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## EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF RECORDS IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: DIARY AND STUDENTS' ATTENDANCE REGISTER AND THEIR PROCEDURES IN FOCUS

BY

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### ABSTRACT

*School diary and students' attendance register as examples of statutory school records were extensively discussed in this article. School diary is a document used to record all the approved topics expected to be completed with the students in each of the classes for all the subjects on termly basis. The procedures involved in the preparation of school diary were equally highlighted. These procedures will serve as guidelines to all academic staff and heads of schools in the secondary schools for effective management of school diary. The students' attendance register is a school record for a single class and has provision for each student's name, admission number, age last birthday, among others. The paper went further and discussed the various components of attendance register and their procedures. These procedures and some computed examples as regard to students' attendance register were critically examined. All academic staff and school heads in Nigerian secondary schools and beyond will find this article very useful for effective management of these two essential school records. The article concluded that the management of these two records in big schools with few academic staff may not be easy. The paper recommended that extra periods of at least ten (10) minutes should be created in the teaching time table that will allow the class teachers to mark the attendance registers before the first period in the morning and the last period in the afternoon in all the classes.*

**Keywords:** Attendance Register, Diary, Procedures, School Records, Secondary Schools.

## INTRODUCTION

Effective keeping of school records is the essential ingredient for smooth running and management of secondary school. Records must be safely kept and managed in the social system like School. Osakwe (2011) viewed school records as official documents, books and files containing essential and crucial information of actions and events which are kept and preserved in the school office for utilization and retrieval of information when needed. Such records are kept by the staff of the school. School records are regarded as the official transcripts of proceedings of events, actions or other matters kept by the school manager (Sunmola, 2008). Here, the school manager is the principal, or vice principal or any staff of the school whose duty is to keep such records on behalf of the school. Secondary school as a social system does not run and manage itself but managed by the qualified human resources employed by the employer to run and manage the system. In the words of Nwagwu (1995) quoted by Egwunyenga (2000), records and record keeping constituted the arteries that supply life-sustaining blood through the system and sub-systems of organizations and institutions. The author further stressed that it will definitely be an impossible task to plan and administer any known institution in which records are not kept. Still on the definition of school records, school records are pieces of information on relevant events about a school (Ajayi and Ayodele, 2002).

According to Amos (2017), school records are grouped into two namely statutory and non-statutory school records. Statutory school records according to Amos (2017), are records that are compulsory under the law to be kept by all schools. Under the education law in Nigeria, the following are some of the statutory records to be kept in school; Admission register, Daily Attendance Register for students, Diary of works, Log book, among others. The non-statutory school records, according to Amos (2017) are records that are not compulsory to be kept but they are nevertheless equally important and useful for record purposes for the school. Examples of non-statutory school records are Inventory book, Stock book, Requisition book, Duty roster book, Movement book, among others.

Although, principals and teachers employed to run and manage secondary schools have one form of training at the tertiary institutions in their respective disciplines. Some of these principals and teachers find it difficult to effectively manage and record some of these statutory and non-statutory school records. Teaching as a profession is flooded with many unqualified tutors regarded as non-professional and professional teachers. Some of these non-professional and professional teachers lack the necessary knowledge or skill to effectively compute some of these school records in the secondary schools.

Therefore, the essence of this article is to equip these categories of teachers and school heads the procedures on how to manage school diary and students' attendance register in Nigerian secondary schools.

### School Diary

School diary is a statutory school record used to record all the topics expected to be completed with the students by all the subject teachers for each of the terms in a particular class. According to Amanchukwu and Ololube (2015), school diary shows the topics that are to be done and have been done each term for each class/subject. The topics that are to be filled into the school diary are extracted from the current subject curriculum and further breakdown into term by term. Subject curriculum is a document prepared by the Federal Ministry of Education and published by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC). Ezenweani (2006) described subject curriculum as a document structured

to highlight the topics, objectives to be achieved and the materials to be used by the teacher. According to Ezenweani (2006), the topics specify the unit headings that are stated in the document. These topics are arranged in order of difficulties. The curriculum contains all the approved topics that the students need to learn in all the subjects in an academic session in each of the classes. For example, Mathematics curriculum for Junior Secondary School (JSS I-III) contains all the topics that the students are expected to learn in JSS I, II and III in the full academic session in mathematics. In addition to the various stipulated topics in the curriculum, the document also contains the various instructional objectives to be achieved by the end of each topic and also indicated the expected students/teacher interaction in the classroom. Scheme of work and syllabus all depend on subject curriculum.

