



School Attendance Policy

Reviewed: 2023

Date for review: 2025

Mission Statement

Rosemont School strives for excellence by creating an environment which fosters the development of each student in all aspects of the human person – spiritual, intellectual, moral, physical and social. Students are encouraged to set personal goals, take ownership of their learning and to initiate positive change. A sense of values and a commitment to the service of others together with a deep understanding of the Catholic faith is central to the mission at Rosemont.

Introduction

A meaningful education provides every student with the best possible start in life, and it helps them to mature and develop into conscientious young adults. The purpose of this policy on attendance, punctuality and participation is to encourage regular school attendance, full participation in the education system and gives students good preparation for the responsibilities of active citizenship, further education, and employment. Moreover, it endeavours to promote self-discipline, commitment and responsibility.

Expectations

Rosemont has high expectations regarding attendance and punctuality as poor attendance and punctuality by some students negatively impacts the teaching and learning of all students through the disruption caused by students arriving late and hinders the progression of the class through the curriculum. Rosemont is aware of its responsibilities to those students who experience difficulties and through encouragement and support will assist those students to reach their full potential.

Scope

This Attendance, Punctuality and Participation Strategy applies to all the stakeholders at Rosemont. Our philosophy of teamwork underpins our approach. Students, parents and staff contribute to the strategy by working together to maximise attendance and participation.

Board of Management

The Board of Management of Rosemont recognises that punctual and regular school attendance is an essential precondition of social inclusion and a prerequisite to effective learning. It believes that children should attend school regularly and punctually because school is where they learn and school is where they are safe.

The Board of Management is, therefore, committed to improving levels of school attendance and punctuality. It aims to do this by:

- a) promoting the value and importance of regular school attendance;
- b) reducing all forms of unexplained absenteeism, especially levels of persistent absenteeism (a student is classified as being a persistent absentee if she has an absence rate of 20 or more days in a school year).

The Board of Management is obliged under the Education Act to make written reports to the Educational Welfare Services of TUSLA during the school year regarding school absences.

Goals

This policy aims to reduce absenteeism and to motivate students to take an active part in their education. Parents, students and staff are expected to co-operate in the successful implementation of this strategy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Rosemont has a positive and proactive approach towards attendance matters and encourages parents to take an active role in the schooling of their children.

The roles and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers and the board of management are explained fully in the Strategy for Attendance and Participation.

It is a legal requirement that schools will:

- a) be open for 166 sessions each school year;
- b) maintain attendance registers;
- c) accurately record and monitor all absenteeism and lateness;
- d) clearly distinguish between absence which is authorised and absence which is unauthorised;
- e) submit, absence returns to the National Educational Welfare Board;
- f) liaise with the National Educational Welfare Officer regarding absence issues and meet with relevant families;
- g) inform the National Educational Welfare Board of students who are suspended from school for six days or more.

The following is a summary of the procedures that are used by the school:

- Parents are given attendance information through the Rosemont School app, telephone calls, letters, and;
- Year Heads and Class Tutors take roll call at 8:30 during class assembly on VSware and every subject class teacher is required to keep records of absence and punctuality on VSware for each student in their class.
- If any student has any unexplained absences, this will be communicated to parents through the school office via phone call, through VSware or the Rosemont app. Students will only be permitted to leave the school when a parent has submitted an absence request/permission to leave form via the Rosemont app to the office.

Year Head and management team are alerted if a follow up is required.

Monitoring Procedures

Principal, Deputy Principal, and Year Heads will monitor the implementation of this policy. The Principal will report to the B.O.M. regarding Attendance and Participation.

Success Criteria

- Improved attendance over a sustained period.
- Reduced disruption to classes.
- VSWare will provide statistics on late arrivals and absences regularly.

Review Procedure

The staff will review the effectiveness of the monitoring and procedures every 2 years. All records regarding attendance will be kept in the school for 7 years (legal record).

