



Riverview Educate Together National School

School Attendance and Punctuality Policy

This policy was reviewed and ratified by:

Riverview Educate Together Board of Management February 2019

Signed: _____
Nichola Murphy: Chairperson Board of Management

Date: _____

Signed: _____
Margaret Burke: Principal

Date: _____



Riverview Educate Together National School Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

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1.0 Introduction

The National Education Welfare Act 2000 recognises the role of parents in ensuring the regular attendance and punctuality of their child. The legislation also requires schools to establish and maintain a school register and school attendance records, to monitor the attendance of all students enrolled and to report on student attendance in certain circumstances, to Túsla, The Child and Family Agency.

This policy document was drawn up by the principal and teaching staff in consultation with the Board of Management of Riverview Educate Together National School.

2.0 Rationale

In Riverview ETNS we hope to nurture each child to develop their potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. Regular school attendance and punctuality help to give children the best possible start and are essential factors in a child's learning. The purpose of this policy is to promote and encourage regular school attendance and to foster an appreciation of the importance of arriving to school on time every day.

3.0 Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- raise awareness of the importance of regular and punctual school attendance
- ensure a high level of attendance and punctuality among pupils
- comply with requirements under the Education Welfare Act 2000

4.0 Recording and Reporting of Attendance and Non-Attendance

Attendance - Parental Responsibility

There is a statutory obligation on parent(s) to ensure their child attends a recognised school. Where a child is absent from school the parent(s) of the child is/are required to notify the school in writing of the reasons for the child's absence.

Attendance - School's Responsibility

There is a statutory obligation on schools to report on student attendance and absence.

4.1 Reporting of Student Absence

A school is obliged to report to Túsla every time:

- a student has reached 20 days absence cumulatively
- the principal is concerned about a student's attendance
- the principal is concerned about a student's punctuality
- the board of management decides to expel a student
- a student has been suspended for 6 days or more cumulatively
- a student's name is to be removed from the school register for whatever reason

4.2 Recording and Reporting Non-Attendance

If a child is absent the parent(s) of the absent child must:

- Notify the class teacher in writing of the cause of absence. Email is our preferred means of communication for this. Written notes must be signed and dated by parent(s).
- Such notes will be retained by the school office. Reasons for absence will also be recorded by the class teacher on the online Aladdin System.
- Schools must report certain non-attendance matters to Túsla (see above)
- If a teacher is not given a written explanation by the parent(s), he/she will send a request home in writing using the approved template. See Appendix A Attendance Reminder.
- Absence reports will be run monthly. Should a student reach 10 days absent, a letter will be sent to the parents/guardians advising them of same. See Appendix B Absence Letter
- The parent(s) of a pupil whose non-attendance is a concern will be contacted to meet with the principal.

4.3 Half-day Absences

If a child is absent for part of a school day or goes home early parent(s) must:

- Notify the school in writing of the cause of the absence.
- Sign the '*Sign Out*' log book in the secretary's office if leaving to go home early with the date and reason for going home early.

4.4 Punctuality

Punctuality is very important to ensure that your child gets the right start to the day.

Late Arrivals

- All children must be accompanied into the school yard by a parent or guardian and they should be waiting in their lines when the teachers come to pick them up at 8.30am.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to supervise their child in the school yard until the teacher takes the class into the school building.
- Teaching will begin as soon as children are settled in class. Pupils must be in their class line before this time. They will be collected from the line and led to their classrooms by the class teacher.
- The school door will be closed as soon as the last class line is taken into the school building. This complies with our *Health and Safety* and *Child Protection Policies*.
- Pupils who arrive after 8.35am sharp are deemed *late for school*.
- Parents who bring their child to school late will be asked to sign the *late arrivals book* recording the time of arrival and reason for being late.
- This will also be recorded as 'late' on the online Aladdin system. This role system is a direct link to the Department of Education and Skills.
- After signing the *late arrivals book* **parents will not accompany their child** to their classroom as this causes further disruption to the daily teaching and learning in the classrooms.
- Where a child is repeatedly late for school the class teacher will address this in writing to the parents. See Appendix C Late Arrivals
- The parents of a pupil whose repeated lateness is a concern will be contacted to meet with the principal.
- If the problem persists a report will be made to Túsla under our Child Protection Policy.
- In line with our school ethos we ask parents/guardians to respect our

endeavours to provide the best possible learning environment for all the children in the school. Your co-operation will help create an efficient, calm atmosphere in the morning.

Late Collections

- The school day finishes at 1.10pm for infants. Pupils must be collected from the school at this time.
- Pupils who are collected after this time are deemed late for collection.
- If pupils are repeatedly collected late from school the class teacher will address this to the parent(s) in writing. (See attached template)
- The parent(s) of a pupil whose repeated late collection is a concern will be contacted to meet with the principal.

