ST. OLIVER'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Attendance Policy 2025-2026

School attendance is central to a child's learning. Our school is proactive in supporting and welcoming our children to school each day.

The aims of the attendance policy in this school are to :

- encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually.
- share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community.
- inform the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined in the Act.
- identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance/participation.
- develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
- 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.
- Pupil 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 Board.
    - The Education Welfare Officer
    - The Board of Management

**Punctuality**
School is open from 8:40 a.m. and children are required to be in their classrooms not later than 8:50 a.m.. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time . The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. The Principal is obliged under the Education Welfare Act, to report children who are persistently late, to the Education Welfare Board.

**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 of such arrangements.

Reasons for pupils' absences must be communicated in writing, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. To facilitate this, such communications should not be in the homework diary, but on a separate page or sheet of paper at the back of our school diary. If a child is absent, when the child returns to school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher which contains the child's name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence. These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. The school will contact parents when a written explanation for the child's absence is not received by the school.

**What is the role of the parent?**

Ireland's Constitution states that parents are the child's primary educators. Support from home is vital for your child's success in school. To support your child, you can:

- Show interest in what your child is doing in school
- Consult with the school on your child's progress
- Attend parent / teacher meetings
- Talk with the class teacher about any concerns you may have, and
- Praise your child's efforts at every opportunity. Your encouragement means a lot and will motivate your child to continue trying.

**Educational Welfare Officers**

EWOs are based throughout the country to offer advice and guidance to parents who need support in ensuring that their child attends schools regularly.

If a school principal is concerned about the attendance of a student they can make a referral to **TESS**.

Once this referral is screened and assigned to the local EWO the EWO will contact the school principal to get a picture of what's going on and to ensure that efforts have been made by the school to help the child.

They will then contact the family and meet with them. Home visits are an essential part of an EWO's work and the first meeting with an EWO very often opens up a pathway of solutions for a child and family needing support.

Once problems have been identified the EWO will work with those involved to improve the situation for the child/young person.

**When will the school make a referral?**
Where a school principal has a concern in relation to a pupil's school attendance and where the school has made all local efforts to resolve the problem and the school still remains concerned about the student's attendance a referral can be made to EWS.The school will be asked to document interventions already made in line with their School Attendance Strategies.

**What should I do if my child is absent from school?**

You must tell the school that your child cannot attend and the reason why. Write a short note to the school to explain why your child was out and send it in with your child when they go back to school.

**What will the school do if my child misses a lot of school?**
The school must tell **tess** if your child has missed 20 days or more in the school year.The school may also make a referral to tess where they are concerned about the amount of days your child is missing at school.

**Where can I get information about other concerns that are impacting my child's attendance?**
Concerns that may arise, including bullying, anxiety and special educational needs, should be discussed directly with the School. Further information is available from:

Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2013 – www.education.ie

National Education Psychology Service – www.education.ie

National Council for Special Education – www.ncse.ie

**Who can refer to the Educational Welfare Service (tess)?**
A school principal or other professional who has a concern about the number of days a child/young person has missed from school can submit the referral.
Parents can contact their local EWO(Educational Welfare Officer) for help and advice and can make a referral through their EWO.

**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 we receive written notification of transfer.
Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer from another primary school will be sought directly from the 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.

## Text Service

A text informing parents of a pupil's absence and reminding them to provide a written explanation to the class teacher is issued through the Aladdin Schools database system operated by the school.

## Links with Ballyspillane Community Resource Centre Services.

Continued support for after school programmes on campus and at Ballyspillane Family Resource Centre.

This Policy will be reviewed in conjunction with updated Department of Education & Skills Guidelines on a bi-annual basis.