**Attendance Policy**

Mary Queen of Angels N.S. 2

Gurteen Road

Ballyfermot

Dublin 10

**Attendance Policy**

###### Introductory Statement

This policy has been formulated by the staff of Mary Queen of Angels N.S. under the guidelines provided by Elizabeth Farrell (Deis Cuiditheoir)

**Rationale**

Mary Queen of Angels 2 decided to create its attendance policy first and foremost in order to encourage pupils to attend school on a daily basis. It is a priority area identified by the staff and the school DEIS targets. It is also a requirement under Education Welfare Act 2000.

**Ethos statement of Mary Queen of angels N.S. 2**

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**Aims**

* To ensure that the system of rules and rewards are implemented in a fair and consistent manner which encourage pupils to attend school.
* To enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
* To promote positive attitudes to learning and foster an appreciation of learning.
* To raise awareness of the importance of school attendance to the children’s education.
* To comply with requirements under Education Welfare Act 200/Guidelines from N.E.W.B.

**Content**

## Defining and Recording Non-Attendance

We at MQA 2 acknowledge that the N.E.W.B. defines a child as someone between 6 & 16 years. Our children begin in “Early Start” aged 3 years. Therefore our attendance policy caters for the children in the school age 3 – 13 years old.

Attendance is when a parent presents a child at school for instruction.

In a situation where this does not occur this is considered non attendance.

Attendance is recorded on a daily basis in the roll book by the class teacher.

These numbers are transferred each day to a number book which is kept in the Office.

At the end of each day the principal totals these numbers.

At the end of the week these totals are recorded in the “Leabhar Tinrimh” by the principal.

A written explanation is required in the event of non-attendance. These notes/explanations are kept on file by the class teacher until the end of the school year. Notes from any child who is referred to the EWB will be kept

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When a child has missed 20 days the class teacher informs the office who then informs the N.E.W.B. and a copy is once again kept by the principal and the class teacher.

Teachers highlight the effects of non-attendance on the pupils learning at informal meetings with the parents and at official parent teacher meetings.

In the event of half/partial day absences, the school requires an explanation from the parents and the child must be signed out in the “sign out” book at the office.

**Appendix 1**

**Whole-school strategies to promote attendance**

**Environment:**

* The school is warm and bright.
* A Breakfast club is funded by the School Completion Programme and managed by Trish Boylan.
* During fine weather the children play outside under supervision.

**Late arrivals**

* Children who arrive late have to gain access by the main school door.
* Children who arrive after 9.20 am must sign in at the office.
* Teachers take note of the reason they are late. If this continues the Principal will contact H.C.L.T. (Home School Liaison Teacher) who will contact parent. Support may be set up by ouside agencies where possible.

**Lunches - Food**

* Breakfast club and school lunches are provided for every child in the school.

**Rewards**

* The school rewards children with full attendance each month.
* Children who have full term attendance and full yearly attendance also receive a prize / certificate.

**Reports**

* The school is investigating the use of a computerized attendance monitoring system.

**Early intervention**

* We hold annual meeting for new parents of the school where procedures for attendance are discussed.
* New parents also receive a school information pack where attendance regulations are laid out.

**Learning Needs**

* SCP targets at-risk pupils

**Communications with other schools/other providers:**

* Local EWO Ms. Sinead O’Neill ph.087-2198457
* St. Louise’s Jun. And Sen. Schools
* Mary Queen of Angels N.S. 1
* St. John’s College
* Kylemore College
* Cherry Orchard after-school club
* Civic Centre
* Library
* Equine Centre
* Ballyfermot Sport & Leisure Complex

**Strategies to promote attendance:**

* The total number of days present is reported as a proportion of the overall total.
* We are an inclusive school and welcome all pupils.
* Parents are notified of their duty /requirements under the Education Welfare Act at the beginning of each school year through the newsletter.
* The School Completion provides the following supports:
* Breakfast Club**,** Lunch provision**,** Homework Club**,** After school sports activities
* Visits by H.S.C.L.
* H.S.C.L. has links to outside agencies

All at risk children are targeted discreetly using the above supports.

Any changes are communicated to all staff both formally and informally.

