



**ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL,  
TERENURE  
DUBLIN 6**

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE**

### **The Education Welfare Act 2000**

The Education Welfare Act was enacted by the Government in 2000 and came into law in July 2002. The Act replaces the School Attendance Act of 1926 and primarily concerned with providing for the right of each child to be educated. The right of parents to choose that education and the state's role in providing for an education for each child. In this context the Act provides for structures to be put in place which will encourage and promote school attendance and which will assist parents in providing for the education of their children outside the school system.

### **School Attendance**

Children are expected to attend school for the duration of the academic year and it is important for parents and teachers to convey a positive regard for regular attendance to children. Under the Act Section [(21) (9)] 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. That means that all other absences are unauthorised and cannot be authorised by the school Principal.

If a child is absent, parents are advised to contact the school and give a reason for the absence. When your child returns to school he should be given a written note (not in the journal) which contains:

- (i) his name
- (ii) the dates of absence
- (iii) the reason for the absence

The absence explanatory note will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. The school is now obliged under Section 20 of the Act to maintain such a record for all pupils.

If written contact explaining the child's absence, fails to be made by parents or guardian then the school will contact you by letter.

Children with 100% attendance will be rewarded by the school with a certificate at the end of June.

### **Family Holidays during term time**

The School Principal cannot authorise a child's absence for going on holidays during school time. However, it is necessary to inform the school of such arrangements as the school is obliged to remove a child's name for the roll after 15 days continuous absence.

### **The importance of good attendance**

A pupil's absence during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning. The impact of such disruption will be different for each individual pupil. There is however, a consequent risk of under-achievement which we must try to avoid.

### **Punctuality and lateness**

School is open from 8.50 a.m. and all pupils are expected to be on time. The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. Pupils who are consistently late not only disrupt their own education but give a poor example to other pupils.

### **What parents can do to promote attendance**

- Inform the school as soon as possible why your child is away.
- Provide the school with a written explanation for the absence from school.
- Try to make appointments for children outside of school hours.
- Contact the school if you have concerns regarding your child's absence.

### **The Principal's obligation to report school absences.**

Section [(21) (4)] of the Act obliges the School Principal to inform in writing an Educational Welfare Officer when a pupil:

- (i) Has missed 20 or more school days during the course of the school year.
- (ii) Has been suspended for six or more days during the school year.
- (iii) Is not attending school regularly.
- (iv) Has been removed from the school's register.

### **A strategy for promoting good school attendance**

The school community recognises the importance of promoting good school attendance and is committed to fostering and developing good school attendance attitudes amongst the pupils. The school attendance policy will be implemented as a means towards influencing such attitudes throughout the school community.