

**Attendance policy**

**St. Mary’s N.S. Partry**

**ATTENDANCE**

The Education Welfare Act (2000) promotes school attendance. Section 17 of that legislation states that it is a statutory obligation on parents to ensure that their child attends a recognised school once registered in the school. Furthermore, where a child is absent from the school, the parent is required under the Act to notify, in writing, the Principal or Class Teacher of the reason for the child’s absence. Parents are asked to use the Notes for Absences section in the School Homework Diary for this purpose. The Act states that the relevant authorities will be informed of pupils who have been absent for **twenty days or** **more for any reason** (this includes illness, holidays outside school holidays, etc.). Children deemedat risk will be registered with Tusla.

Parents are discouraged from taking holidays during school term. It is agreed that school work will not be sent home with children, to be done while they are on holidays. When a pupil has missed 15 schooldays, an automatically generated text is sent to parents. A second text is automatically sent when a pupil has missed 20 school days.

***Strategies for improving attendance:***

The following strategies will be employed to improve attendance:

* The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, will be flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
* St. Mary’s N.S.will promote development of good self-esteem and self worth in its pupils (see Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy).
* Support for pupils who have special educational needs in accordance with DES guidelines.
* Attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance and the class teacher will notify the DLP of any concerns regarding the attendance of any pupil.
* Where concerns arise, the class teacher monitoring attendance brings the concern to the attention of the principal and the DLP.
* The principal and class teacher assess each case individually at this point and a meeting with parents/guardians may be deemed necessary

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* The class teacher will encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
* The class teacher will ensure that contact is made with parents/guardians in instances where absences are not explained. A standard note is used for this purpose.
* The school will keep a daily record of attendance in Aladdin.
* The Principal will promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff..
* The Principal will inform the NEWB:
  + - When a pupil has been missing for twenty or more days during the course of the school year.
    - When a pupil has been suspended from school more than once under the Code of Behaviour.
* Evidence of non-attendance is a factor in including pupils in the various activities; football, art, drama, fitness…etc.
* Participation in activities such as, Gaelic football, soccer and cycling will be encouraged for all pupils, specifically those at risk of non-attendance.

**Role of Parents:**

The role of parents is to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child(ren).

The parent of a child shall cause the child concerned to attend a recognised school on each school day. Where a child is absent from the school where he/she is registered, the parent of the child is required under the Act to notify the school of the reason for absence. Letters from parents concerning illness and doctor’s certificates will be kept on file in the school, by the class teacher, for one year. If a child has missed more than 20 days, notes relating to that child will be given to the Principal

Closer home/school relations will be fostered through:

* Attendance at meetings (Parent/Teacher, etc).
* Attendance at Sports Day.
* Attendance at school events.
* Involvement in School activities, etc.
* Regular texts/e-mails to families.
* Open-door policy in Principal’s office for daily communication.

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**Role of Teacher:**

* To encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
* To identify pupils at risk and develop strong links between school and family to promote good attendance

***Fostering contacts***

Contact with the following bodies will be fostered and developed in order to promote the good attendance of students in St. Mary’s N.S.

* NEWB.
* Other schools in the vicinity.
* NEPS.
* Local GAA club, soccer club, etc.
* Community Gardaí.
* After school activities providers

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**Role of Principal:**

* To inform the relevant authorities (i) when a student is absent in excess of 20 school days in a school year, (ii) where a student is suspended, (iii) where a student’s name is removed from the register, or (iv) where, in the opinion of the Principal, the student is not attending school regularly.
* To follow the Tusla guidelines for promotion of attendance.
* To inform the Board of Management of school attendance rates.

In so far as is practicable, programmes will be developed with the bodies mentioned above which will encourage the full participation with students in the life of the school. Examples of these are:

* Attendance incentive scheme.
* Gaelic Games and soccer.