



# Attendance Strategy Statement

## Title

Attendance Strategy Statement

## Introductory Statement

This statement was put together by the staff of the school and presented to the BOM for ratification.

## Rationale

It was decided to work on this policy for the following reasons

- It is a requirement under Education Welfare Act 2000
- School recording of strategies in relation to attendance.
- To promote good attendance in our pupils
- To encourage timekeeping
- To have a coordinated approach to attendance in the school

## Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Attendance at school is a requirement under law. Our strategy hopes to continue to promote attendance and to encourage parents and children to see that good attendance helps children to become fully involved in school life. This also helps the holistic development of the child. We also hope to promote better timekeeping for all pupils.

## Aims

Through recording this document, we hope to highlight the importance of education in the life of a child. We hope to raise awareness in the importance of the academic and social aspects of education for a child

We hope to

- To foster an appreciation of learning in the school community.
- To raise awareness of importance of school attendance and an awareness of forming good patterns of attendance in early years.
- To identify pupils at risk of school leaving early and reporting this to the EWO.
- To enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To promote positive attitudes to learning
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner that encourage pupils to attend school
- To make parents aware of their responsibilities, around attendance, under the Education Welfare Act.
- To comply with requirements under Education Welfare Act 2000/Guidelines form NEWB

## Guidelines

May include

### Defining and Recording Attendance and Non-Attendance

- Children should be in school every day the school is open for instruction. A calendar is forwarded to parents at the beginning of the school year. This is also posted on the school website.
- Parents are notified of the schools opening and closing times. Children should arrive at school for 9.00 and be collected promptly at 1.40pm (infants) 2.40pm (all other classes).
- Parents are asked to send a written note to the class teacher when a child is absent. (*This is an obligation under the Education Welfare Act*). This note should be dated and explain the reason for absence. This assists the class teacher in completing returns about absences to the NEWB. When no note is sent to the school absences are reported as unknown reason.
- Notes sent detailing absences are kept by the class teacher for the school year. If/when a child misses 20 days these notes are used to inform the NEWB the reasons for absences. Notes are then kept in the child's file.
- If the child does not miss 20 days the notes are shredded at the end of the school year.
- Our school uses the online roll book system, Aladdin. Rolls should be taken every day before 10 am. **Once the roll book is filled it should not be changed (following guidelines from the Department of Education).**
- **Teachers should record late arrivals on Aladdin. There are 20 minutes assembly time allocated each day. Children arriving after 9.20 are late for school. Continuous late arrivals can also be reported to the Education Welfare Officer.**
- Parents are also asked to sign their children out when collecting their children early from school.
- At the end of each quarter attendances for individual children are recorded in the roll book. Yearly attendances are also recorded and this helps with the completion of NEWB Annual Returns forms.
- Individual children's attendances are transferred to the school register at the end of the school year.
- The principal has an attendance book which is then completed with daily attendance numbers for each class. This is also completed to show collective monthly attendances and percentages. Collective yearly attendances are recorded at the rear of the book. This is now recorded through Aladdin.
- Dates for reporting non-attendance are received from the NEWB each year. The staff of our school checks individual attendances of pupils on these dates and when children have missed 20 days or more they are reported to the NEWB. A letter is also sent home to parents to inform them that a notification has been sent to the EWO.
- It is the parents' responsibility to inform the class teacher if a child is going to be late arriving to school or if the child has to leave school early. Arriving late at school, repeatedly, or leaving school early, repeatedly will be viewed as a form of absence.
- The EWO will be informed of genuine reasons for absences such as illness or hospital stays.
- Parents of children who had poor attendance the previous year will get half termly updates of attendance to support getting the child to attend school every day, when possible.
- Percentage attendance statistics are kept by the principal
- A report on attendance is provided at BOM meetings.

### **Whole school strategies to promote attendance.**

- **Early intervention:** A pack is prepared each year for new enrolments. Information from the NEWB about the importance of attendance is included. The INTO booklet on Primary Education is also included. Parents are also informed at the Parents' Evening of the importance of attending school.
- **Communication with parents:** An information note is sent home to parents each term outlining the importance of attendance and stating the obligation on staff to report non-attendance. Parents are also informed, of their responsibility, to send a note explaining absences to the staff.
- **School Records of Attendance:** The staff is involved in keeping daily, monthly and annual records of attendance. The staff also keep notes received from parents re absences.
- **School Reports:** Children's individual attendances are recorded in the annual school report which is sent home to parents. In the cases of children transferring to secondary schools and/or other primary schools attendance records are also forwarded.
- **NEWB:** Quarterly and annual returns are forwarded to the NEWB about attendance every year.
- **Promotion of Good attendance:** Certificates are presented termly and at the end of the year to children who have had full attendance or to children who have only missed one day. Medals are also presented at the end of the term and the end of the year to children who missed no days during the school year. The school certificates and medals are purchased from school DEIS funding.
- **SPHE:** As part of our Social Personal and Health Education Programme each class teacher teaches SPHE. This hopes to promote self-esteem and encourage attendance through areas such as "making choices".
- **School Lunches:** As a DEIS school we are able to provide lunches for children. This is a support for children and parents and ensures children have food every day.
- **Activities:** We hope to provide a variety of experiences for pupils in school to encourage attendance. This includes sporting activities, science activities, music and trips.
- **Assembly:** We have a weekly assembly to promote positive behaviour and attendance. Photographs of the weekly "Student of the Week" are put on display on the corridor.
- **Committees:** We aim to promote independence among pupils in our school giving them opportunities to be part of our committees and the various teams in our school e.g. Green School Committee, Health Promoting School, Erasmus, Active School. Through this we hope to promote enjoyment of school life and encourage positive decision making.

