

**Sliabh a' Mhadra N.S.**

**Attendance Policy**

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## **Introductory statement and rationale**

Sliabh a'Mhadra N.S. National School is a school which caters for pupils from junior infants to sixth class. We endeavour to cater for the holistic needs of each pupil. It is in this context that our attendance policy is implemented within our school. This policy endeavours to set out the principles upon which the school attendance strategy will be implemented, sustained and evaluated by the whole school community.

The characteristic spirit of the school is encapsulated in our mission statement. We, as a staff, are cognisant of supporting pupils to achieve their best ability. We understand that both pupils and staff need to support each other to achieve the aims of this policy. It is also important for pupils to attend school so that they can receive the very best from their education.

## **School Vision**

Sliabh a'Mhadra National School endeavours to nourish the educational, social, emotional, spiritual and physical development of each student to his/her potential with the future expectation of active participation in his/her local community. Our vision for school attendance is encompassed in our vision for the school. By engaging pupils positively with their education we hope that all pupils will become active citizens in their community and continue to demonstrate exemplary attendance in further education or employment in the future.

## **Aims of the policy**

- To encourage pupils to strive for full attendance and to comply with the Education Welfare Act 2000.
- To facilitate working collaboratively with TUSLA in regard to school attendance.
- To encourage an effective communication system between parents and staff with regard to attendance.
- To ensure that procedures with regard to non-attendance at school are implemented.
- To ensure procedures for brief absences of staff are outlined.

## **Procedures regarding school attendance and non-attendance**

- Parents are obliged to ensure that their children attend school each day that the school is open for instruction at the times specified by the Board of Management.
- The school officially opens at 9:00a.m. every morning and finishes at 2:40 p.m.
- Attendance and non-attendance are recorded daily on Aladdin by each class teacher.
- The principal sends term reports to TUSLA of attendance in our school.
- Teachers will speak to parents regarding attendance at the parent/teacher meetings conducted each year as well as informing them through the end of year school reports.
- After 15 days of non-attendance a reminder letter is sent to the parents of the student in question, stating the implications of missing 20 school days in accordance with the Education Welfare Act 2000.
- After 20 days of non-attendance, a report is made to TUSLA.
- Parents are also required to explain non-attendance by phone call or entry into homework diary for pupils from 1<sup>st</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>.

## **Whole school strategies to promote attendance**

- Sliabh a' Mhadra N.S. strives to provide a welcoming and safe environment for all our pupils, which is supported through our Code of Behaviour.
- If late arrival is a persistent issue the class teacher will raise it with the parent/guardian.
- A school calendar is posted to all parents prior to the beginning of each school year.
- Children who have good attendance records are praised.
- Pupils who achieve full attendance in a school year are rewarded with Certificates at a special ceremony on the day we get our summer holidays.

## **Strategies in the event of non-attendance**

- Parents are required to explain non-attendance.
- If a child is absent for 15 days over the course of the year a letter is sent to the parents/guardians regarding the non-attendance.
- If the pupil is absent for twenty days a report in writing is made to TUSLA.
- Referrals may also be made to the relevant agencies/individuals such as TUSLA or the HSE. The school will endeavour to inform the parents before contacting the agencies, where appropriate (with reference to the *Child Protection Policy and National Guidelines on Child Protection*).
- Procedures in relation to brief absences of teachers have also been outlined in appendix 1.

## **Procedures with regard to Early Departure and Late Arrival**

- Parents/Guardians are required to "sign their child out" in the event of the child having to leave school early, similarly the child who arrives late (e.g. after an appointment) must be "signed in". A reason for early departure / late arrival must be written in this book.

## **Procedures in relation to removal from register**

- The principal will only remove a pupil's name from the school register where she has been informed that the pupil:
  - has been enrolled in another school
  - the pupil is in receipt of an out-of-school education.

## **Transfer to/from another school**

- Where parents wish to transfer their child to another school, they should first inform the principal in the current school. Details of attendance, which is requested by the school to which the pupil is transferring, will be given to the principal of the proposed new school.
- If a pupil is transferring from another school, a letter of application should be made to Sliabh a' Mhadra N.S. as well as other relevant documentation.

## **Success Criteria**

- **Continued excellent attendance will demonstrate the success of this policy.**

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Staff, Parents, Board of Management and TUSLA all have a collaborative role to play in ensuring a high attendance rate at Sliabh a' Mhadra N.S.

## **Ratification and Communication**

This policy was ratified by the BOM on .....

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson of BOM

It is available, on request, to the whole school community.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed as required.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Procedures in relation to the brief absences of staff**

- Application for brief absences will be made to the Principal.
- In the event of an unexpected absence, the staff member must inform the principal as early as possible.
- When appropriate a doctor's certificate will be furnished.
- Where a teacher is absent, the Principal/Vice Principal/or designated person will ensure the teacher's class is supervised and other responsibilities (such as yard duty) are covered.
- Where a teacher is absent and there is no substitute teacher employed, one of the following procedures will apply.
  - (a) Students will be distributed amongst other classes.
  - (b) Other teachers will be reassigned to that class.