

Scoil Áine Naofa  
Loreto,  
An Uaimh,  
Co. na Mhí.



St Anne's  
Loreto Primary School  
Navan,  
Co. Meath.

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Roll No. 00883P

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

**The aims of the attendance policy in St. Anne's Loreto Primary School are to:**

1. Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually.
2. Share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community.
3. Inform the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined in the Education Welfare Act 2000 (The Act).
4. Identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.
5. Ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance / participation.
6. Develop links between the school and the families of children who have developed school attendance problems.
7. Identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.

**The school will ensure that:**

- The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school.
- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Pupils attendance is recorded daily.
- Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated.
- Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored.
- School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to:
  - The Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
  - The Board of Management.
  - Tusla Child and Family Agency

### **Punctuality**

Pupils are welcomed onto the school campus from 9.00am when supervision by staff is provided. School lessons commence at 9.15am where all classes are usually collected promptly by their teachers from the Blue or Black Yard areas. In the event of a wet morning, classes will be facilitated in the school hall and/or from under 'the shelter' in the Blue Yard. All pupils and teachers are expected to be in on time.

Five minutes discretionary time is permitted to facilitate the **occasional** delayed arrival of families. The school gates/doors are closed by school staff at 9.20a.m.

Following this any 'minutes late' by a child will be recorded by each class teacher on the Aladdin Attendance database, will be monitored throughout each term and referenced on the 'end of year' report. The school will contact parents / guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. Punctuality is critical to ensure continuity of learning. The school is obliged under the Act, to report children who are persistently late, to the Education Welfare Officer.

Arrival into school is via the office reception from 9.20am onwards throughout the day.

### **Guidance for Parents**

Section [(21) (9)] of the Act states that: "a pupil's absence can only be authorised by the Principal when the child is involved in activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved". The school Principal cannot authorise a child's absence for holidays during school time. However, it is essential that parents inform the school in writing of such arrangements.

Reasons for pupils' absences must be communicated on the Aladdin App or by phone/email, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained on the school records. Parents are asked to complete an explanation for their child's absence on the Aladdin Connect Absence tab on their App. The options 'other' or 'unexplained' will be queried as an appropriately detailed explanation, given at the time of the absence, is required for our records and for the EWO's records.

**All absence notes are kept on file to show to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) during her regular visits. All absences are recorded on the Aladdin schools system. These absences are compiled and included on the child's annual school report.**

The school may contact parents when a written explanation for the child's absence is not received by the school.

For those days when your child is unavoidably sick we wish them well in their recovery. As a general rule we will not send home schoolwork for them to study during this period of illness to allow the child time to recuperate and not feel pressured to study.

### **Parents / Guardians can promote good school attendance by:**

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- Notifying the school via phone/email/Aladdin App if their child/ren cannot attend for any reason.
- Working with the school and education welfare services to resolve any attendance problems.
- Making sure their children understand that parents support and approve of school attendance.
- Discussing planned absences with the school.
- Refraining, if at all possible, from taking holidays during school time. Under current health guidelines pupils will need to isolate upon their return from holidays in line with HSE guidelines.
- Showing an interest in their children's school day and their children's homework.
- Encouraging them to participate in school activities.
- Praising and encouraging their children's achievements.
- Instilling in their children, positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth.
- Ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children's medical/welfare appointments are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- Contacting the school without delay, if they have concerns about absence due to CoVid 19 testing or a positive case in the immediate family or other school related matters.
- Notifying, the school, preferably the class teacher directly, if their child/children's usual collection routine is amended in any way from what has been established practice heretofore and the child/ren is/are to be collected by someone other than the usual person especially by someone unfamiliar to the teacher. Please note that due to 'duty of care' pupils must be collected by persons over 18 year

### **Pupils**

- Pupils have a clear responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence.
- Pupils are responsible for promptly passing on absence notes from parent to their class teacher (though responsibility primarily lies with the parent/guardian to record this detail on the Aladdin App).
- Pupils are responsible for passing school correspondence to their parents, on the specified day.