5.0 Strategies to promote attendance and punctuality

- In Riverview ETNS we endeavour to create a safe, welcoming environment for our pupils and their parent(s).
- The teaching staff collaborates in the planning and implementation of the primary school curriculum, so as to provide a stimulating learning environment for all pupils.
- Parents of new entrants will be given a copy of the Attendance Policy at parent meetings.
- Parents and pupils are reminded regularly of the school's policies and procedures in relation to attendance and punctuality.
- There is a focus on the value of regular attendance and on the importance of developing good attendance habits from Junior Infants onwards.
- The calendar for the coming school year is published annually. It is hoped that this will enable parents to plan family events around school closures, thus minimising the chances of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term.
- At the end of the school year pupils with full attendance will be presented with a certificate of attendance.
- Parents will be referred to *Don't Let Your Child Miss Out* - school attendance leaflet for parents http://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/english_leaflet.pdf

6.0 Communication

The school has a good relationship with Túsła personnel and there is regular communication in relation to children who are at risk.

7.0 Success Criteria

The principal is responsible for evaluating the success of this policy and will coordinate and monitor the implementation of the strategies in place.

Indicators of the Success of the Strategies in this Policy

- Increase in attendance levels and punctuality.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.
- Board of management, parent and staff awareness of their legal obligation under the Education Welfare Act 2000.

8.0 Roles and Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the principal and staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the Board of Management.

Implementation Date

This policy will be implemented immediately following ratification by the Board of Management and communication to the Parent Teacher Association.

Appendix A
Attendance Reminder

Date: _____

Dear Parent(s),

Your child _____ was absent from school on _____.

Please note that our school Attendance Policy requires that you provide a written explanation for all absences.

Signed: _____

APPENDIX B

ABSENCE LETTER

7th January 2019

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian(s),

Under the terms of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the school is obliged to notify Túsla if a child is absent for 20 days or more, or where a child's absence gives rise to concern.

It is the school's policy to inform parents by letter of children's absences, when these absences are 10 days or more. While we understand that children may be absent due to illness or bereavement, we are just bringing the number of absent days to your attention.

This letter is to inform you that our records show that xxxx has been absent from school on xx days from xxx to xxx inclusive.

Xx days unexplained

Xx days sick

XX days holidays

One of the factors ensuring success in education is regular school attendance and habits of attendance are set in the early years of schooling. Hence it is a policy of Riverview Educate Together to encourage children to attend school every day. Parents can help to develop a positive attitude to school attendance by encouraging children to come to school every day and also by ensuring that all absences are explained in writing.

We thank you for your cooperation in this.

Yours sincerely,



Margaret Burke
Principal

APPENDIX C
PUNCTUALITY LETTER TO PARENTS / GUARDIANS

18th January 2019

Dear Parents / Carers,

Re: Punctuality

The National Educational Welfare Act 2000 recognises the role of parents in ensuring the regular attendance and punctuality of their child. The legislation also requires schools to establish and maintain a school register and school attendance records, to monitor the attendance of all students enrolled and to report on student attendance in certain circumstances, to Túsla, The Child and Family Agency.

With this in mind, we are writing to emphasise the importance of being in school on time. Incidences of XX late arrive are listed below.

Late

Date	Day	Minutes	Note
10/01/2019	Thursday	90	
09/01/2019	Wednesday	20	
08/01/2019	Tuesday	20	
07/01/2019	Monday	None	
18/12/2018	Tuesday	30	
17/12/2018	Monday	90	
14/12/2018	Friday	20	
13/12/2018	Thursday	15	
12/12/2018	Wednesday	15	
11/12/2018	Tuesday	15	
10/12/2018	Monday	10	
29/11/2018	Thursday	15	
28/11/2018	Wednesday	20	
27/11/2018	Tuesday	20	
26/11/2018	Monday	10	
23/11/2018	Friday	15	
22/11/2018	Thursday	15	
21/11/2018	Wednesday	10	
13/11/2018	Tuesday	20	
12/11/2018	Monday	40	
09/11/2018	Friday	10	
08/11/2018	Thursday	30	
		530	

School starts at 8.30am every day. Children need to be in their class line by this time so that they can start their lessons promptly. Children who arrive late are greatly disadvantaged because they miss starting the day with their peers and the beginning of lessons. This means that they are often unsettled and confused about tasks. Their teacher will not always be able to re explain work.

It is also very important that children establish good routines and habits in preparation for the rest of their lives. Punctuality is a life skill that they need to develop whilst they are young.

Riverview's Policy regarding Late arrivals is as follows:


- Class lessons begin at 8.30am sharp.
- The school door will be closed as soon as the last class line is taken into the school building. This complies with our Health and Safety and Child Protection Policies.
- Pupils who arrive after 8.30am are deemed to be late for school.
- Pupils must be accompanied to the school office prior to class admission.
- Parents who bring their child to school late will be asked to sign the late arrivals book and recording the time of arrival and reason for being late.
- After signing the late arrivals book, parents will not accompany their child to their classroom as this causes further disruption to the daily teaching and learning in the classrooms.
- They will be recorded as 'late' on the online Aladdin system. This role system is a direct link to the Department of Education and Skills.
- If the problem persists, a report will be made to Túsła under our Child Protection Policy.

We understand that there may be rare occasions when you are unavoidably late due to unforeseen circumstances. On these occasions please make sure that you contact the school office to inform us when you will arrive.

One of the factors ensuring success in education is regular school attendance and habits of attendance are set in the early years of schooling. Hence it is a policy of Riverview Educate Together to encourage children to attend school on time every day. Parents can help to develop a positive attitude to school attendance by ensuring children arrive on time.

We thank you for your cooperation in this.

Yours sincerely,



Margaret Burke
Principal