- When a child has accumulated 10 days of absence the teacher discusses the absence with the Principal/Deputy Principal and, if necessary, the parents of the child may be contacted by phone and/or letter. A meeting may be requested with the parents.
- When a child has missed 20 days, the absence is reported to the EWO for the county and to Education Welfare Board as required by the Education Welfare Act. If the absenteeism persists, the school requests active intervention from the EWO.

These strategies were adopted by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

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