



Policy on Attendance

The aims of the attendance policy in Fionnbarra Naofa BNS are to:

- Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community.
- Inform the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined in the Act.
- Identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- Ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance/participation.
- Develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
- Identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.

The school will ensure that:

- The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school.
- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Pupil attendance is recorded daily.
- Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated.
- Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored.
- School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to:
 - The Education Welfare Board.
 - The Education Welfare Officer.
 - The Board of Management.

Punctuality

School is open from 8.50a.m. and children are required to be in their classrooms not later than 9.10 a.m. Boys attending Breakfast Club will be admitted to the Breakfast Club only, from 8.15am. All pupils are expected to be on time. The Attendance Secretary will track attendance and punctuality of pupils who are consistently late or absent and will text or telephone these parents/guardians Under NEWB rules children can be marked absent if they are more than forty minutes late. The Principal is obliged under the Education Welfare Act, to report children who are persistently late, to the Education Welfare Board.

Guidance for Parents

Section [(21) (9)] of the Act states that: “a pupil’s absence can only be authorised by the Principal when the child is involved in activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved”. The school principal cannot authorise a child’s absence for holidays during school time. However, it is essential that parents inform the school of such arrangements.

Reasons for pupils’ absences must be communicated by parents/guardians to the school. To facilitate this, such communications may be in the homework diary. If a child is absent, when he returns to school his parent should explain the absence. Absence notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. The school will contact parents when an explanation for the child’s absence is not received.

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.
- Making sure their children understand that parents’ support approves of school attendance.
- Discussing planned absences with the school.
- 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 self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth.
- Informing the school of the reasons for absence from school.

- 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.
- Notifying the school if their child/children, particularly children in junior classes, are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher.

Pupils

Pupils have the clear responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually.

Pupils are responsible for promptly passing on absence notes from parents to their class teacher.

Pupils are responsible for passing school correspondence to their parents, on the specified day.

A strategy for promoting good school attendance

The Board of Management is committed to providing a positive school atmosphere which is conducive to promoting good school attendance. In this regard:

- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- The school will promote development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children.
- Support for pupils, who have special educational needs, are in place in accordance with Department of Education & Science guidelines.
- Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils.
- A special reward system will be introduced for promoting good attendance at school.
- The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer & SCP Coordinator will be utilised.
- The attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance, and the class teacher will notify the Principal, or delegated member of staff, of any concerns regarding the attendance of any child.
- Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.

School Principal

The School Principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations.
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer:
- If a pupil is not attending school regularly.
- When a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during the course of a school year.
- If a pupil has been suspended for a period of six or more days.
- When a pupil's name is removed from the school register.
- Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil.
- Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff

Class Teacher

The class teacher will:

- Maintain the school roll-book in accordance with procedure.
- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences.
- Contact parents in instances where absences are not explained.
- Promote a reward system for pupils with exceptional attendance.
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Inform the Principal of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.

Record/Communication

Subject to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer to another primary school will be passed to the Principal of the school, by post, as soon as we receive written notification of transfer.

Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer from another primary school will be sought directly from the previous school.

Attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils transferring to a second level school will be sent to the school, if requested, once enrolment has been confirmed.