Rosemont Secondary School Attendance Strategy

1. Goals
2. Roles and Responsibilities
3. How attendance is monitored
4. Participation
5. Target setting and targets
6. Strategies to achieve targets
7. Legislation

1. Goals

This policy aims to monitor and tackle absenteeism and to motivate students to take an active part in their education. Parents, students and staff are expected to co-operate in the successful implementation of this strategy.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Rosemont has a positive and proactive approach towards attendance matters and encourages parents to take an active role in the schooling of their children.

2.1 Responsibilities of Students

- Students are expected to be in school by 08:30 to attend morning assembly at this time. They are expected to remain for all classes. First year to Fourth year students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during the school day without permission. 5th and 6th years are permitted to leave the school grounds at lunchtime, once they submit completed permission form from their parent/guardian.
- Students who have a medical/dental appointment during the school day, must submit a permission to leave form on the app authorising the student to leave school early. The app will update VSWare so this information is available for staff members.

All students are expected to comply with this policy.

2.2 Responsibilities of Parents

Parents are responsible by law for ensuring that their children attend the school at which they are registered.

Under the Education Welfare Act 2000 parents must inform the school if their children will be absent from school on a school day and the reason for the absence, for example, illness. Parents/guardian must inform the school via the Rosemont app.

The Educational Welfare Services of TUSLA strongly advises against taking children out of school to go on holiday during term-time.

Parents and guardians have a legal obligation to ensure that their child attends a school or otherwise receives an education. If the Educational Welfare Services of TUSLA considers that a parent is failing in their obligation, it must send the parent a School Attendance Notice warning that legal action will follow if the child does not attend school regularly. Before doing this, it must make reasonable efforts to consult with the parents and the child. If the parent fails to comply, they may be prosecuted. If convicted, the parent may be fined and/or imprisoned for a month and fined for each subsequent day that they fail to send the child to school. If the parent claims that suitable alternative education is being provided, they must prove this. It will be a defence for the parents to show that they have made all reasonable efforts to send the child to school - in such cases, the Health Service Executive (HSE) must be informed.

Parents can do a great deal to support the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents should:

Ensure that all contact details are up to date on VSware.

- Take an active interest in their child's school life and work.
- Check and sign the school journal as needed.
- Attend parents' evenings and other school events.
- Be aware of notifications and letters from school which their child brings home or the school sends via the app.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day, dressed in school uniform and fit to learn.
- Make all appointments for their children outside of class time where possible.
- Ensure that their child only misses school for reasons which are unavoidable or justified, such as illness.
- Always notify the school as soon as possible of any absence via the app..
- Avoid booking family holidays during the school term – examinations will not be rescheduled if they are missed due to holidays.
- Talk to the class tutor if they are concerned that their child seems reluctant to attend.
- Avoid collecting their child unexpectedly from school as this causes significant disruption to teaching and learning.

- Only contact their daughter during the school day through the Office. They should also remind their daughter only to communicate with them through the Office.

2.3 Responsibilities of Year Heads and Class Tutors and Teachers:

- To operate the attendance system effectively and efficiently using VSWare.
- To notify/ask the Office if a student is absent and note this on VSWare immediately.
- Liaising with Principal and Deputy Principal.
- To give particular attention to children whose families are experiencing difficulties.
- Communication (telephone call/letter/ note in journal/email) with parents.
- Early identification of “at risk” students.
- To encourage students to aim for full attendance.
- To monitor student attendance and liaise with management to improve attendance where necessary.
- To regularly remind students about the importance of full and punctual attendance for effective learning to occur in the classroom.

2.4 Responsibilities of Management

- To regularly monitor attendance and participation.
- To co-ordinate the identification of students who may need assistance to fully participate or attend school regularly.
- To support students who have poor attendance or participation.
- To report to the board of management regarding attendance levels and set targets for attendance and participation.