**Strategies in event of non-attendance:**

“The school must inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register “

* Parents are made aware of their statutory duties outlined in the Education Welfare Act in relation to their children attending school The ***“Don’t Let Your Child Miss Out”*** (leaflet for parents NEWB 2004) will be given to parents with information booklet on enrolment and also continual reminders are put in the Newsletters.
* Parents are aware of the schools duties outlined in the Education Welfare Act in relation to reporting the non –attendance of a child to the Education Welfare Officer, of the serving of a “schools attendance notice” by the Education Welfare Officer (following all reasonable efforts by the Education Board to consult with the child’s parents and the principal of the school) on any parent who they conclude if failing or neglecting to cause the child to attend the school and of the possible consequence of a successful case being taken against the parent (fine or imprisonment) The principal addresses this issue at the June, Junior Infant meetings for new pupils.
* Communications are recorded by in a folder by the class teacher.
* When a child has been absent for 20 days the Education Welfare Officer will be informed.
* Other agencies can be approached in the context of a family/pupil having difficulties with attendance eg. Familiscope, HSE, Barnardos

## Procedures in relation to the Removal from Register/Transfer from another school

*The principal may only remove a pupil’s name from a school register where they have been informed that the child has been enrolled in another school or when the Welfare Board notifies them that the child has been registered by it as in receipt of out-of-school education.*

The Procedures address the following issues and inform the Education Welfare Officer of

intended expulsion of the child, notification from another school that the child has been enrolled in that school, notification by the Education Welfare Officer that the child is in receipt of education outside of the regular school system (e.g. home) or has enrolled in a special school.

**Transfer to another school**:

* Where parents remove a child from a school the principal is obliged to give them and the new school a certificate stating child’s record of attendance and absences in the school, the last class the child attended, and any other relevant information pertaining to the education of the child.

Transfer from another school:

We send them a letter of notification stating that the child is registered on our Roll. A copy is kept for our files.

(*The principal must notify the principal of the child’s last school attended that the child is now registered in their school “as soon as may be”. When the principal receives notification that a child has been registered elsewhere she will notify the principal of the pupil’s new school of any problems in relation to attendance at the pupil’s former school and of such matters relating to the child’s educational progress as he or she considers appropriate.)*

## Annual Report

The Board intends to inform the Education Welfare Officer and Parents Group (where established) of the level of attendance at the school for each school year? This should be done *within six weeks of the end of the school year*.

* We inform the principal/secretary responsible.
* The Annual Report is completed by the principal on line.

**Success Criteria**

In order to determine the success of this policy the principal will co-ordinate with teachers, and the Assistant Principal in order to monitor the school attendance in the given year.

**Checking /Monitoring**

* Have the monthly attendance figures improved? This will be done by checking the rolls and registers and recorded on the DEIS target table

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**Roles and Responsibilities**

* **Principal:** The Principal will consult with class teacher and liaise with the NEWB.
* **Class Teacher** tracks children’s attendance, encourages children’s full attendance and alerts the principal to children who may be at risk. Teacher will also file non-attendance notes from doctor/parents. Home School Liaison Teacher will liaise with NEWB, principal, class teachers, and parents to encourage to them to bring their child to school and if the child is absent to provide a note or explanation.

**Implementation Date: November 2009 after Board of Management meeting.**

**Timetable for Review**

* April 2010 in accordance to the DEIS plan lay out.
* As issues arise

**Ratification & Communication**

This policy was ratified by B.O.M. in November 2009 and may be subject to a periodic review.

A **c**opy of the policy is available for teachers in the Plean Scoile and for parents in the Parents Room.

The above policy was discussed and ratified by the B.O.M on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

#### Signed on behalf of B.O.M. by chairperson \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management reserves the right to add to or amend this policy from time to time as deemed necessary.

## Appendix 1

## Letter for parents accompanied by “ Don’t let your child miss out”

Mary Queen of Angels. N.S. 2

Gurteen Road

Ballyfermot

Dublin 10

E.mail mqa1@eircom.net

Dear Parents,

According to the educational Welfare Act 2000 if your child has missed 20 days or more in the school year the School must notify the National Education Welfare Board.

Please refer to the attached booklet for more information.

Because of this from September 2009, in the event of your child having to leave school before the end of the school day, he must be signed out in the “sign out book” in the Office.

Once again we remind you of the importance of regular attendance at school for your child’s education

## Reference (Attendance)

**Education (Welfare) Act, 2000**

**18**.—Where a child is absent from the school at which he or she is registered during part of a school day, or for a school day or more school. than a school day, the parent of such child shall, in accordance with procedures specified in the code of behaviour prepared by the school under *section 2*3, notify the principal of the school of the reasons for the child’s absence.

**20**.—(1) The principal of a recognised school shall, as soon as may be after the commencement of this section, cause to be established and maintained a register of all students attending that school.

