





Westport Educate Together National School

Attendance Policy

“The parent of a child shall cause the child concerned to attend a recognised school on each school day”

Created Date	February 2020
Created By	Niall Quinn (Principal)
Signed by Principal	
Version	V1_03March2020
Approved by Chairperson name	Linda McNulty
Approved by Chairperson signature	
Approved by Board Date	03 March 2020
Date of next review	2024

1. Rationale:

The National Educational Welfare Board, (EWB, now part of Túsła), requires all children to attend primary school from the age of six. However, Westport Educate Together National School encourage all of its enrolled children to attend school every day whatever their age. The EWB also requires the school to report children who are frequently absent and this includes those that are under six years of age. Section 17 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), states that ‘the parent of a child shall cause the child concerned to attend a recognised school on each school day’. Section 21 of the Act obliges schools to inform the Education Welfare Officer if a child is absent on more than 20 days in any school year, or if a child does not attend school on a regular basis.

2. Aims:

The aims of our attendance policy are:

- to ensure that pupils are registered accurately and efficiently
- to record and report attendance
- to identify pupils at risk of poor school attendance
- to raise awareness of the importance of school attendance
- to ensure compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation
- to ensure that the school has strategies in place to promote attendance
- to develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems
- to identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance
- to develop strategies in the event of non-attendance

3. Túsła and absenteeism:

Túsła is the board responsible for ensuring that all children in our school are being looked after. They work with our school to ensure that children are not neglected or abused. Absenteeism is one of the most common issues that the organisation deals with. Mayo Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) is available at 094 925 0199. Schools are responsible for reporting absenteeism to Túsła. When a child misses 20 school days, Túsła may become involved in investigating the cause.

Education Welfare Services – Túsła

The Education Welfare Office is informed if:

- A child is expelled
- A child is suspended
- A child has missed more than 20 days

The Education Welfare Services section of Túsła is furnished with the total attendances in the school year through the Annual Report Form which is completed on-line.

6. Lateness and the Roll Book:

School starts at 8.30am in Westport Educate Together NS. Lateness is damaging for the child. A child who arrives only 10 minutes late for school misses over 30 hours of tuition per annum. The first ten minutes of our school day can be the most important time as it helps the child to settle in to his/her routine.

Class teachers will monitor punctuality on a daily basis. Classes begin at 08.30am sharp. If a child arrives at school after this time, the class teacher will record the amount of minutes the child has missed. This information will be communicated to parents if and when the need arises. Any child who arrives later than 10.00am (when the roll is called) will be marked absent even if he/she arrives to school. There are exceptions to this rule outlined in the next two sub-points.

6.1 What to do if you know your child will be excessively late

If the child is going to be late for school, a phone call to the school before 10:00am will be accepted and the child will not be marked absent in the roll book. Failure to produce the above will warrant the child being marked absent for the day.

6.2 Planned Lateness

If a child has a morning appointment, e.g. doctor, dentist, etc., it is acceptable to write a note or simply tell the teacher of the appointment. In some cases, a certificate may be asked for.

7. Lateness After School:

School ends at 1.10pm for infants and 2.10pm for other classes in Westport Educate Together NS. Being late to collect your child can cause undue stress for the child as well as inconvenience for the teacher. While teachers will in general act "in loco parentis", in unforeseen circumstances, continuing or excessive lateness may result in further action from the school. This may be in the form of contact with the gardaí or social work team.

Although school ends at 1.10pm/2.20pm, teachers are responsible for the supervision of children until they are collected by an adult. Should a teacher be unable to supervise a child for any reason, it is their responsibility to ask a colleague to supervise that child and ensure that the child is aware of this situation.

8. Communication with other schools:

The school maintains communication with local primary and second-level schools in order to make the transition for pupils as easy as possible.

- When a child transfers from our school to another school, the schools records on attendance, academic progress etc. will be forwarded on receipt of written notification of the transfer. Under Section 20 on the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), the Principal of the 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

Appendix 1



Date

Dear _____,

It has come to my attention that _____ has missed _____ days. We are legally obliged to report absences of 20 days or over to Túsla. Please contact the school so that we can discuss strategies and supports to improve attendance.

Please sign this letter and return to school.

Niall Quinn
Principal

Signed _____