



St. Senan's N.S.

Strategy for Student Attendance

Document Status and Issue Control:

Version: 1.1

Date reviewed: January 2026

Contents :

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Rationale
- 3) The aims of our attendance policy
- 4) General Information Regarding Attendance
- 5) Punctuality
- 6) Family Holidays
- 7) Procedures for Parents/Guardians re. Explanation of Absences
- 8) Strategies for promoting good school attendance.
- 9) Record Keeping/Communication
- 10) Success Criteria
- 13) Ratification and Review

1. Introduction

St. Senan's National School is committed to providing a supportive learning environment that will promote children's learning and encourage regular school attendance. Teachers will provide a positive well-structured learning environment so that the children feel welcome and comfortable at school. We believe good attendance is vital for children to reach their full potential. As far as possible, we aim to have full attendance from all our pupils. Irregular attendance is discouraged, and the school will take steps to support children whose attendance is unsatisfactory.

2. Rationale

The Board of Management wishes to comply with legislation, such as: The Education Act, 1998 and The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. The Board of Management wishes to promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils' learning. The Board wishes to clarify the role of TUSLA in promoting school attendance. In St. Senans, we will endeavour to enable every pupil to actively participate in all school activities. Regular attendance helps to create a stable learning environment for all our pupils, and the school hopes to promote cooperation among pupils, parents/guardians and school personnel in maintain a high level of regular attendance through the school year.

3. The aims of the attendance policy:

- Provide a warm, welcoming, and supportive learning environment for our pupils, one in which they are valued and respected and in which provision is made for the learning needs that pupils may have.
- Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually, encouraging full attendance where possible.
- Share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community.
- Raise awareness of the importance of school attendance among children and parents/guardians.
- Highlight the vital role that parents/guardians play in ensuring regular school attendance.
- Identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- Ensure the school has procedures in place to promote attendance / participation.
- Identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, reasons for obstacles to school attendance.
- Ensure that regular contact is maintained with parents/guardians of pupils whose attendance is unsatisfactory.

4. General Information Regarding Attendance

The school attendance/absence of individual pupils is recorded on a daily basis on the school data management system, 'Aladdin'. The annual attendance/absence of each individual pupil is recorded in electronic format also.

Non-attenders must provide a written note from their parent/guardian with reason for absence outlined. The school keeps a record of all absences using the following codes as set down by the NEWB

- A Illness
- B Urgent Family Reasons (e.g. bereavement)
- C Expelled
- D Suspended
- E Other (e.g. religious observance, emigration)
- F Unexplained
- G Transfer to another school (written confirmation received from other school)
- H Holiday

Attendance is monitored by the Principal and if a child is absent for long periods of time without explanation, parents are contacted by the Principal/Deputy Principal.

The school calendar is published before the end of each school year for the following school year. It is hoped that parents will use this to plan holidays. Parents are discouraged from taking children out of school for holidays during school time.

Teachers will not be required to supply schoolwork and/or homework to pupils who are absent on holidays during school time.

Parents will receive an automatic reminder text from the school when 15 days' absence have been recorded.

Absences of 20 days or more are submitted automatically to TUSLA at the end of term 1 and 3.

These procedures apply to all pupils regardless of reason for absence.

The school will support parents in helping their child improve their attendance where necessary.

However, if the school feels there are ongoing concerns regarding a pupil's absence, despite the school's best efforts to support the family, the school may deem it necessary to make a referral to TUSLA. Parents will be made aware of this referral during the support process.

5. Punctuality

We ask parents to value every minute that their child spends in school. Supervision begins at 8.50 a.m. Pupils are required to be assembled in their class line not later than 9.00 a.m. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. Lateness causes a disturbance to the class and is also time missed from the teaching and learning environment.

6. Family Holidays

As previously stated, parents are advised to avoid planning family holidays during school time. The school calendar is published before the end of each school year for the following school year. It is hoped that parents will use this to plan holidays. Parents are discouraged from taking children out of school for holidays during school time. Teachers will not be required to supply schoolwork and/or homework to pupils who are absent on holidays during school time.

7. Procedures for Parents / Guardians

All absences from school must be explained in writing to the Class Teacher when the child returns to school. This should be communicated using the Aladdin Connect App. A phone call to the school office explaining the child's absence, while welcome, is not sufficient. All absences must be explained in writing. The school will contact parents when a written explanation for the child's absence is not received by the school.

All absence notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. It is mandatory for the school to report all absences in excess of 20 days to the Child and Family Agency, TUSLA, in quarterly returns. Where the school is concerned about excessive unexplained/not credible absences, the NEWB will be informed of its concern outside of quarterly return dates.

8. Strategies for promoting good school 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. Senan's NS 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 principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any pupil.
- Where concerns arise, the class teacher or secretary monitoring attendance brings the concern to the attention of the principal.
- The principal will assess each case individually at this point and direct contact with the parents may be deemed necessary.
- 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 class teacher will keep a daily record of attendance in Aladdin, completed by small break.
- Attendance figures will be monitored daily by the secretary on Aladdin.
- School attendance is monitored throughout the year. Where absences have exceeded 15 days parents are informed via Aladdin.
- The school will avail of the assistance of the Education Welfare Officer.
- 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.

9. Record Keeping and Communication

Subject to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act, attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer to another primary school will be passed on written request to the Principal of the new school, by post, as soon as written notification is received of the transfer.

Attendance, behaviour, and academic records of children who transfer from another primary school to our school will be sought directly from their previous school.

Attendance, behaviour, and academic records of pupils transferring to a second level school will be sent to the school, when requested, once enrolment has been confirmed.

10. Success Criteria

- An improvement in annual attendance rates.
- The promotion of awareness of the importance of School attendance among all school partners.
- Progress on a reduction in the number of unexplained absences.

11. Ratification and Review

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management in January 2026.

It will be appropriately communicated to members of the school community and made available on our school's website.

This Attendance Policy will be reviewed after there has been a material change in any matter to which this document refers.

Signed.....Date.....

Chairperson