### **Communication with other schools/other providers**

- When a child seeks to enrol from another school information re the pupil (including attendance) is sought from the other school.
- If a child from our school transfers to another school a school report including attendance figures and standardised test results are forwarded to the new school.
- Children/Parents/Teachers transferring to secondary school complete a Passport Transfer. This is forwarded to the school following confirmation of enrolment. Attendance information is also provided.
- Information is forwarded to TUSLA re absences at the end of each quarter.

- Information re attendance may be provided to Social Workers who are working with individual families
- Attendance statistics are provided to the Department of Education and Department Inspectors as part of our participation in the DEIS initiative.
- If a child is having an Educational Assessment the staff must provide statistics on the child's attendance.
- Ongoing work with the Educational Welfare Officer with regards attendance may be necessary.

### **Strategies in event of non-attendance**

*(The school must inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register)*

- Parents are informed of the importance of attendance from our welcome talk for new Junior Infants. Regular reminders are also forwarded to parents.
- Parents are informed of the school's legal responsibility to report all attendances of 20 days or more.
- Parents are asked to inform the school when their child is missing from school. Parents are also asked to forward a note to the class teacher explaining the absence – these notes are kept for competing NEWB/Tusla returns.
- Records of absences and late arrivals are recorded in Aladdin. If reasons for absence is provided this is also recorded on Aladdin.
- Information re attendance is forwarded to the principal at each reporting period and also where there is a concern about a child's attendance. Individual tracking records may be used to record attendance and time keeping.
- When children have missed 20 days or more a notification is sent home re the numbers of days absent
- When children who have had poor attendance the previous year (other than for medical reasons) updates on attendance may be sent home at end of each half term to remind the parents of the importance of being in school.
- Parents may also be contacted by phone or called to meet the class teacher /principal re attendance.
- Attendance is also reported at Parent-Teacher meetings and on report cards
- Returns to TUSLA are forwarded online, by the principal, at the end of each reporting quarter. EWO may also be contacted where there is a case for concern.
- Support may also be given via HSCL/SSC and HYL.
- *Are parents aware of the schools duties outlined in the Education Welfare Act in relation to reporting the non-attendance of a child to the Education Welfare Officer, of the serving of a "school attendance notice" by the Education Welfare Officer (following all reasonable efforts by the Education Board to consult with the child's parents and the principal of the school) on any parent who they conclude is failing or neglecting to cause the child to attend the school and of the possible consequence of a successful case being taken against the parent (fine and/or imprisonment)?*

## **Procedures in relation to the Removal from Register/Transfer from another school**

- Transfer to another school: When a child transfers to another school school reports, attendance figures and test scores are given to the other school. Any other important information is also transferred.
- If a child has been suspended from our school this is also reported on our returns and in BOM notes
- If the BOM moves to expel a child procedure as outlined in the Code of Behaviour are followed.

## **Annual Report**

- The Principal sends the Annual Report, online to the NEWB/TUSLA
- Photographs of children with attendance certificates may be displayed on our school website and on school noticeboards
- Information to parents re attendance sent home at final Parents' Letter of the year.

### **Success Criteria**

- Monthly percentage tracking of attendance is kept through use on the online Roll book.
- Increase in attendance will be noted from these statistics
- Records of children with full attendance, excellent attendance is kept and this hopefully will improve each year
- Records of children who miss 20 days or more also are kept

### **Roles and Responsibility**

- Principal – The principal oversees the Aladdin system and reminds staff of their responsibilities termly re marking of rolls and reporting poor attendance or timekeeping  
The principal also files quarterly and end of year returns.  
The principal also oversees the transfer of information to and from other schools.
- Post Holder – Responsibility for the registering of all new pupils in the Clar Leabhar and the allocation of Claruimhir for each pupil.
- Class teacher – Each class teacher is responsible for the daily recording of attendance before 10.00 each day. The teacher is also responsible for the collection and storage of notes with regards to absences. These can also be recorded on Aladdin  
Teachers may be asked to keep record sheets of late arrivals or persistent early departure from school.  
Each teacher should report, to the principal, children of concern.  
Teachers are asked to return names of children with full attendance each term for certificate presentation and also medals.  
Teachers forward lists of children who have missed 20 days or more, to the principal, each term, for reporting.
- Other teachers – Other teachers should support class teachers and the Principal in the encouragement of full or excellent attendance. SET may provide extra support for children who have missed extra time due to illness or bereavement.
- HSCL should work with class teachers and the principal to communicate with parents re attendance.
- Parents – It is the responsibility of parents to ensure their child gets to school on time every day and is collected on time.

Parents should also ensure children are at school every day unless the child is ill or an emergency occurs.

Parents are responsible for informing the class teacher the reason for a child's absence.

- Pupils – Children should work with their parent to get to school on time and to get to school every day possible.

Children should wait for collection by their parents each evening.

- Education Welfare Officer- should work with the Principal and Staff to ensure children get the best opportunities for education.
- Board of Management – It is the role of the BOM to support the principal and the staff in the implementation of this policy and to allocate funding to support attendance.

### **Implementation Date**

The calling of roll books and reporting attendance has always been in place in schools

This policy was reviewed in 2022.

### **Timetable for Review**

This policy is revisited every year and will be reviewed as necessary.

In 2025 a full review will take place.

### **Ratification & Communication**

The statement was presented to the BOM in September 2022 for review.

The statement will be displayed on the school website.