

Kentstown National School

Attendance Policy

In Kentstown National School, we value the individuality of each of our pupils and respect their right to access all areas of learning. We work to enable them to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes which are necessary for their self-fulfilment and their development into active and responsible adults. We have high expectations for pupil learning, participation and attendance.

Aims:

In Kentstown National School we aim:

- To foster an appreciation of learning
- To raise awareness of the importance of regular, punctual school attendance
- To identify pupils at risk of developing school attendance problems
- To enhance the learning environment where pupils can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To promote positive attitudes to learning
- To ensure that the system of school rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent way that encourages pupils to attend school
- To comply with requirements under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000/Guidelines from NEWB

Strategies to Encourage Good Attendance:

- **Caring Environment**-the Board and staff of Kentstown National School strive to ensure that pupils are taught in a safe, secure, caring environment where their intellectual, physical, and spiritual development are catered for.
- **Welcoming Environment**-we are committed to creating a welcoming environment for pupils and parents. Teachers consistently encourage good attendance in their classrooms. The principal, or deputy principal, greet the pupils at the door each morning. Teachers create positive relationships of mutual trust and respect, maintaining good communication with parents and encouraging communication from parents.

- **Special Needs**-pupils needing support are identified as early as possible and the appropriate support systems put into place.
- **Homework Support**-homework is adapted to the child's ability. Any home circumstances which may affect the completion of homework are taken into account.
- **Rewards**-certificates are issued for perfect and improved attendance at the end of each term. At the end of the school year, trophies are awarded for full attendance and medals are awarded for missing just one day in the school year.

Communication:

Parental Support- It is the policy of Kentstown National School to encourage and maintain open communication between home and school and to encourage parents as primary educators of their children. The principal and teachers are available on an appointment basis to meet parents. Teachers communicate with parents using email, class dojo, and phone calls. All communication with parents is mindful of parents' literacy or language challenges.

- Attendance is addressed at meetings for new parents when their child is being enrolled in Kentstown NS.
- Parents are made aware of the requirements of the Education Welfare Act in the School Information Booklet
- Parents are reminded of the importance of good attendance and punctuality (newsletters, parent/teacher meetings etc.).

Procedures for Notification of Pupil Absences:

Parents should communicate with the class teacher in writing (note in homework journal, email/class dojo) about absence on the third day of absence or when the pupil returns to school if absent for less than three days.(The Education and Welfare Act 'obliges the parents of an absent child to notify the school of the cause of absence not later than the third day of absence'.) are dated and need to be kept. Parents should communicate with the principal if their child is absent for five days or more. The school may ask parents to submit a doctor's certificate in some cases.
Notes or record of non-attendance

School Records

A roll call is taken every day between 9.40am and 10am using the Aladdin for Schools system. Should a child be absent, they are required to have an explanatory note from their parents. This may be recorded in the school diary or communicated using email or class dojo.

1. Pupils who arrive late to school must be signed in by an adult. A reason for late arrival is part of this record. The principal contacts the parents of pupils who arrive late and encourages them to improve timekeeping.
2. Pupils who leave early must be signed out by the adult who collects them. A reason for leaving early is part of this record. The principal contacts parents of children who leave early on a regular basis with no good reason e.g. medical or dental appointments.
3. When a child has accumulated 15 days of absence the principal will write to parents reminding them of the school's obligation in law to notify the Educational Welfare Services of Tusla when a child misses 20 days. Parents will be invited to meet with the principal to discuss how staff and parents might work together to improve the child's attendance.
4. After 20 days of absence the principal will inform the Education Welfare Officer and notify the parents of this in writing. Parents will be invited to meet with the principal to discuss how staff and parents might work together to improve the child's attendance.
5. Where improvements have been recorded, a letter or email will be sent to parents to acknowledge the improvements.
6. Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer to another primary school will be passed to the principal of the school by email as soon as we receive written notification of transfer.
7. Attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils who transfer into Kentstown NS will be sought directly from the previous school
8. Information regarding attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils transferring to secondary school will be available to the school once enrolment has been confirmed.
9. The Education Welfare Services of Tusla will be informed in writing by the principal where:
 - The pupil is absent for an aggregate of 20 days or more
 - A pupil is suspended for 6 days or more
10. The principal will submit an attendance report at each Board of Management meeting as part of the Principal's Report.

11. The school will comply with the NEWB requirement to submit quarterly attendance levels along with the names and addresses of pupils who have missed 20 days or more.

Ratified by the Board of Management on _____

Chairperson of the Board: _____