



## **Attendance Policy**

### **Introduction**

The Francis Street School attendance policy aims to promote and encourage regular attendance.

### **Rationale**

The main factors contributing to the formulation of this policy can be summarised as follows:

- To promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils' learning.
- To adhere to the legislative requirements of the Education Welfare Act 2000 and the Education Act 1998.
- As a DEIS band 1 school we have a strong focus on attendance and retention.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The revised policy is geared towards:

- Ensuring that pupils are registered accurately and efficiently
- Ensuring that pupil attendance is recorded daily
- Encouraging full attendance where possible
- Improving school attendance
- Promoting a positive learning environment
- Raising awareness of the importance of school attendance
- Identify pupils at risk of leaving school early
- Ensuring compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation
- Developing links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems
- This policy complements the school ethos of nurturing potential in a caring environment where the welfare of children is paramount.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- All staff have an input into the implementation of the policy.
- Class teachers record individual patterns of attendance using our Aladdin system.
- Secretary records late arrivals on aladdin Management system.
- It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management.



## **Punctuality**

Children can assemble in the yard between 8.40 and 8.50 a.m. Children can enter the yard via John Dillon Street or Davis Place

At 8.50 am the bell goes and the children enter the school building. The main school entrance on John Dillon Street remains open until 9.10 am.

All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. The school secretary notes late arrivals of pupils on our Aladdin management system. The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late.

## **Recording Attendance**

The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded using the Aladdin Management system on the classroom P.C. by 10.00 a.m. on a daily basis. When a class teacher is absent it is the responsibility of the SET teacher assigned in that class to take the attendance..

Any pupil not present will be marked absent for that day. A note from parents/guardians is required to explain each absence. Ideally parents will input reasons via the Aladdin management system. If a physical note is received, teachers can input that on the Aladdin Management System. 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. This can also be done via Aladdin or a physical note.

Parents/guardians are made aware of the requirements when children begin school relating to absences of more than 20 days per school year. They are notified in writing on the end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year.

## **Promoting Attendance**

The school promotes good attendance by:

- creating a safe and welcoming environment.
- displaying kindness, compassion and understanding to the families in our school.
- The school maintains communication with local pre-schools and second-level schools in order to make the transition for pupils as easy as possible.
- being vigilant so that risks to good attendance such as disadvantage, bullying etc. are identified early and strategies are put in place to support families.
- HSC teacher works closely with families to support attendance and any related issues that may arise
- The calendar for the coming school year is published annually in late June and a reminder is published in September. 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.

- School will meet with families of children when absenteeism becomes a concern and help support families by devising strategies to assist them.
- School links in with SCP (School Completion Program) to provide support for target pupils and families.

## **Attendance Reporting**

Under Section 22 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 each school is obliged to have a statement of strategies to encourage regular attendance among students. The principal should ensure that the strategies outlined are followed, ensuring that parents are informed at the earliest possible point of the school's concern regarding attendance and that the school follows the steps outlined in the strategy to address non-attendance.

As per the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, any named student who has reached a cumulative total of 20 or more days absence from school must be reported in the SAR.(School Absence Report) School Absence Reports must now be submitted via the Tusla portal. A student recording 10 or more days absence in term 1 may be considered a concern by the school.

A SAR is a legislative requirement which all schools must complete, a referral is a request for assistance by a school that is concerned about a student's attendance and is seeking the intervention of an Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

Where a school principal has a concern in relation to a pupil's school attendance and where the school has made all local efforts to resolve the problem and the school still remains concerned about the student's attendance a referral can be made to EWS. The school will be asked to document interventions already made in line with their School Attendance Strategies. DEIS schools will also be asked to document the additional interventions made by HSCL and SCP.

## **Transfer to Another School/Suspension**

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.

If the school principal receives a confirmation letter from another recognised school indicating that a student who has attended Francis Street CBS has now been registered in another school then the pupil may be removed from the school register except where the child may be still receiving any portion of their education in your school.

The Principal must also remove a child from the register if the school receives notification in writing from Tusla Alternative Education and Registration Service indicating that a student has been placed on the Section 14 register and is being homeschooled..



If a student is suspended for a period of not less than 6 consecutive school days then the school is obliged to report this to TESS. If a student is suspended for a shorter period(s) then it must be counted in the aggregate number of absences and if the student exceeds 20 days absence (including any suspensions) then this should be reported through the normal referral and reporting processes.

Once the BOM has agreed an expulsion a Notification of Intention to Expel should be completed and sent to tess, Tusla Head Office, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8.

### **Communication with Families**

The school informs all parents of the implications of non-attendance as per the Education Welfare Act 2000. Parents of new children are informed on enrolment.

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
- 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 sense of self-worth
- 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

### **Evaluation**

The success of any Attendance Policy is measured through:

- Improved attendance and retention levels
- Happy, confident, well-adjusted children
- Positive parental feedback
- Teacher vigilance with respect to taking attendance

This policy was ratified on 10/11/2022

Gerard Cagney, Chairperson