**Attendance and Punctuality November 2012**

The Education Welfare Act 2000 promotes school attendance and Section 17 of the legislation states that it is a statutory obligation on parents to ensure their child attends a recognised school once registered in the school. Furthermore, where a child is absent from the school, the parent is required under the Act to notify the Principal of the school of the reason for the child’s absence. The Act states that the relevant authorities will be informed of pupils who have been absent for **twenty school days or more** (this includes illness, holidays outside school holidays etc.) The school will also record names of the pupils who have missed ten **school days or more** during the school year. Children deemed at risk will be registered with the National Educational Welfare Board on-line and their attendance regularly recorded.

**Punctuality and Encouraging Good Attendance:**

From time to time parents will be reminded of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance. Children should join their line and walk in with their class. In this way they are supervised. If children are late the doors from the yard will be closed and children should enter via the main entrance where their name will be recorded. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that children enter the school safely as they will not be supervised by the school from the yard to the reception area. Parents should send a written note e.g. in journal if they are aware that their child will be late. Parents will be discouraged from taking holidays during school time. Work will not be sent home with children, to do while they are on holiday. Work may be sent home (if requested by parents) if children are unable to attend school due to injury or illness e.g. broken bone. Teachers are not expected to do anything to facilitate parents taking children on holidays during school time. Parents should keep note of their child’s absences in order for them to avoid the situation arising where their child misses 20 days without them realizing it.

**Role of Parents:**

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child attends a recognised school on each school day. Where a child is absent from the school where s/he is registered, the parent of the child is required under the Act to notify the school of the reason for the child’s absence. Letters from parents concerning illness and doctor’s certificates will be kept on file in the school for one year. Teachers are also required to keep a record of all absences and reasons for these absences in their roll book. If a child has missed more than 20 days notes stating the reasons for the absences relating to that child will be sent by the class teacher to the office at the end of the school year. Written permission from a parent is necessary for a pupil to leave the school for any reason during school hours. In that case the pupil must be collected from the class teacher by a responsible adult. This person must sign out the child.

**Illness**

A pupil who shows signs of illness should be kept at home. Requests from parents to allow their child to stay inside during break times cannot be accepted; however a child who is capable of attending classes but is incapacitated e.g. broken bone will remain in the medical area for the duration of the breaks where they will be checked by the teachers on duty. A child who is too sick to play with his peers or go outside during break times should not be in school. The school is unable to provide adequate supervision both inside and outside the school, during these times. Situations do arise however, when a child appears well in the morning and then gets sick during the day. On such occasions every effort will be made to make the child comfortable. Parents/guardians will be contacted. It is very important that the school have at least three contact numbers in respect of each pupil lest an emergency should arise. If the school is unable to make contact with parents/guardians a decision will be made as to whether the child needs medical assistance. If deemed necessary the child’s family doctor will be contacted. If not the child will be made as comfortable as possible until a parent/guardian is contacted.

**Role of the Principal:**

* To inform the Education Welfare Board when a student is absent in excess of twenty school days in a school year, where a student is suspended for a period in excess of 6 school days, or expelled and removed from the register or where, in the opinion of the Principal the student is not attending regularly.
* Informs the Board of Management from time to time in relation to school attendance.
* Communicates to a school, to which a student is transferring any problem relating to school attendance and other appropriate matters relating to the child’s educational progress.
* Communicates to parents concerns as regards school attendance of their children where necessary.

**Role of Teacher:**

* Call the roll daily and record attendances and absences.
* Teachers provide office with the numbers of absent pupils daily.
* Teachers provide office with absences in order to compile reports for the National Educational Welfare Board.
* Class teachers add totals for terms and full year and check that these are accurate.

**Role of Deputy Principal:**

* Register each student on the day the child first attends the school and removes the student’s name from the register when the child is transferring to another school or is registered with the National Education Welfare Board
* To keep a record of the pupil’s attendance at school and co-ordinates the collection of notes explaining reasons for any failure to attend.
* Assists teachers with the completion of roll books.
* Co-ordinates the checking of numbers relating to attendance at the end of each term and the end of the year.
* Assists with compiling absences in order that they may be reported to the NEWB.