### **Procedures Involved in Preparing School Diary**

The following procedures highlighted below are expected to be followed by all teachers when preparing school diary.

1. Get the copy of the school diary from the management of the school at the beginning of each term.
2. Get the copy of the current subject curriculum (in your subject area(s)) from the school management at the beginning of each term.
3. Arrange all the topics in the current subject curriculum in a sequential order (knowledge of one topic leads to the learning of the next topic).
4. Share or group all the arranged topics in the current subject curriculum into three (3) terms (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> terms).
5. Transfer the arranged topics for the first term into the school diary of your subject/class. Spread the arranged topics for first term according to the number of weeks of instructions approved for the term and it should be done at the beginning of each term. It is wrong for a teacher to fill in the diary all the topics to be taught for the three(3) terms at the same time. It should be done term by term.
6. Transfer the same arranged topics for the first term into the first page of your lesson plan/note.
7. Write the same arranged topics for the first term on the chalk/maker board for the students to write into the first page of their notebooks before the commencement of teaching for the term.
8. In case a teacher was unable to complete all the first term topics with the students, transfer all the untaught topics to the second term in addition to the prepared second term topics for continuation. This process will continue with the other term.
9. Also, if a teacher was unable to complete all the topics with the students during the academic session, the untaught topics should be transfer to the new academic session with the same students in the new class for continuation.
10. Write the taught topics in the weekly report section of the school diary designed for that purpose against your subject on weekly basis. This section is normally found towards the end of the diary.

### **Students' Attendance Register**

The students' attendance register is a school record for a single class and has provisions for each student's name, admission number, age last birthday, any handicap, and the student's status in the class (repeating or new student). These pieces of information hardly change from term to term, but should be updated and properly recorded at the beginning of each term.

The production of the students' attendance register varies from company to company. The attendance register without the sex column, blue or black biro should be used to enter the names of all the male students and red biro should be used to enter for the girls. But, for register with sex column, blue or black biro should be used to enter both the boys and girls and indicate "M" and "F" for male and female students in the sex column respectively. The names of the students should be arranged in alphabetical order with the surname in capital letters, coming first. The other names of the students should be in small letters except the first letter which must be in capital letter.

### Various components of the Attendance Register and their Procedures

1. **Daily Attendance:** Each term is broken into a maximum of fourteen (14) weeks, with each week divided into five (5) days (Monday to Friday). Each day is sub-divided into morning and afternoon sessions. There are thus a maximum of 10 times per week.
2. **Marking the Register** The presence of a student at roll call should be indicated by oblique marks in blue or black ink in the following order:  in the morning and  in the afternoon. Absence of a student is indicated with a zero . If a student withdraws from school after having been marked present, the original oblique mark should be circled to indicate that fact. This will result in  or  depending on whether the withdrawal is for morning or afternoon session. The roll call should take place as soon as the session begins that is, before the first lesson in the morning and before the last lesson in the afternoon. However, the register should not be closed until the end of first period. Those who arrive during that period are marked with the same oblique marks as for those present but in red ink to indicate that they were late.
3. Should a holiday be granted for a period of less than a week, cancel the attendance space each morning and afternoon of that period by lines drawn vertically through the middle of each space. Should a holiday be for week or longer, write the word "HOLIDAY" in the cancelled attendance space. The reason for granting the holiday should always be entered in the log book.
4. The attendance register is supposed to contain factual information in respect of each student. It should therefore be marked only at the time he or she is present.
5. **Daily Total:** Total number present at each time in a day that is, M total for morning and A total for afternoon in each day. Count the number of students that present in the morning and afternoon (both punctual or late) and record such figures in the space provided for each day.
6. **Weekly Total:** Add all the M total for morning and A total for Afternoon separately from Monday to Friday and record the figures in the space provided.
7. **Weekly Percentage Attendance:** It is the percentage attendance of all the students per week. Mathematically,  
$$\text{Percentage Attendance (Weekly)} = \frac{(\text{M Total} + \text{A Total}) \times 100}{\text{Total on Roll} \times \text{Times school Opened}}$$

Total on roll means the total number of students in the class while times school opened means the time school opened for each week.
8. **Percentage Punctual (Weekly):** This is the percentage of students that were in the class as at the time when their names were marked present per week. It is the total number of blue/black and red inks marked present minus the total number of red marked present multiplied by 100 and divided by the number of M total + A total. Mathematically,

$$\text{Percentage punctual} = \frac{\{(M \text{ Total} + A \text{ Total}) - RT\} \times 100}{M \text{ Total} + A \text{ Total}}$$

Where M total = Morning weekly total, A Total = Afternoon Weekly total (both in blue/black and red ink) and RT= Total number of times marked with red ink in a week.

