

**ST. PAUL'S SECONDARY SCHOOL**  
**Greenhills**  
**Dublin 12**



**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

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# Attendance Policy

## WHY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT

The law states that all children are required to attend school every day.

Good attendance:

- leads to better outcomes at school
- leads to a better understanding and better learning in class
- results in increased self-confidence, self-esteem and student wellbeing
- leads to better career opportunities when students leave
- Poor attendance can lead to early school leaving

## SCHOOL'S LEGAL OBLIGATION

The school Principal is required to:

- Maintain a register of all students attending the school [under section 20, Education (Welfare) Act 2000]
- Maintain a daily record of attendance for each student attending the school, including the reasons for non-attendance [under section 21, Education (Welfare) Act 2000]
- Notify Tusla's Educational Welfare Service (EWS) in writing if
  - (a) a student is suspended for a period of not less than six days
  - (b) a student is absent for a total of more than 20 days in any one school year
  - (c) the student's name is removed from the school register by the Principal
  - (d) in the opinion of the Principal, a student is not attending school regularly

## MANAGING ABSENCES

- Attendance is recorded at 8.45am each morning on the administration system VSware.
- Attendance at every class throughout the day is recorded by subject teachers on VSware.
- Form Teachers follow up on absences and notes from parent(s) explaining absences during Registration / Tutorial.
- A text is sent every morning notifying parents if their daughter is absent
- Students who arrive late for school must sign in as soon as they arrive and get a late stamp in their journal at reception. Any student who does not register is deemed to be absent all morning.
- Students will only be allowed to leave the school earlier than the official times if there is a written request from parent(s)/guardian(s). In the event of a student being ill, the school will contact parent(s)/guardian(s). When leaving school, all students under 16 years of age must be collected from the school, or may leave only with the prior agreement of a parent/guardian.
- Records of partial absence, i.e. students arriving late or leaving early are kept on a daily basis and reported to the relevant Year Head who will discuss any concerns with students and parents/ guardians.
- On return to school parent(s) are required to give a written explanation for their daughter's absence from school. This is a legal requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000. This also applies where a student has had to leave school for any reason

during the school day. When a student is absent for a significant number of days or partial days due to illness, the school will require a doctor's certificate.

- In the event of a student having absences in excess of 20 days, a letter to parent(s)/guardian(s) will be sent from the school attendance monitor informing them that their daughter's name has been forwarded to the Educational Welfare Board in compliance with current legislation.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are always notified in writing of any changes in regular school hours and /or school closures.

#### ENCOURAGING ATTENDANCE

- The school values the support of parents and is committed to working in partnership with parents to improve attendance and punctuality
- The school provides a wide-range of extra-curricular activities, clubs and societies to support all students and in particular those at risk of poor attendance
- The school's Home School Liaison Co-ordinator is available to support parents in ensuring that their daughters have a good attendance record
- Students are supported by the school's two Guidance Counsellors
- A student awards system includes rewards for good attendance

The school is engaged in reviewing, on an on-going basis, some of the key factors within St. Paul's which may influence attendance.

We are committed to:

- An on-going review of curricular provision and assessment policies
- Maintaining our robust pastoral care procedures
- Continuing to provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities
- Encouraging student engagement in the student council, prefect system and other student forums
- Engaging in a meaningful way with the Wellbeing Programme
- Building on partnership with parents

The School's Statement of Strategy for School Attendance (January 2018) outlines in more detail the attendance policy and targets for improvement

#### REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis by the BOM

***This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on: 24<sup>th</sup> November 2010***

***This policy was reviewed and revised on: 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012***

***This policy was reviewed and revised on: 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018***