



St. Joseph's National School. Miltown Malbay.

Arrival and Dismissal Policy

Background: *The following information was used as a guide in the formulation of this policy*

Department of Education and Science position:

Under the provisions of the Education Act 1998, and the regulations of the Department of Education and Science, the Board of Management is the body charged with the direct governance of a school.

The overall responsibility for the day to day management of school supervision rests with the Principal teacher. The terms of Circular 16/73, which issued to all primary schools, provide that the Principal Teacher of primary schools should organise supervision for the order and general behaviour of the pupils during school hours. In particular, s/he should organise and participate in the effective supervision of the pupils during breaks, lunch breaks, assembly and dismissal.

Circular 18/03: "Rules 121(4) and 124(1) of the Rules for National Schools and Section 23(2) of the Education Act 1998 oblige teachers to take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of pupils and to participate in supervising pupils when the pupils are on school premises, during school time and/or on school activities. Accordingly, the responsibility of all teachers individually and collectively to provide a duty of care at all times towards the children in the school in which they teach, including periods of supervision, is not changed." Schools should also refer to Circulars 11/51, 11/68, 24/71 and 11/95

The duty of care to pupils applies not only in school but also, for example, on school tours and on other occasions when the children are in the care of a teacher. On the issue of supervision before and after school, advice was given some years ago by Eoghan Fitzsimons, SC. The essence of that advice was that it was unreasonable to restrict supervision of children to the classroom hours; that children required a reasonable amount of time before school and after school to come and go into the school building, and that the school could reasonably be expected to supervise children for that reasonable period before and after school. A period of 30 minutes at either end was discussed. He also felt that it was prudent to advise parents as to when children would be supervised and when they would not be

supervised, and that, outside of supervision times, children would be on the school premises at their own risk. The practice of parents leaving children at a school at, say, 8.00 am, might be seen as being unreasonable.

Rules for National Schools – School Day

Latest time for opening	9.20	Rule 55
Latest time for commencement of formal instruction	9.20	Rule 55
Staff attendance	20 minutes before formal instruction or 9.00 a.m. whichever is earlier	Rule 124
Length of school day/secular instruction	5hours 40 minutes – may be reduced by one hour for infants to first class	
Religious instruction	30 minutes	
Lunch break	30 minutes	Rule 56
Roll call	10 minutes	Rule 55
Short break	1×15 mins. deducted from secular instruction	Rule 56
Total	5 hours 40 minutes	

Duty of care:

All schools must take reasonable care for the safety of pupils when the pupils are under their charge. This applies not only to periods during break or playtime but also to the periods between the pupils' arrival at school and the start of the school day and from dismissal in the afternoon until, for example, the school bus leaves where the pupils remain on school property. (Primary Education Management Manual – Round Hall – 3:2.7)

See also Leadership+, May 2007 and Solas, Summer 2007

Greene v Mundow (Circuit Court – January 20th 2000)

The duty to supervise primary school pupils began once they arrived on the school premises and was not confined to the “official day” but spilled over for a short period before and a short period afterwards

“The school will open to receive pupils at the hour of 9.20 a.m. No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before that time. Classes will commence each day at 9.20 a.m. No pupils should arrive later than 9.30 a.m.

Classes will end each day at

- 2.00p.m. for infants
- 3.00p.m. for all others

Parents who wish to have their children escorted home should make their own arrangements to have them met at the school gate and the person to escort them should be at the school gate not later than

- 2.10p.m. for infants
- 3.10p.m. for all others, as the school cannot accept responsibility for looking after the children after that time.

Start of School Day

- The official school opening time is 9.20a.m.
- The school grounds are accessible to pupils but the school can not accept responsibility for them.
- The school understands that some parents may need to leave their children before this time therefore children may be left to school after 9.00a.m.
- In inclement weather the children are supervised in hall from 9.00a.m.
- Parents are notified by the Board of Management of the times at which the school will accept responsibility.

End of School Day:

The school ends at the following times

- 2.00p.m. for Infants
- 3.00p.m. for all others
- Infant classes are escorted to the school gate by the teacher where they are met by parents.
- SEN Pupils are escorted onto buses by SNAs.
- Parents of infants who are not collected are informed by telephone by secretary and child waits in office or class with a teacher.
- Parents of older children who are not collected are informed by telephone by secretary/ Principal and child waits in office or class with Principal/teacher.
- When buses are delayed the Principal/Deputy or teacher supervises children
- Parents / guardians collect pupils at the front gate

Other issues:

If pupils are required to be on the school premises before official starting time e.g. for school tours / choral work etc., written notification is sent to the parents and a teacher must be on site.

If pupils are required to be on the school premises after official closing time e.g. for school tours/ choral work, sports events, training etc., written notification is sent to the parents and a teacher must be on site.

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____
Secretary Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____

Review: _____
Chairperson Board of Management

Date: _____

Review: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: _____

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Review: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: _____