



## Readiness for the School Day Policy

### 1. Introduction

St. Paul's School is committed to supporting the health, safety, and wellbeing of every child. Many of our pupils have complex needs along with their diagnosis, and even small changes in their health or routine can have a big impact on their ability to participate comfortably in school activities. This policy aims to ensure that every child who attends school is in the best possible condition to benefit from the day, while also helping to protect the health of all pupils and staff.

St. Paul's school is an educational setting. Classrooms are busy environments which are not suitable when children are unwell. We do not have an illness bay, bath or showering facilities or a sleeping or isolation room. We do, however, have wonderful children with complex needs, and it is for all of the children that this policy is written.

### 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all children attending St. Paul's School are fit to participate in school life, ensuring the well-being, safety, and the health of all individuals on the school premises. This policy establishes guidelines for parents/guardians regarding their child's health and fitness to attend school, based on the child's wellbeing and medical condition.

### 3. Rationale

Pupil-to-staff ratios are allocated to account for the high level of assistance pupils require to stay engaged and meet educational objectives. If a child is presenting very differently to their typical presentation during the school day, it can disrupt the educational activities of the class. This child will need the full attention of one staff and possibly more staff members, which impacts other pupil's learning. In case of infection there is a risk to others, including those on transport.

### 4. Criteria

It is both the school and parents/guardians role to follow the advice of the HSE. Parents/guardians must ensure their child meets the following criteria before attending school. The child should:

1. **Be free from contagious diseases:** Children should not attend school if they have any contagious, infectious disease. As incubation periods vary, please follow the latest up to date information from the HSE. In the case of infectious vomiting or diarrhoea, children must not attend school for 48 hours following the last episode.

2. **Be free of fever:** Children must be fever-free without the aid of medication before returning to school.
3. **Antibiotics:** All children must remain at home for a minimum of 24 hours after commencing antibiotic treatment prescribed for **acute** illness, i.e. ear/throat/chest infection. Children must only return to school when they are well enough to do so. This does not include long term prophylactic antibiotic therapy.
4. **Medical appointments:** If a pupil attends a medical appointment during the school day, he/she must be well enough to engage in school activities upon same day return

## 5. Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities

1. **Monitoring Health:** Parents/guardians are responsible for monitoring their child's health and well-being. If your child shows any signs of **unusual** pain, **excessive** tiredness, adverse effects of medication, the parent/guardian must keep their child at home. The school is not equipped to provide the level of care necessary for such situations.
2. **After care:** Children must remain at home for a minimum of 24 hours following a general anaesthetic or a hospital stay.
3. **Antibiotics:** *The school\** should be informed of a child commencing a prophylactic antibiotic.
4. **Reporting Illnesses:** Parents must notify the school immediately if their child has a contagious illness or if there is a significant change in their medical condition. The school will work with the family to determine when it is appropriate for the child to return.
5. **Reporting a significant change in medical condition:** If a child has experienced a significant medical procedure, hospitalization, or a new diagnosis, the *school* must be notified
6. **Administering Laxatives:** The school must be informed should your child require daily laxative therapy. If supplemental laxative therapy in addition to a child's long term daily laxative regime is required, children must be kept at home for 24 hours or until **normal** bowel pattern has been observed. This is to ensure the child's comfort and hygiene needs can be met.
7. **Sharing Information:** It is helpful if Parents/Guardians share any minor injuries including bruising on their child with the class teacher.
8. **Excessive Tiredness:** If your child is excessively tired outside of his/her normal school presentation, a call will be made to the parent/guardian. Following discussion, the school will decide if it is the appropriate place for him/her to stay.
9. **During school day:** Should a pupil become ill or unfit for school during the school day, parents/guardians/emergency contact must collect their child immediately following a phone call from the school.
10. **Keeping Emergency Contact Information Updated:** It is critical that parents/ guardians keep the school updated with accurate emergency contact information. It is crucial that parents/guardians ensure that their emergency contact is always available to collect their child if called.
11. **Equipment maintenance:** If the child requires special accommodations or equipment (e.g., oxygen support, medical devices), parents/guardians must ensure all equipment is functional and properly maintained.

## 6. School's Role

1. **Health Protocols:** The school will adhere to the HSE and Department of Education health and safety guidelines, school protocols and school policies to prevent the spread of illnesses,

including maintaining hygiene practices, monitoring for signs of illness, and ensuring proper medical support is available when necessary. The school will follow HSE Management of Infectious Disease in Schools

2. **Collection:** If a child is not fit for school, the secretary will ring for him/her to be collected. Should the parent/guardian require further information, the class teacher/school nurse will ring the parent/guardian or meet them at collection.

**Communicating class infections:** If more than one child or class staff member is absent with similar symptoms, the school will inform the parents/guardians so they can make an informed decision regarding their child's attendance.

3. **Assessment of Readiness:** In situations where there is uncertainty regarding whether a child is fit for school as he/she is displaying clear signs outside of the normal school presentation, the school may ring a parent/guardian to assess the child's ability to attend school safely. As the school has a duty of care to all pupils and staff, the school will make the final decision.
4. **Support and Accommodations:** The school will make appropriate accommodations and support in accordance with its duty of care to ensure the health and safety of all pupils and staff.
5. **Meetings:** If an issue is ongoing a meeting can be organised with parents/guardians and relevant staff to provide a solution.

## 7. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required, to ensure it reflects best practices for a healthy and safe school community.

This policy is designed with the well-being of all children, staff, and families in mind. By adhering to this policy, parents/guardians help us to provide the safest and healthiest environment for their child and all others at St. Paul's School.

## 8. Supporting Documents

- Partnership with Parents/Guardians Policy
- Administration of Medicines Policy
- Laxative Protocol
- SPHE Personal Care and Wellbeing Policy

**Ratified by the Board of Management on:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Jerry Corkery  
Chairperson

*\*school* implies one or more of the following: Principal/Deputy Principal/School Nurses/Class Teacher /SNAs/Secretary