9. **Number of Boys and Girls on Roll per week:** Count the number of boys and girls separately in the class per week. For a male or female student to be included in the number on roll, the name of such male or female student must be in the attendance register as at the time when the register was marked before he or she can be included or added to the number on roll for that particular week. If a student is totally absent throughout in a particular week, such student should also be counted among those students to be included on the number on roll for that particular week. The number of students on roll for all the weeks may not necessarily be the same because of the names of the newly admitted students on weekly basis during the term.
10. **Total Weekly Attendance:** This is the addition of M Total and A Total per week.  
Total Weekly Attendance = **M Total + A Total**
11. **Half Attendance for Term:** Count the number of times each of the students present in each week and record such figures in the spaces provided. Add all the weekly number of times for each of the students for the half of the term and record such figures in the spaces provided in the attendance register.
12. **Total Attendance for each Student in a term:** Add all the weekly number of times for each of the students for the entire weeks of the term and record such numbers in the space provided.
13. **Total Times Late per Student in a term:** Count the number of oblique marked in red ink for each of the students in a full term and record such figures in the spaces provided.
14. **Total Attendance for Term:** Add all the total attendance of each of the students in a term. Or add all the weekly attendance in the term.
15. **Average Attendance for the Term:** This is the mean attendance of all the students in a term.  
Average Attendance =  $\frac{\text{Total Attendance for Term}}{\text{Total number of student in a class}}$
16. **Total times school was opened in a week:** From Monday to Friday without holiday, the number of times school open for the week is 10 (two times per day). But, if there is holiday, the number of times for the week will be reduced.
17. **Total Times School was opened in a Term:** Add all the weekly number of times school opened for the term.
18. **Total Attendance for Boys in a Term:** Add all the total attendance for each of the boys together in the term and record the answer in the space provided.
19. **Total Attendance for Girls in a Term:** Add all the total attendance for each of the girls together in the term. Or subtract the total attendance for boys from the total attendance for all the students in a term.
20. **Attendance Brought Forward:** First term has no attendance of each student brought forward. For the second term, carry the total attendance for each student in the first term to the second term and record such figure against the same each student in the space provided. The addition of the first and second term total attendance scores for each of the student will serve as the attendance brought forward for the same each of

the students in the third term. The addition of the third term attendance and the attendance brought forward in the third term will form the total attendance scores for each of the students in the academic session.

**Example:**

Given the information below concerning the weekly attendance of students in a particular school.

Morning Total (M)	=	214
Afternoon Total(A)	=	206
Total number of students on roll	=	50
No of times school opened in a week	=	10
No of times students came to school late	=	12

**Question:** Calculate the percentage attendance and percentage punctuality of the students for the week using the above information

**Answers**

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Percentage Weekly Attendance} &= \frac{(M+A) \times 100}{\text{No. on Roll} \times \text{No of times}} \\ &= \frac{(214+206) \times 100}{50 \times 10} \\ &= \frac{420 \times 100}{500} \\ &= \frac{42000}{500} \\ &= 84\% \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Percentage Punctuality} &= \frac{[(M+A)-RT] \times 100}{M+A} \\ &= \frac{[(214+206)-12] \times 100}{214+206} \\ &= \frac{[420-12] \times 100}{420} \\ &= \frac{408 \times 100}{420} = \frac{40800}{420} \\ &= 97.14\% \end{aligned}$$

**Conclusion**

The preparation and implementation of the school diary and students' attendance register in a school with large population of students and few academic staff may not be easy. A study that was conducted by Aduwa (2021) on the extent of mathematics contents(topics) coverage in the Bayelsa State public secondary schools reviewed that the level of mathematics contents coverage was not relatively high. This may be likely similar to the extent of contents coverage in the other subjects.

Furthermore, teachers teaching the same subjects in the different classes should have cordial relationship among themselves by ensuring that the students are exposed to all the

topics stipulated in the curriculum before the final external examination. Also, the school management should try as much as possible to make the copies of the current curriculum for all the subjects available to all the teachers.

For the students' attendance register, extra periods of at least 10 minutes should be created in the teaching time table that will allow the class teachers to mark the attendance registers before the first period in the morning and the last period in the afternoon in all the classes.

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