



## **Absence and Punctuality Policy**

At Navan Educate Together we encourage good attendance and good punctuality in order for every child to gain as much as possible from the education provided here.

### **Rationale & Aims**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all children come to a school which is a happy, safe and learning environment. When a child is absent or late for school, they miss out on both educational and social needs. It is also difficult for children, who are frequently absent, to maintain relationships and to attain in their education. By law, any child who misses 20 days must be reported to Túsla. All absences are recorded and sent to Túsla three times per annum.

This policy also aims to outline the procedures when a member of staff is absent from the school. This is to ensure that children under their care do not suffer as a result of an absence.

### **Content of Policy**

1. Túsla and absenteeism
2. Keeping records
3. What to do if your child is absent
4. Lateness and the Roll Book
5. Lateness after school
6. Structures and plans to counter Lateness

#### **1. Túsla and absenteeism**

Túsla is the board responsible for ensuring that all children in our school are being looked after. They work with our school to ensure that children are not neglected or abused. Absenteeism is one of the most common issues that the NEWB deals with. The local Túsla officer in Meath is Sirena Campbell. Schools are responsible for reporting absenteeism through the web site, [www.schoolreturns.ie](http://www.schoolreturns.ie). When a child misses 20 schooldays, Túsla become involved in investigating the cause.

#### **2. Keeping records**

Every day in school, children's attendance is recorded on our online roll book before 9.30 am. This is an important document and, when transferred into the rollbook, it can be used in

legal cases. When a child is absent when the roll is called, he/she is marked absent. A child is marked absent if he/she arrives after the roll call.

When a child is absent, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to write a note to explain the absence. It is not sufficient to telephone or text the school. However, email or written notes are acceptable. These notes are stored in the child's file until June 30<sup>th</sup> of each school year. After this, all notes are archived.

By law, parents are required to submit a written explanation outlining the reason for their child's absence. Usually notes are received within three days of the child returning to school following the period of absence. Every term, the school reports all absences to Túsla. In this report, every child's absence is recorded online with a reason. There are 6 criteria for absence in the report. Any absence, without a written note, will fall under the category "unexplained".

If a child has 20 or more unexplained absences, Túsla will automatically investigate. It is our legal obligation to report any child missing 20 days or more to Túsla.

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### **3. What to do if your child is absent**

If your child is absent, write a short note explaining the reasons for the absence. Filing out the slip in the journal, written notes and emails are the only acceptable forms of communication.

Although planned holidays and other absences are not encouraged by the school, a note, online form or email must be sent in to explain the absence from school. Please note that the teacher will not provide schoolwork for children for any planned absences.

### **4. Lateness and the Roll Book**

School starts at 9.00 am in Navan Educate Together NS. Lateness is damaging for the child. A child who arrives only 10 minutes late for school misses over 30 hours of tuition per annum. The first ten minutes of our school day can be the most important time as it helps the child to settle in to his/her routine.

Class teachers will monitor punctuality on a daily basis. Classes begin at 09:00am sharp. If a child arrives at school after this time, the late book must be signed in the office. This information will be communicated to parents if and when the need arises. In accordance with section 3.3 (b) of the circular 28/2013 "a pupil will be marked either present or absent at the time of roll call and there will be no provision for adjusting the Roll Book (Leabhar Rolla) where a pupil subsequently does not complete the full day or arrives after the roll call." Any child who arrives later than 9:30am (when the roll is called) will be marked absent.

#### **4.1 Planned Lateness**

If a child has a morning appointment, e.g. doctor, dentist, etc., it is acceptable to write a note or simply tell the teacher of the appointment. In some cases, a certificate may be asked for.

## **5. Lateness After School**

School ends at 1:40pm for infants and 2:40pm for other classes in Navan Educate Together NS. Being late to collect your child can cause undue stress for the child as well as inconvenience for the teacher. While teachers will in general act “in loco parentis”, in unforeseen circumstances, continuing or excessive lateness may result in further action from the school. This may be in the form of contact with the Gardaí or social work team.

Although school ends at 2:40pm, teachers are responsible for the supervision of children until they are collected by an adult. Should a teacher be unable to supervise a child for any reason, it is their responsibility to ask a colleague to supervise that child and ensure that the child is aware of this situation. Parents who are late to collect their children are asked to sign a “late book”. This is monitored by the Attendance Officer. The Principal will speak to parents who are repeatedly late.

### **Implementation Date**

This updated policy will be implemented in the school from 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018. It will be reviewed by the Board of Management within 4 years.

**Ratified by Board of Management on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018.**

**Signed By: Anthony Mackey**  
**Chairperson BOM**