### **Strategies for promoting good school attendance.**

The Board of Management is committed to providing a positive school atmosphere which is conducive to promoting good school attendance. In this regard:

- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- The school will promote development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children.
- Supports for pupils, who have special educational needs, are in place in accordance with Department of Education & Skills guidelines.
- Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils.
- A special reward system to promote good attendance at school in the form of Full Attendance Certificates, Exceptional Attendance Certificates is in place.\*
- The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be utilised. The EWO is invited to attend Junior Infant Induction meeting. The EWO is also invited to meet mid-year with any parents where there is a concern regarding attendance.
- The attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance and the class teacher will notify the Principal / Deputy Principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any child.
- Pupils with poor attendance will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance through constructive interaction and dialogue with their parents/guardians.
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to balance the need to absent their child/ren from school where illness has now passed and appreciate the need for their child to return promptly to class and their learning when recovered.
- The EWO/School staff monitor all absences and will link with Parents/Guardians for clarification.

### **School Principal / Deputy Principal**

The school Principal / Deputy Principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations.
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer:
  - If a pupil is not attending school regularly for unexplained reasons.
  - When a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during the course of a school year, Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing of this fact with a view to monitoring this carefully for the remainder of the year. This is in an effort to support the child's best interests regarding their learning and to minimise gaps in their tuition time from class and access, where involved, to the Special Education Teaching team.

- If a pupil has been suspended for a period of six or more days.
- When a pupil's name is removed from the school register.
- Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil.
- Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.
- A 'School Absence Report' recording those pupils with 20+ days absence is returned to Tusla, the Child & Family Agency, twice yearly. A 'School Attendance Report' is filed with Tusla every June.

\* Due to CoVid 19 the Principal/Deputy Principal will take into account the impacts of Covid-19 regarding the absence explanations provided by parents/guardians in relation to pupil absences for the academic years 2021/'22 and 2022/'23.

### **Class Teacher**

The class teacher will:

- Maintain the school on-line system in accordance with procedure.
- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences on Aladdin.
- Where there is a concern, teachers will contact parents/guardians in instances where absences are not explained on Aladdin.
- Engage with a reward system for pupils with exceptional attendance.
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Inform the Principal / Deputy Principal of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.

### **Co-Vid 19 St. Anne's Loreto Primary School - Re-Opening Our School Guidelines.**

#### **Children who should not attend school:**

In accordance with DES and HSE guidelines children in the following categories should not attend school: -

- Children who have been diagnosed with CoVid 19.
- Children who have been in close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with CoVid 19.
- Children who have a suspected case of CoVid 19 and the outcome of the test is pending.
- Children who have been in contact with a person who has a suspected case of CoVid 19 and the outcome of the test is pending.
- Children with underlying health conditions who have been directed by a medical professional not to attend school.
- Children who have returned home after travelling abroad and must self-isolate for a period of 14 days or as directed by the HSE.
- Children who are generally unwell or presenting with a high temperature.
- If parents/guardians are in any doubt about whether their child should attend school, please keep the child at home and seek medical advice.

#### **Children in High Risk Groups:**

Parents/Guardians should seek advice from their GP/Specialist if they think their child is in a high/risk group. They must make an informed decision if it is safe for their child to return to school. They should inform the Principal and the class teacher of the advice given.

Our school attendance strategy is set aside for the time being so as to respect parent/guardian discretion regarding their child's health and their ability to attend school.

### **Supporting the Learning of Children Who Cannot Attend School**

If a child is not able to attend school for an extended period of time the class teacher and / or the Special Education Teacher will provide suggested activities to the parents/guardians to support the child's learning at home. More details are provided in our Homework Policy.

### **Record / 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 to the Principal of the school, by post, as soon as written notification of transfer is received by St. Anne's.

Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer from another primary school to St. Anne's Loreto P.S. 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, if requested, once enrolment has been confirmed.

**Ratified by Board of Management on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022.**

Signed: *Máire O'Donoghue*  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: *Clodhna O'Brien*  
Principal

**Next Review Date: January 2024.**