



ST. TERESA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

2023-24



ATTENDANCE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

*Your Child's education is important to us and **MUST** be important to you.*

As a Rights Respecting School the UNCRC is at the heart of our planning, policies, practice and ethos. We are very concerned about the attendance for all our pupils and we endeavour to improve the well-being and potential of every child.

Article 28- Every child has the right to an education

Article 29- Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

Article 3- The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning children.

Regular school attendance is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum in a warm and safe environment which will enable them to reach their full potential.

St. Teresa's Primary School will strive to promote an ethos and culture, which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel, valued and secure.



VISIONARY FRAMEWORK

VISION

St. Teresa's Primary School –

'Deeds Not Words'

Aims

St. Teresa's Primary School promotes high achievement and learning for life by working with children to:

- practise the Catholic faith;
- be tolerant and respectful of themselves, others and the environment;
- acquire knowledge and skills to be their individual best;
- be highly motivated life-long learners;
- be able to work independently and collaboratively;
- gain technological skills to equip them for the 21st century.

Article 28

Mission

We believe that each child will succeed through experiencing quality in:

- a caring and supportive environment;
- a broad and challenging curriculum;
- stimulating surroundings;
- innovative teaching and an investigative approach to learning;
- a learning partnership between school, home and the wider community..

We demonstrate our commitment to working as a learning school by:

- striving for continuous improvement in all that we do;
- working collaboratively towards common goals;
- Investing in people. **Article 29**

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

The Pupil Attendance Monitor (Mr McSwiggan) at St. Teresa's Primary School has overall responsibility for school attendance. All teachers or parents should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to her attention.

The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets while assessing the effectiveness of St. Teresa's Primary School attendance policy and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item at each meeting.

Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that class attendance is recorded at the beginning of morning and afternoon registration sessions.

To enable our school to accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2020/08 which can be found at <https://bit.ly/47KBNDX>

REWARDS FOR EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE

Children who attain 100% attendance at the end of each term will be awarded a certificate and prize during assembly and at the end of year prize giving ceremony. This achievement should be celebrated by the school community and the children who attain this goal should be recognised for this achievement. Through the attendance challenge considered at assembly each month, classes will be rewarded at the end of each term. This will be for the class in each year group with the highest average class attendance over 96%. Rewards will include extra time in Serenity Park, cinema morning, and a visit to St Teresa's Youth Club.

ROLE OF PARENT/ CARER

Parents/ Guardians have a legal duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient full-time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise. **Article 3**

If a child is registered in school, their Parent/ Carer has a legal duty to ensure that they regularly attend that school.

Pupils are expected to be in school at St. Teresa's Primary School for registration and the beginning of classes commencing at 8.55am. It is the responsibility of the Parents/ Carers to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness is recorded at registration and on your child's attendance record.

If your child appears reluctant to attend school, please discuss the matter promptly with the class teacher or Principal to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

St. Teresa's Primary School is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

ROLE OF PUPILS

Each pupil at St. Teresa's Primary School must attend school punctually and regularly. If you have been absent from school, a written note from a parent/ carer must be provided to your teacher when you return.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

In St. Teresa's Primary School, the parent/ carer must contact the school by phone to inform of the child's absence on the first day of the absence. On the child's return to school a written note must be provided for class teacher to confirm the reason for absence. If the absence is likely to be prolonged, this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with homework or any other necessary arrangements, which may be required

Parents/Carers must for as far as possible ensure that all medical and dental appointments are made outside of school hours. Where unavoidable the letter or appointment card must be produced prior to the appointment.

The class teacher will contact the parent of any child who has not reported a reason for their child's absence on the morning of the second day of absence.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

St. Teresa's Primary School discourages holidays during term time due to the detrimental impact they have to a child's education because of missing school. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence. Only in exceptional circumstances will a holiday be authorised.

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING NON-ATTENDANCE

- The Pupil Attendance Monitor regularly liaises with teachers about attendance and will address any individual concerns that the teachers may have.
- The Pupil Attendance Monitor meets with the Educational Welfare Officer (E.W.O) approximately every 6 weeks to complete an attendance audit throughout the school.
- Following the completion of the attendance audit the pupil attendance monitor reviews the attendance record of all pupils and actions accordingly. These actions will include:
 - A phone call to parents when a pupil's attendance falls below 85% on a first occasion.
 - If no improvement a formal letter will be issued to parents/carers.
 - If there continues to be no improvement a meeting will be arranged with parents with a referral to the EWO.

EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

Education Authority (EA) throughout the Education Welfare Service (EWS) have a legal duty to make sure that parents meet their responsibility towards their children's education.

EWS will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address levels of poor attendance and to improve overall attendance in the school.

ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE

The benchmark of the attendance grading is detailed below:

0 Days Missed	Excellent
1 to 2 days Missed	Very Good
3 to 5 Days Missed	Good
6 to 10 Days Missed	Satisfactory
11 to 15 Days Missed	Poor
16 to 20 Days Missed	Very Poor
Over 21 Days Missed	Unacceptable

PUNCTUALITY

Children's punctuality is also monitored by the class teacher and the pupil attendance monitor.

It is very important that children come to school on time each day. Children should be in their classroom by 8.55am ready for lessons to start at 9.00am each day. We recognise that on occasion there may be a valid reason as to why your child may not be in school on time. However, if your child is repeatedly late for school this is problematic for the following reasons:

- Your child may become distressed or embarrassed coming into school late;
- The teacher will have already explained the first lesson to the other children in the class and will need to stop to repeat this to any child who is late;
- Often there is more than one child late in class and this will need repeated numerous times;
- This is disruptive to the other children who are in school on time.

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING POOR PUNCTUALITY

When a child is late on three or more occasions within a 2-week period, the teacher will aim to highlight this concern to the child's parents or carer. If there is no improvement after this discussion a formal letter will be issued to parents reminding them of the need to improve this. Again, if there is no improvement a second formal

letter will be issued outlining that if there is no further improvement in punctuality that a meeting will be arranged with the School Attendance Monitor.

A child learns everyday- don't miss it!

Review of policy: October 2023