



## **Attendance policy**

### **Introduction**

This policy document was drawn up:

- To ensure and maintain a high level of attendance at school by all pupils.

The Board of Management, in consultation with staff and parents/guardians drew up this Attendance Strategy Statement.

### **Rationale**

The policy was drafted for the following reasons:

- The Board of Management wishes to comply with legislation, such as:
  - The Education Act, 1998
  - The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000
- The Board of Management wishes to promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils' learning.
- The Board of Management recognises poor attendance and timekeeping can seriously damage children's education.

### **Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School**

Naiscoil Ide endeavours to enable every pupil to actively participate in all school activities. Regular attendance helps to create a stable learning environment for all pupils, and the school hopes to promote co-operation among pupils, parents/guardians and staff in maintaining a high level of regular attendance through the school year.

### **Aims**

- To raise awareness of the importance of regular school attendance
- To identify pupils at risk of leaving school early
- To promote and to foster positive attitudes to learning
- To ensure compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation.

### **Content**

#### **Recording and Reporting of Attendance and Non-Attendance**

- The school attendance of individual pupils and Class attendance data is recorded on our data management system on a daily basis. The annual attendance of each individual pupil is also recorded on-line.
- If a pupil does not attend on a day when the school is open for instruction, the class teacher will record his/her non-attendance. The roll call is taken at before 10 o'clock each morning. Any pupil not present will be marked absent for the day. The roll may not be altered once it has been called. A note from parents/guardians is required to explain each absence.
- The class teacher records late arrivals and early departures.

- Parents/guardians are informed in writing at the end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year. Pupils whose non-attendance is a concern are invited to meet with the Principal/Teacher and are informed of the school's concerns.
- The school must inform TUSLA in writing, where a child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular, where a pupil is removed from the school register and where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more.

### **Whole School Strategies to Promote Attendance**

- Naiscoil Ide, endeavours to create a safe, welcoming environment for our pupils and their parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are consulted in drafting and reviewing policies with the aim of promoting a high-level of co-operation among the school community. The teaching staff collaborates in the planning and implementation of the primary school curriculum, so as to provide a stimulating curriculum relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- New entrants and their parents/guardians are invited to engage in an induction process, through which the school's policies and procedures in relation to attendance are explained. There is a focus on the value of regular attendance and on the importance of developing good attendance habits from Junior Infants onwards.
- The school will use regular newsletters and web texts to promote attendance and punctuality.
- The class teacher will encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance and the class teacher will notify the principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any pupil.
- The calendar for the coming school year is published annually in September. It is hoped that this approach will enable parents/guardians to plan family events around school closures, thus minimising the chances of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term.
- Naíscoil Íde will promote development of good self-esteem and self worth in its pupils.
- Parents/guardians are informed if a child has no lunch, and if one cannot be provided for him/her, the school will provide a sandwich and a drink.

### **Rewarding of Students With Good Attendance**

- Naiscoil Ide awards certificates and trophies to pupils who have full attendance during the school year.

### **Strategies in the Event of Non-Attendance**

- Section 17 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), states that 'the parent of a child shall cause the child concerned to attend a recognised school on each school day'.
- Section 21 of the act obliges schools to inform the Education Welfare Officer if a child is absent on more than 20 days in any school year, or if a child does not attend school on a regular basis.
- In such cases 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) may serve a 'School Attendance Notice' on any parent who he/she concludes is failing or neglecting to cause the child to attend the school. A successful case taken against the parent may result in a fine and/or imprisonment.
- Reasons for absence are recorded and reported to TUSLA five times during the school year through an online system. An annual report is submitted – not more than six weeks following the end of the school year - detailing the overall level of attendance at the school during that school year.

### **Transfer to Another School**

Under Section 20 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), the Principal of a child's current school must notify the Principal of the child's previous school that the child is now registered in their school.

When a Principal receives notification that a child has been registered elsewhere he/she must notify the Principal of the pupil's new school, of any problems in relation to attendance at the pupil's former school and of such matters relating to the child's educational progress, as he/she considers appropriate.

On transfer to Naíscoil Íde attendance records will be sought from previous schools on pupil attendance.

### **Success Criteria**

The following will provide some practical indicators of the success of this policy:

- An increase in annual attendance rates
- Board of Management, Staff and parent/guardian awareness of their legal obligations under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Principal and class teacher to implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management.

### **School Principal**

The school principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations.
- Inform TUSLA;
  - If a pupil is not attending school regularly.
  - When a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during the course of a school year
  - When a pupil's name is removed from the school register
- Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil.
- Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.

### **Class Teacher**

The class teacher will:

- Maintain the school roll in accordance with procedure.
- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences.
- Promote a reward system for pupils with exceptional attendance.
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Inform the Principal of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupils

### **Implementation**

This revised policy will be implemented immediately following ratification by the Board of Management and communication to the Parents' Association in November 2016.

### **Ratification and Review**

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management in November 2016.

The Board of Management ratified it on Date: 31<sup>st</sup> January 2011

Signed: John Swords Chairperson, BOM

**Review Date: 2021**