(2) The principal of a recognised school shall, on the day on which the child first attends that school, enter the child’s name, the date of his or her first so attending and such other particulars as may be prescribed by the Minister, in the register maintained under this section in respect of that school, and the child concerned shall, for the purposes of this Act, be deemed, as on and from that date, to be registered in that school.

(3) The principal of a recognised school shall, as soon as may be after entering in the register maintained under this section in respect of that school the name of a child who is registered in another recognised school, so inform by notification in writing the principal of the second-mentioned school.

(4) The principal of the second-mentioned school referred to in *subsection (3)* shall, on receipt of a notification under that subsection, remove the name of the child concerned from the register maintained under this section in respect of the said second-mentioned school except where the child continues to receive part of his or her education at that school.

(5) The principal of a recognised school shall, on receiving a notification under *subsection (3)* in relation to a child, notify the principal of the school first-mentioned in that subsection of—

*(*a) any problems relating to school attendance that the child concerned had while attending the second-mentioned school referred to therein, and

*(*b) such other matters relating to the child’s educational progress as he or she considers appropriate.

(6) The principal of a recognised school shall not remove a child’s name from the register other than—

*(*a) in accordance with *subsection (4*), or

*(*b) where he or she has received a notification in writing from the Board that the child concerned is registered in the register maintained under *section 1*4.

**21**.—(1) The principal of a recognised school shall cause to be maintained in respect of each school year a record of the attendance or non-attendance on each school day of each student registered at that school.

(2) A record maintained under *subsection (1)* shall specify the following, that is to say:

*(*a) where a student attends at the school concerned on a school day, the fact of his or her attendance, or

*(*b) where a student fails to so attend, the fact of his or her failure and the reasons for such failure.

(3) A record to which this section applies shall be maintained at the recognised school concerned and shall be in such form as may be specified by the Board.

(4) Where—

*(*a) a student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than 6 days,

*(*b) the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from a recognised school during a school year is not less than 20,

*(*c) a student’s name is, for whatever reason, removed from the register referred to in *section 20* by the principal of the school concerned, or

*(*d) a student is, in the opinion of the principal of the recognised school at which he or she is registered, not attending school regularly,

the principal of the school concerned shall forthwith so inform, by notice in writing, an educational welfare officer.

(5) On receiving a notice under *subsection (4*), an educational welfare officer shall—

*(*a) consult with the student concerned, his or her parents, the principal and such other persons as he or she considers appropriate, and

*(*b) make all reasonable efforts to ensure that provision is made for the continued education of the child and his or her full participation in school.

(6) The board of management of a recognised school shall, not later than 6 weeks after the end of each school year, submit a report to—

*(*a) the educational welfare officer who has been assigned functions under this Act in relation to that school, and

*(*b) the parents’ association of the recognised school concerned established under section 26 of the Act of 1998 (where so established), on the levels of attendance at that school during the immediately preceding school year.

(7) A report under *subsection (6)* shall be in such form and comply with such requirements as may be determined by the Board.

(8) An educational welfare officer may during any school day enter a recognised school and inspect the register maintained at that school under *section 20* or a record to which this section applies, and take copies of extracts from such register or record.

(9) For the purposes of this section a student shall be deemed not to be absent from school where any period of absence is authorised by the principal and relates to activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved.

**22**.—(1) The board of management of a recognised school shall, after consultation with the principal of, teachers teaching at, parents of students registered at, and the educational welfare officer assigned functions in relation to, that school, prepare and submit to the Board a statement of the strategies and measures it proposes to adopt for the purposes of fostering an appreciation of learning among students attending that school and encouraging regular attendance at school on the part of such students (hereafter in this section referred to as a ‘‘statement of strategy’’).

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of *subsection (1*), a statement of strategy shall provide for—

*(*a) the rewarding of students who have good school attendance records;

*(*b) the identification at an early stage of students who are at risk of developing school attendance problems;

*(*c) the establishment of closer contacts between the school concerned and the families of students to which *paragraph (b)* applies;

*(*d) the fostering, promoting and establishing of contacts by the school with—

(i) other schools that provide primary or post-primary education,

(ii) bodies engaged in the provision of youth work programmes or services related thereto, or engaged in the organising of sporting or cultural activities, and

(iii) such other bodies within the area in which the school concerned is situated as the board of management considers appropriate;

*(*e) in so far as is practicable, the development, following consultation with the bodies referred to in *paragraph (d*), of programmes of activities designed to encourage the full participation of students in the life of the school;

*(*f) in so far as is practicable, the coordination with other schools of programmes aimed at promoting good behaviour among students and encouraging regular attendance at school by students, and the exchanging of information relating to matters of behaviour and school attendance with such schools;

*(*g) the identification of—

(i) aspects of the operation and management of the school and of the teaching of the school curriculum that may contribute to problems relating to school attendance on the part of certain students, and

(ii) strategies—

(I) for the removal of those aspects in so far as they are not necessary or expedient for the proper and effective running of the school having regard, in particular, to the educational needs of students, and

(II) that will encourage more regular attendance at school on the part of such students.

