

Maynooth Educate Together National School

Attendance Policy

Preamble.

Maynooth Educate Together N.S is a co-educational school with mainstream classes and classes catering for children with ASD. Our ethos espouses the following principles ie we are multi-denominational, co-educational, child-centered and democratically run. We aim to provide an education that fosters development of childrens talents, abilities and personalities. We support children in developing attitudes which will enable them to become open-minded, creative, respectful, responsible and caring members of society. The school recognises that parents/guardians are the primary educators of their children.

In devising this policy, due consideration has been given to Section 9 of the Education Act 1998. This policy has been formulated by the school Principal and staff in consultation with the Parents Association and has been ratified by the Board of Management.

Maynooth Educate Together NS is a multi-denominational school which upholds the values of the Educate Together ethos, encapsulated in the motto "Learn Together to Live Together" As primary teachers our aim is to nurture the holistic and harmonious development of our pupils to their fullest potential in accordance with their needs and to encourage them to work collaboratively whilst fostering within them a sense of respect for themselves, others and the environment. The Board of Management of Educate Together National School recognizes the clear and direct relationship between high and regular school attendance and pupil progress. The Board also recognizes that high and regular attendance engenders a positive attitude to school and learning.

Aims

- 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 Education 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 National Education Welfare Board

Education Welfare Officer
Board of Management.

National Education Welfare Board

Schools report individual student absences and expulsions by submitting Student Absence Reports four times each year. Schools also report the total number of days lost through absence by submitting an Annual Attendance Report (AAR) at the end of the academic year.

Guidance for Parents

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 in writing, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. If a child is absent, when the child returns to school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher, which contains the child's name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence. These notes will form a record, which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. The onus is on parents to give a written explanation to the school explaining a child's absence, otherwise no explanation will be noted as the reason for the absence and this will be returned to the Education Welfare Officer.

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

Punctuality

The school day is from 8.30a.m. To 1.10pm. for junior and senior infants and 8.30 a.m. To 2.10 p.m. for all other classes. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. The Principal is obliged under the

Education Welfare Act, to report children who are persistently late, to the Education Welfare Board.

Pupils

- Pupils have the clear responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence.
- 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 will be utilised.
- The class teacher will monitor the attendance rates of pupils in the first instance, and the class teacher will notify the Principal 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.
- Acknowledge pupils with exceptional attendance during Assembly.

Deputy Principal

The Deputy Principal has special responsibility for the area of school attendance. The Deputy Principal will:

- Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff
- Inform parents by letter when a pupil has been absent for 15 days enclosing a letter outlining their role in ensuring good attendance and also explaining the role of the NEWB.
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer:

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.

- Inform the Principal of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil. Class Teacher

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 in writing. If no written explanation is forthcoming then the class teacher will note no explanation as the reason for the child's absence.
- 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 once enrolment has been confirmed.

Review

This policy will be referred to regularly to check that it is being consistently implemented by all staff. Policy will be reviewed by staff annually.

Approved by Board of Management;

Date: 15/9/2014

Signed :