ATTENDANCE POLICY

Under the Education Welfare Act (2000) you must make sure that your child attends school regularly. When your child is absent from school for any reason you must notify the school of the reasons for the absence.

The National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) is responsible for promoting and monitoring school attendance. The school must inform the NEWB when a pupil is absent for more than 20 days in a school year or when a pupil is not attending regularly.

In cases of serious non-attendance an Education Welfare Officer will make all reasonable efforts to ensure regular school attendance.

There is a very strong tradition of good attendance in St Paul's Primary School. However, the changing social fabric of the nation is altering attitudes to school and we are anxious that parents be aware of the absolute necessity for regular punctual attendance at school. The following strategies have been put in place to help foster an appreciation of learning and good attendance.

1 Rewards in accordance with the Discipline for Learning (DFL) Code of Behaviour. (See DFL booklet and school journal).

2 Gold or Silver Certificates from N.E.W.B. are awarded to each pupil in the school depending on their effort towards good attendance. Term Certificates are awarded for full attendance for each term.

3 As stated in the Code of Behaviour parents are requested to write notifying the teacher of the reason for a child's absence on the child's return. The teacher notes the reason for the absence.

4 Identification of students who are at risk of developing school attendance problems. These are categorised as follows;

a) Irregular Absentee: 2/5 days absent in 20-day period without a valid reason. b) Seriously Irregular Absentee: 6/10 days absent in a 20-day period without a valid reason.
c) Chronic Absentee: 11+ days absent in a 20-days period without a valid reason.

5 Appropriate contact will take place between the school and parents/guardians of these children.

a) For Irregular Absentees the teacher will inform the parents by telephone or by letter of her/his concerns about the child and seek to meet the parents to discuss the matter.

b) For Seriously Irregular Absentees the Principal will write to parents inviting them to a meeting to discuss the problem.

c) For Chronic Absentees the Principal will inform the Education Welfare Office and notify parents of this by letter.

d) A small number of children's' parents (3or 4) are telephoned each morning concerning attendance.

6 Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer to another primary school will be passed to the Principal of the school by post as soon as we receive written notification of transfer.

7 Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer to St Paul's will be sought directly from the previous school.

8 Attendance, behaviour and Academic records of pupils transferring to Secondary School will be sent to the school once enrolment has been confirmed.

Absences 2007-2008=6432 days.48>20days [94% attendance]

Absences 2008-2009= 7274 days. 59 >20days. [93.5% attendance. Please note 1279 days absent in June mainly due to fact of International children returning home]

Positive Steps Towards Enhancing Improved Attendance

· Roll to be taken daily / numbers input daily onto administration system/ Roll books kept up to date- quarters added up each term.

· If a child is absent a written note is required from parents in the child's journal or by letter, on return.

· If note not received on return, a request for note by class teacher for the following day. If not received a phone call to be made to the parent /guardian to confirm the reason for the absence.

· After 20 days' absence a letter to be sent to the parents /guardian by the class teacher listing exact number of days absent.

· In certain cases, where school is not happy with explanation for absences, a meeting will be arranged with the guardians to express the importance of good attendance to the educational and social wellbeing of the child.

· At the beginning of each term all children to be reminded of attending school every day during that week, month or term.

· Individual stamps, homework passes stamps in allocated page in Journal to be awarded weekly, monthly for full attendance.

· In serious cases the attendance officer will be contacted or other relevant authorities (e.g. HSE, Gardaí)

· As the school year progresses children who are regularly late or who have many unexplained attendances to be encouraged and reminded to improve. Names sent to the office in relation to this.

· At the end of each school year an award is given for;

- Full attendance- Trophy for 6th classes
- Gold Certificate/ medal - Full attendance
- Silver Certificate/ medal –1, 2 or 3 days absent.