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Chairperson of the Board of Management: Harold Brooks

Policy: Dual Attendance

Date of Issue: January 2012

Amendments / Reviews

Reviewed: Jan '12; Jan 16 (Chairperson change)
September 2017 – Chairperson change

Aim of Policy: To provide clarity regarding Dual Attendance at Our Lady of Good Counsel School.

Aim of Policy

To provide clarity regarding Dual Attendance at Our Lady of Good Counsel (OLGC) to parents, staff, relevant mainstream schools, multi-disciplinary support teams, relevant pre-schools and Special Educational Needs Organisers. At present there are no official guidelines for Dual Attendance from the Department of Education and Science (DES).

What is Dual Attendance?

Dual Attendance is a process adopted by our school to facilitate the attendance, where appropriate, of some pupils at their local mainstream school *for social integration purposes* for one day per week or part of one day per week.

PROCEDURES

1. Requests for Dual Attendance: The request for Dual Attendance comes directly to the Principal of OLGC from parents/guardians only.
2. OLGC then convenes a team meeting to discuss the request and determine the suitability of the pupil for Dual Attendance taking into account the following issues
 - Behaviour
 - Sociability
 - Health and Safety
 - Care Issues
 - Possible benefits to the child
3. The parent contacts the preferred mainstream school to ascertain if Dual Attendance is a possibility there. If the school is willing to consider it, the principals of OLGC and the mainstream school will usually have a telephone conversation to discuss relevant matters and to decide whether or not to proceed. Obviously, the arrangement only proceeds if the mainstream school is comfortable with the idea.
4. Before the mainstream school commits to the arrangement we recommend that relevant mainstream staff visit OLGC and it has been the practice that the OLGC class teacher visits the mainstream school as well if possible. The purpose of these visits is to familiarise staff from both schools with each other and with the facilities in each school.
5. Enrolment: The pupil is already fully enrolled in OLGC and is usually only added to the roll book of the relevant mainstream school for insurance purposes. It has been the practice of mainstream schools to inform their own insurance company of the part-time presence of the OLGC pupil. This matter has not been clarified by the Department of Education and Science.
6. Special Needs Assistant (SNA) support in the mainstream school: The mainstream school applies for this support. A letter of support from OLGC Psychologist will be provided if requested. If required OLGC SNA's may accompany the pupil on his/her first day at the mainstream school.
7. Timetable: The class teachers of both schools, in consultation with parents, decide on which day is most suitable. Parents are reminded that scheduled OLGC school activities such as swimming, dance, trips out, etc. cannot be rescheduled if the pupil misses them as a result of attending the mainstream school.
8. Meetings/phonecalls etc. can be arranged at the discretion of both class teachers to facilitate the sharing of information and feedback. School reports, I.E.P's and other professional reports can be passed on to the mainstream school with the prior permission of parents and the Principal. It may be appropriate for the teacher of the mainstream school to attend relevant team meetings held in OLGC if they wish. This will be considered on a case by case basis.

9. Transport: Transport from home to OLGC school is provided by the Department of Education and Science. Organising transport to the mainstream school is the responsibility of parents.
10. Absence of the pupil from the mainstream school: OLGC fills out the NEWB returns and will request information from the mainstream school with regard to absences if necessary.
11. If the mainstream school is closed for any reason and OLGC is open, the pupil can attend OLGC. It is the parent's responsibility to inform and organise transport.
12. Review: At the end of the school year, the OLGC class teacher will comment on the progress of the pupil's attendance in the end of year school report. A copy of this report can be made available to the mainstream school through the parents. The Principal of OLGC will phone the Principal of the mainstream school to discuss the arrangement and to ascertain if it will continue for the following year.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Dual Attendance may not be in the child's best interests during their first year in school.
- Both schools reserve the right to terminate or suspend the arrangement at short notice.