



Reduced School Day Policy

Introductory Statement

St Peters School recognises the right of every young person to an education where he or she may reach their full potential. The school recognises the uniqueness of each young person and fully understand that each individual may develop and grow in diverse ways. Therefore, this school takes a holistic approach to education, endeavouring to meet the varying needs of our students in an individualistic, child-centred manner. As a result of this ethos the use of reduced school days is limited to only those circumstances where it is necessary and, where such usage occurs, St. Peter's School will follow best practice with the interests of the student to the fore. For the purposes of this policy, reduced school days are defined as a reduced day in school where, by arrangement with the school authorities, a student arrives to school after the usual starting time or leaves before the end of the school day and/or a reduced week where, by arrangement with the school authorities, a student may not attend the full five days each week.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity around the use of reduced school days in St. Peter's School. This policy is drawn up in accordance with Circular 0047/2021 and The Use of Reduced School days - Guidelines for schools on recording and notification of the use of Reduced School days.

Key Requirements for Reduced School Days

- The school, prior to consideration of a reduced school day, have previously engaged with the relevant support services and professionals, including the special educational needs organiser (SENO) where appropriate, and have developed and implemented a student support plan for an appropriate period of time.

- There is clear evidence-based reasons for considering a reduced school day as a relevant and appropriate intervention with the best interests of the student at the core of the decision.
- There is written consent of the parents/guardians of the student (or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student), and must also document if parental (or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, student) consent is subsequently withdrawn.
- The school will notify Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) of the decision to place a student on a reduced school day no later than the first day of the commencement of each episode of a reduced school day.
- The school will formulate and agree a plan for the reduced school day intervention which will specify the following: start, review and end dates; any educational supports or interventions to be provided for the student during the period of the reduced school day; the actions required to support the student's return to school and reintegration to a full-time school day. The plan with respect to the reduced school day intervention and return to school will have regard to any relevant medical reports or other relevant information held in the student's support file. The intervention and return to school plan must be discussed and agreed in collaboration with the parent/guardian (or in the case of a student over 18, the student). Ideally, the period for which the student is on a reduced school day, should not exceed six school weeks. A reduced school day cannot be carried forward from one academic year to the next.
- The name of a contact person in the school with whom the parents/guardians (or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student) may communicate will be included on the plan, and, where appropriate, any work plan for the time during which the student will not be in attendance at the school.
- The school will provide the parents/guardians (or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student), with a copy of the agreed plan, signed by parents/guardians (or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student), and the school principal, and retain a copy which must be given to the Educational Welfare Officer or a member of the DEY Inspectorate if requested. This information should be included in the Student Support File.
- The school should consider a graduated regime of school attendance which increases steadily and incrementally towards full attendance.
- The school will arrange for a review with the student and their parents/guardians (or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student), if a student is still on a reduced school day as the time limit of the plan approaches.
- An extension should only be considered in exceptional circumstances and only with the further written consent of parents/guardians (or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student).

- The school will submit a new notification form to TESS when the period during which the student has been on a reduced school day is extended no later than the first day of renewal of the plan.
- The school will keep a record of all instances of students being placed on a reduced school day and access to this list should be made available to TESS educational welfare officers and the DEY Inspectorate if requested.
- The school will inform the parents/guardians (or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student), of their right to withdraw consent at any time, and that TESS educational welfare officer can provide assistance and advice if required.

Appeals

Where parental/guardian (or in the case of a student over 18, student) consent is not given or subsequently withdrawn and the school proceeds or continues with a reduced school day, this is effectively a suspension.

The provision for appeals for suspensions and exclusions is set out under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Information on the appeal procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 is set out on the DEY's website. TESS educational welfare officers are available to provide parents/guardians with advice and support in relation to their child's attendance at school and the Section 29 appeal process.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Board of Management has overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the school policy on Reduced School Days. The Principal is the day-to-day manager of routines contained within this policy with the assistance of all staff members.
- All staff have an input into the implementation of the policy. Class teachers and SNAs record individual observations and maintain records of interventions taken with students who have access to their support.
- It is the responsibility of the Principal and Staff to ensure that this policy is adhered to under the guidance of the school's Board of Management and to ensure that returns are made to TESS and the EWO and proper records maintained.
- Parents and guardians have a responsibility to follow the advice and recommendations of the relevant services (NEPS, School SENo, CDNT, Multi-disciplinary assessment teams), psychologists and other professionals with regards to their child's educational needs.

This policy has been drawn up by the principal in collaboration with the staff of St. Peter's and in consultation with the Board of Management. It will be made available to all members of the school community.

This policy will be reviewed annually and amended if necessary.

Rosemary Fahy

Principal St. Peter's School

Eoin Ó Donnagáin

Chairperson to the Board of Management

Signed:



Date: 26th November 2025

Signed:



Date: 26th November 2025

Appendix A



Reduced School Day Plan

This plan has been designed in line with the provisions of Circular 47/2021 and The Use of Reduced School days, Guidelines for Schools on recording and notification of the use of Reduced School days. An extension of this plan will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and only with the further written consent of parents/guardians.

Student name	
Class	
Date of meeting to discuss and agree plan	
Start date of plan	
End date of plan	

Plan for graduated regime of school attendance which increases steadily and incrementally toward full attendance - attendance times, arrangements for transport.
Details of educational supports or interventions to be provided for the pupil during the period of the reduced school day

Actions required to support the pupil's return to school and reintegration to a full-time school day
Name of contact person in the school with whom the parents/guardians may communicate with in relation to this plan

Checklist

This plan has been discussed and agreed in collaboration with the pupil's parents/guardians.	
The pupil's parents/guardians have been informed of their right to withdraw consent for this plan at any time.	
The pupil's parents/guardians have been informed that TESS educational welfare officer can provide assistance and advice if required.	
Parents/guardians have been provided with a copy of the Guidelines.	

By signing in the space below, parents/guardians' consent to this plan and acknowledge the content.

Parent / Guardian: _____

Principal: _____

Date of notification to:

Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) of the decision to place a student on a reduced school day no later than the first day of the commencement of each episode of a reduced school day.	
--	--

Appendix B



Notice of Withdrawal of Consent for Reduced School Day to
the Principal of St. Peter's School

Name of student: _____

Name of parent/ Guardian: _____

I wish to withdraw my consent to a Reduced School Day with effect from: _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____