(3) The board of management of a recognised school shall, in preparing a statement of strategy, have regard to such guidelines issued by the Board regarding the preparation and carrying into effect of statements of strategy.

(4) A statement of strategy prepared and submitted by the board of management of a recognised school, in accordance with *subsection (1*), shall be carried out by that board of management in accordance with its terms.

(5) The board of management of a recognised school may, with the consent of the Minister, and for the purpose of giving effect to a statement of strategy prepared and submitted by it in accordance with this section, appoint such and so many teachers employed by it, as it considers appropriate, to liaise with the parents of students

registered at the school concerned and to give such assistance to the families of those students as the board of management concerned considers appropriate.

(6) Two or more boards of management of recognised schools may, if they consider it appropriate, coordinate, and cooperate in, the carrying out of the statements of strategies prepared and submitted by them, in accordance with *subsection (1*).

(7) The Board shall issue guidelines to boards of management of recognised schools for the purposes of this section.

(8) The statement of strategy prepared by the board of management of a recognised school shall be included in the plan prepared by it under section 21 of the Act of 1998.

**23.**—(1) The board of management of a recognised school shall, after consultation with the principal of, the teachers teaching at, the parents of students registered at, and the educational welfare officer assigned functions in relation to, that school, prepare, in accordance with *subsection (2)*, a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school (hereafter in this section referred to as a ‘‘code of behaviour’’).

(2) A code of behaviour shall specify—

(*a*) the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;

(*b*) the measures that may be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;

(*c*) the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;

(*d*) the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and

(*e*) the procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child’s absence from school.

(3) A code of behaviour shall be prepared in accordance with such guidelines as may, following consultation by the Board with national associations of parents, recognised school management organisations and trade unions and staff associations representing teachers, be issued by the Board.

(4) The principal of a recognised school shall, before registering a child as a student at that school in accordance with *section 20*, provide the parents of such child with a copy of the code of behaviour in respect of the school and may, as a condition of so registering such child, require his or her parents to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour so provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child.

(5) The principal of a recognised school shall, on a request being made by a student registered at the school or a parent of such a student, provide the student or parent, as the case may be, with a copy of the code of behaviour in respect of the school concerned.

**Education Act 1998**

**15.**—(2) **FUNCTIONS OF A BOARD**

(*c*) consult with and keep the patron informed of decisions and proposals of the board,

(*d*) publish, in such manner as the board with the agreement of the patron considers appropriate, the policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school, including the policy of the school relating to the expulsion and suspension of students and admission to and participation by students with disabilities or who have other special educational needs, and ensure that as regards that policy principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents' choice are respected and such directions as may be made from time to time by the Minister, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school and the constitutional rights of all persons concerned, are complied with,

#### References

* Education Welfare Act 2000
* INTO Q&A booklet Education Act & Education Welfare Act
  + Circular 20/90 on Discipline (DES website [www.irlgov.ie/educ](http://www.irlgov.ie/educ)). Also as Appendix CPSMA Handbook
  + Education Act, 1998 Section 15 (2(d)) (DES website)
  + Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 23(1 -5), 24 (1-5) (DES website)
  + Management Board Members’ Handbook. Revised 2007. CPSMA.
    1. Guidelines for School Behaviour and Discipline.
    2. A suggested Code of Behaviour & Discipline for National Schools

\*These references apply until new guidelines are issued by the Education Welfare Board

* + Discipline in the Primary School INTO August 2002
  + The Education Act 1998. The Education Welfare Act 2000. Questions and Answers INTO
  + Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes
  + School’s own SPHE Plan
  + NPC website [www.npc.ie](http://www.npc.ie)
  + IPPN website [www.ippn.ie](http://www.ippn.ie)
  + INTO website [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie)
  + SDPS website [www.sdps.ie](http://www.sdps.ie)