2.5 Responsibilities of Board of Management

- To prepare a school attendance strategy
- To review the attendance and participation report

3. How attendance is monitored

3.1 Daily morning registration

Students are required to attend assembly each day at 08:30 sharp where a register is taken, using VSWare.

VSWare registers are taken for all periods by the subject teacher.

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that their name is marked in every register.

Discretion may be allowed regarding traffic conditions, the weather and other unforeseen circumstances, provided there is notification from parents to the office.

3.2 Registration for students attending appointments during the school day

In the case of parents notifying the school, the subject teacher will be notified of this through VSWare and the student will be permitted to leave.

3.3 Registration for students who leave school due to illness during the school day

In the event of a student becoming ill while at school, the parents/guardians will be contacted for collection. Students must use the office to contact parents, they are not permitted to use their mobile phones. The student should remain in a designated place during this time (generally the atrium). The office will update VShare that the student is now absent.

In the event of an expected Covid case causing illness, please follow Rosemont Covid guidelines.

3.4 Registration for students who miss registers due to extracurricular activities

It is the responsibility of the Sports Co-ordinator/PE teacher/staff member to notify the office beforehand which students will be absent from class due to sporting or other extra-curricular activities, so they may be registered correctly on VShare.

4. Participation

4.1 Participation helps to develop friendships and enhances the experience of school. Rosemont actively encourages every student to participate in school life.

- Students are expected to attend all classes and to participate to the best of their ability
- The approach to teaching and learning (AFL) encourages student participation during classes
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities are available and encouraged.
- Activities take place during lunch time as well as after school.
- SNAs help to integrate special needs students during lunch time.

4.2 Full attendance and participation in timetabled PE classes is required. When students are unable to participate fully in PE classes due to medical circumstances, parents must contact the school office via the app.

4.3 It is the total responsibility of students who are absent from class/school for any reason to find out details of work missed and catch up themselves, where possible. This applies also to students who miss class due to sporting or other extra-curricular activities. Discretion is given in the event of absence due to illness.

5. Target setting

The board of management and school management will set targets regarding attendance and participation.

Students are consulted on the attendance and punctuality rules through their participation on the Student Council.

Specified Targets

Attendance = 95% attendance for all students in the school

Participation = No student drops out of school prior to Leaving Certificate exams.

6. Strategies to achieve targets

- The whole-school focus on wellbeing alongside our pastoral care system.
- Building a warm, caring, respectful and compassionate atmosphere in which every person feels accepted and valued.
- The provision of an excellent extra-curricular activity package which has something for everyone and encourages the participation of all students.
- A modern meaningful curriculum, which is inclusive of all students.
- A comprehensive roll attendance system.
- The identification of students who are at risk of dropping out at an early stage.
- The establishment of closer contacts between the school and the families concerned.
- The co-ordination with the Educational Welfare Services of TUSLA aimed at promoting and encouraging attendance.

7. Procedures for a student leaving without permission:

- If a student is missing from class, the office is notified.
- Student is called to the office over the intercom, if they have not arrived within five minutes, they are called a second time.
- CCTV footage is checked (exits) for student.
- It should be established when/where the student was last seen, via checking with previous class teachers/SNA from that day.
- If a student is seen exiting the building without permission or has not come to the office within the stated time-frame, a parent/guardian will be called.
- If necessary, the guards will be called.
- In certain circumstances a social worker may be contacted prior to the above.

Once a Student has returned to school:

- The Class Tutor will speak to the student involved to establish what has happened.
- A report of the incident will be filled out and filed.
- The student must apologise to the teachers whose classes they missed in person and explain why they left school grounds.
- The Class Tutor will e-mail the parent/guardian of the student involved to inform them this procedure has been followed and of the next steps.
- The student will complete a report (in their own time/at lunch) detailing what happened - 500 words which must be returned to the Class Tutor within 48 hours.
- If the student leaves the school again without permission, they will be suspended.