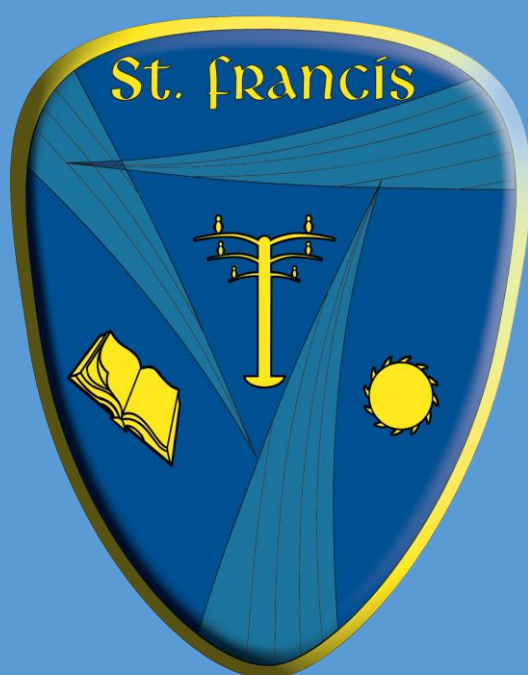


*St Francis' P.S./  
Bunscoil Naomh Proinsias*



# PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS POLICY

## Pupil Attendance and Lateness Policy

### Aims:

St Francis' Primary School recognises that punctual and regular attendance is an essential prerequisite to effective learning and is, therefore, committed to maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality.

We also believe that encouraging good attendance will help children to develop self-confidence, independence, self-discipline and a sense of responsibility for themselves. Good attendance habits established at a young age will prepare our pupils for the future opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. In contrast, poor attendance and poor timekeeping will foster opposite attributes and skills to those listed above.

### Parental Responsibility

The duty of a parent, in relation to the education of their children, is found in the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 which states:

*“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her efficient full time education suitable to his /her age ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”*

Parents should:

- Ensure that their child/children attend school regularly.
- Ensure that their child arrives in school punctually. Our school opens its doors at 9am and children can proceed to their classrooms from that time. School starts at 9.15am.
- Provide the school, on the first day of return after an absence, with a note, giving reasons for the absence.
- Contact the school in confidence if there is a problem which is affecting attendance or punctuality.
- Communicate with the school if their child is a reluctant attender. The school will work with and support the parents. Parents should not cover up a child's reluctance or give in to pressure from their child to excuse them from attending school as this will cause long term problems.
- Not book holidays during term time.
- Arrange medical/ dental appointments outside school hours.

## **Pupil Responsibility**

At St Francis' Primary School we encourage children to take increasing responsibility for their own attendance.

Children should:

Attend school regularly.

Arrive on time punctually.

Tell a member of staff about any problem that may prevent them from attending regularly or being punctual regularly.

## **Governors Responsibility**

The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for pupil attendance, but on a day to day basis, this responsibility is delegated to the Principal. The Board of Governors has a responsibility to monitor school attendance and the effectiveness of the school's Attendance and Lateness Policy. The Principal reports regularly to the Governors on these matters.

## **School Responsibility**

The school should:

- Make daily, accurate recordings of attendance.
- Analyse attendance trends monthly.
- Correspond with parents if there is a concern when attendance is at 90%
- Meet with the Educational Welfare Officer termly to discuss any child who has an attendance percentage of 85% or below.
- Complete a Referral to the E.W.O. if deemed necessary.
- Provide an annual attendance figure on each School Report in June.

Good attendance will be recognised.

## **Registration**

Attendance information will be recorded daily by teachers using the C2k Attendance Module. A child who is late before registration closes at 9.15am will receive an L mark which, while officially recording the child as late, does not record them as being absent for the morning session.

Authorised Absence-where the school has been consulted and can approve the absence.

Examples include:

- Illness
- Hospital confinement
- Bereavement
- Attendance at a very close relative's wedding

Unauthorised Absence- where the school cannot approve the absence.

Examples include:

- Family holiday
- When a pupil is unnecessarily kept off school
- When no written reason is provided upon return to school

### **Lateness**

If a child regularly enters a class after 9.15am there is a threefold effect:

- The child becomes the centre of attention and is often embarrassed. This can create a self-fulfilling prophecy and cause the child to resent coming to school and in turn lead to the child becoming a reluctant attender.
- If a child enters the classroom after 9.15am the teacher will often have started a lesson and this has to be interrupted so that the late child can be registered, have dinner ordered and have money collected. This can cause great interruption to the teacher and add extra workload.
- The teaching and learning of all the children in the class can be adversely affected by a regular latecomer.

### **Monitoring Attendance**

- At the end of each month, all children with an 85% or below attendance will be reviewed by the SLT and long term attendance patterns analysed. (Poor attendance on a particular day of the week will be scrutinised)
- Morning and afternoon absences are recorded on the computer.
- The reason for each absence must also be recorded; on the first day that your child returns to school please send a short written explanation to the class teacher.
- If you know that your child will be absent for a prolonged period please let us know the reason, within 3 days if possible.
- After consultation with the child's teacher, a letter will be sent to the parents advising them of our concern, if it is necessary.
- If attendance remains a concern, a second letter will be sent, in which the particular concerns will be highlighted again and parents will be asked to contact the school to arrange a meeting at which the issue can be discussed.
- If attendance does not improve and concerns remain, then a Referral Form may be sent to the Education and Welfare Officer.

### **Monitoring Lateness**

As with attendance, lateness is also analysed by the Principal at the end of each month. After consultation with the child's teacher, a letter will be sent to the parents, after repeated lateness. A similar process to monitoring attendance will be followed if there are further concerns regarding punctuality.

### **Holidays during Term Time**

St Francis' Primary School strongly discourages holidays arranged during term time.

Schoolwork/homework will not be provided for unauthorised holidays.

**Department of Education Northern Ireland** The school policy on Attendance and Lateness follows the Governmental Strategy which can be accessed through the following link:-

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/miss-school-miss-out-improving-pupil-attendance-strategy>

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