

Attendance Policy



Lurga National School
Gort,
Co Galway

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Education Welfare Act 2000 promotes school attendance and Section 17 of the legislation states that there is a statutory obligation on parents to ensure their child attends a recognised school once registered. Furthermore, where a child is absent from the school, the parent is required under the Act to notify the Principal of the school of the reason for the child's absence. At Lurga National School we would ask for those reasons in writing. The Act states that the relevant authorities will be informed of pupils who have been absent for twenty school days or more (this includes illness, holidays outside school holidays etc.) Children deemed at risk will be registered with Túsla.

Attendance Strategies

- Encourage full attendance where possible
- Identify pupils at risk
- Promote a positive learning environment
- Enable learning opportunities to be availed of
- Raise awareness of the importance of school attendance
- Foster an appreciation of learning
- Award 'Certificates of attendance' at the end of the year

ENCOURAGING GOOD ATTENDANCE

Parents are discouraged from taking holidays during school time. Work will not be given to children to do while they are on holiday. Teachers will not do anything to facilitate parents taking children on holidays during school time.

When recording daily numbers, teachers are asked to list absent and late children and to include the reasons for absence of children. Parents are asked to give reasons for absences in writing.

ROLE OF THE TEACHER

- Call the roll daily and record attendances and absences.
- Keep all letters from parents relating to pupil attendance for the given academic year. These are then shredded at the end of the year.

ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

- Register each student on the day the child first attends the school and removes the student's name from the register when the child is transferring to another school or is registered with Túsla.
- To keep a record of the pupil's attendance at the school and the reasons for any failure to attend.
- To inform Túsla in writing, where a student is absent in excess of twenty school days in a school year, where a student is suspended for a period in excess of 6 school days, where a student's name is removed from the register or where, in the opinion of the Principal the student is not attending regularly.
- Informs the BOM of school attendance

- Communicates to a school to which a student is transferring any problem relating to school attendance and other appropriate matters relating to the child's educational progress.
- Ensure that the Roll Books, Leabhair Tinreamh and Pupil Registers are kept up to date.

ROLE OF PARENTS

- The parent of a child should enable the child to attend school on each school day when the child is well enough to do so.
- Please note that letters from parents concerning illness and doctor's certificates will be kept on file in the school for one year. Written permission from a parent is necessary for a pupil to leave the school for any reason during school hours. In that case the pupil must be collected from the classroom.
- Parents should provide the class teacher with notes regarding school absences.

Punctuality

School begins at 9.10 a.m. All pupils are expected to be on time. Individual pupils should not be reprimanded by teachers for being late. Comments regarding a child's poor punctuality should be addressed to the child's parents and not to the child himself/herself. Punctuality is best addressed in a positive, general way in a whole class/school setting.

It is completely understandable that, from time to time, pupils will be late due to circumstances beyond their parents'/guardians' control. In such cases, a simple note to the child's teacher will suffice. If a child misses a half day, a verbal or written explanation is required. The school will contact parents/guardians directly in the event of pupils being consistently late. The Principal is obliged under the Education Welfare Act 2000, to report children who are persistently late, to the Education Welfare Officer.

Recording & Reporting Attendance

The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded on Aladdin of each class on a daily basis.

If a pupil does not attend on a day when the school is open for instruction, his/her non-attendance will be recorded by the class teacher. The roll call is taken at 9:50 am each morning. Any pupil not present when the roll is called will be marked absent for the day. The roll book may not be altered once it has been filled in. A note (attached as Appendix 1) from parents/guardians is required to explain each absence. Such notes will be retained by the class teacher.

When a child is unavoidably late for school, an explanation by the Parent/Guardian, in verbal or written form, should be given to the Class Teacher.

Parents/Guardians wishing to withdraw their child early from school must call to the office prior to withdrawing their child from class. Parents/Guardians should notify the office and the Class Teacher in advance, where possible, of their intention to

withdraw their child from class. Late arrivals and early departures are recorded by the Class Teacher.

Parents/guardians are notified in writing on the end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year. Pupils whose non-attendance is a concern are invited to meet with the Principal during Parent/Teacher meetings and are informed of the school's concerns.

Promoting Attendance

The school promotes good attendance by:

- ❖ creating a safe and welcoming environment
- ❖ ensuring children are happy
- ❖ displaying kindness, compassion and understanding
- ❖ being vigilant so that risks to good attendance such as disadvantage, bullying etc. are identified early
- ❖ rewarding good attendance with certificates

The calendar for the coming school year is published annually in June and uploaded onto our website www.lurgans.ie It is hoped that this approach will enable parents/guardians to plan family events around school closures, thus minimising the chances of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term.

Education Welfare Service (TULSA)

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is informed if:

- a child is expelled
- a child is suspended
- a child has missed more than 20 days
- a child is not attending school regularly or punctually

TUSLA is furnished with the total attendances in the school year through the Annual Report Form which is completed on-line. If a school contacts the Education Welfare Officer with concerns in relation to a student's school attendance, he/she will talk to the school principal or designated school staff member and find out what efforts have been made to date to help the child. The Education Welfare Officer may then decide to contact the family and meet with them. Home visits are an essential part of an Education Welfare Officer's work and the first meeting with an him/her very often opens up a pathway of solutions for a child and family in need. Once underlying problems or issues are identified, the Education Welfare Officer can then seek to address the family's unique set of circumstances in conjunction with school staff and other local support services as necessary. The main work of an Educational Welfare Officer is around the welfare of the child and the family and on ensuring that concerns and problems are dealt with before school attendance becomes a crisis issue.

However, if a parent fails in his or her duty to ensure that their child attends school, then the Education Welfare Officer has the power to take legal action against the parent under the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. Taking legal action against a parent or guardian is a very serious matter. It is an action of last resort when all other offers of support have failed and the parent has refused to co-operate with the Education Welfare Officer. Imposing a sanction on parents or guardians for non-attendance is the responsibility of the local District Court in each case, having heard all the evidence, including that of the Education Welfare Officer and the parent/guardian. The law provides that, upon conviction, either a fine or up to one month's imprisonment, or both, be imposed.

Transfer To Another School

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. When a Principal receives notification that a child has been registered elsewhere he/she must notify the Principal of the pupil's new school of any problems in relation to attendance at the pupil's former school and of such matters relating to the child's educational progress as he or she considers appropriate. This applies to pupils who transfer between primary schools and to pupils who transfer from primary to second-level education.

Communication With Other Schools

- When a child transfers from Lurga National School to another school, the schools records relating to attendance, academic progress etc will be forwarded on receipt of written notification of the transfer.
- The school maintains communication with local pre-schools and second-level schools in order to make the transition for pupils as easy as possible.
- When a child transfers into Lurga National School, confirmation of transfer will be communicated to the child's previous school, and appropriate records sought.
- Pupils transferring from Lurga National School to a post primary school will have their records forwarded on receipt of confirmation of enrolment.

Implementation/Ratification & Review

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this Policy and review it regularly in the light of experience

Signed:



Date:

01/04/19

Chairperson
Board Of Management