

Scoil Chearbhaill Uí Dhálaigh

Attendance policy 2010

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, there is a very high attendance rate among the pupils of Scoil Uí Dhálaigh, 95% on average. However, because of changes in our society it is essential to emphasise to parents the importance of regular and punctual attendance as well as having the pupil fully prepared for school work. It is an objective of the school to praise and reward good attendance; and also to identify those pupils who have a problem with attendance and to support those students in order to improve attendance. Regular school attendance helps inculcate good habits of regularity and punctuality which will act as a foundation for life in secondary school in the future and later on in the workplace.

By law, a child must attend school until he has reached his sixteenth birthday or three years of post primary schooling.

REPORTING

There is a duty under the Education Act (Amended) 2000 regarding reporting to the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB).

Schools are bound to report absences as well as the causes of those absences to the NEWB so that the Education Welfare Officers (EWO) can decide on the most appropriate intervention, if any, to address the education welfare of the child.

Under the Act the school is obliged to report to the NEWB every time

- ... a student has reached 20 days absence cumulatively
- ... a Principal is concerned about a pupil's absence
- ... a Board of Management decides to expel a pupil
- ... a pupil has been suspended for 6 or more days cumulatively
- ... a pupil's name is to be removed from the school register for whatever reason.

ROLE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

(Throughout this policy document the term 'parent' is used. However, in some circumstances the child's carer may be a guardian or other nominated person)

Pupils are asked to be in school regularly. As a parent, it is important that the school be notified if your child is absent and the reason for the absence. It is school policy that this should be given in writing. The school follows the procedure mentioned in the above paragraph. If the pupil is ill or if there is another valid reason for the absence the NEWB will take no action. On the other hand, if there is a concern about the pupil's absence or the reasons stated for the absence, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will visit you to discuss your child's education with you.

The EWO will work with you and take into account all family and other circumstances before arriving at a decision regarding action in order that your child will receive the education to which he has a right. Information on the

NEWB can be had from THE newb HELPLINE 1890 36 36 66. EWO deal with the public on this support line. Parents will find it worthwhile to read the pamphlet 'Don't let your Child lose out'.

Information about the NEWB available on www.newb.ie

MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE

In Scoil Uí Dhálaigh pupils' attendance is recorded in the Leabhar Rolla between 9.50 a.m. and 10.00 a.m. every school day; i.e. 40 minutes after the commencement of teaching for that day. A note of explanation or a doctor's note where relevant must be provided for every absence, every early departure or late arrival in the morning. Every note is recorded by the teacher. The school reserves the right to check the authenticity of notes at any time. The leabhar Rolla is marked in accordance with the rules of the Department of Education and Skills (DES). Pupils who are in school are marked as present. If a pupil is absent at the time of marking the roll that pupil is marked as absent. This mark cannot be altered.

If a pupil comes to school in time bearing a note that he will be leaving school for whatever reason (medical appointment, exam etc) and will be returning later in the school day the mark (\\) will be put on the roll. If the school is informed that that a pupil will be late for some reason but will be present later the roll is marked (\\). If the pupil does not present on that day this mark will be changed to a triangle to denote absence.

In the event of a pupil leaving the school without permission parents will be contacted immediately as a matter of urgency and the Garda Síochána notified.

In the case of pupils who come to school unaccompanied by a parent or other designated adult, late arrival will be dealt with in the following manner :

- 1. An oral warning will be given to the pupil every time he/she is late for school without a written explanation from the parents. The pupil will sign the late arrival register outside the secretary's office.**
- 2. If a pattern of late arrival in school is noticed .i. that the pupil is late 3 mornings in a month, the class teacher writes a note in the pupil's homework journal.**
- 3. If the pupil is late after that .i. the fourth time, the School Principal will send a note to the parents along with a copy of that note to be signed by the parent(s) to acknowledge that they have read the note.**
- 4. If the pattern of late arrival continues thereafter, the principal will invite the parents to come to the school to discuss the problem and attempt to find a resolution.**

A pupil would be deemed to be late after 9.10 a.m.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

When a pupil's school attendance gives cause for concern the school communicates formally with the parents as follows:

- (a) a phone call from the school principal if the pupil misses without explanation 5 consecutive days.
- (b) a note sent by post from the school if the pupil misses, without explanation, 6 consecutive school days. This note will invite the parents to the school to discuss the absenteeism with the principal and to devise a plan to solve the problem.
- (c) Should the pupil be absent more than 15 days of 20 consecutive school days without a satisfactory explanation a note will be sent by registered post inviting the parent to the school to discuss the problem and seek a resolution. This note will remind the parents that the school will be obliged to report the matter to the to the NEWB when the pupil will have missed 20 days cumulatively.

Note : It must be stated clearly that a pupil will never be punished for an absence.

THE PROMOTION OF GOOD ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

- ... Pupils who have a good attendance record will be praised regularly both formally and informally. This will be done in a kind gentle uncompetitive way so as not to embarrass pupils who are absent for legitimate reasons or through no fault of their own.
 - ... A pupil's full attendance will be rewarded at the end of the school year. If such does not exist pupils with the best attendance will be recognised.
 - ... Parents are asked not to plan holidays which would remove the children from school during term time. This is so that the continuity of learning is unimpeded or group work in the classroom is not interfered with.
- A teacher is not obliged to give pupils work during such an absence.

CONCLUSION

Parents are reminded that this policy should be read in conjunction with the 'leabhrán scoile'.

This policy has been formulated in consultation with the school principal, teachers and parents. It will become valid on 1/6/10 and will be reviewed during the school year 2012/13 or earlier should that be necessary.

Signed

Cathaoirleach an Bhoird Bainistíochta

Dáta.....

