

Attendance Policy of Cloghogue N.S.

Attendance Policy

Introduction

This Attendance Policy was a collaborative school process, involving teachers, staff, parent representatives, the Principal and the Board of Management.

Rationale

The main factors contributing to the formulation of the policy can be summarised as follows:

- To promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils' learning.
- To conform to legislative requirements such as the Education Welfare Act 2000 and the Education Act 1998.
- To recognise the role of the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB)

Aims and Objectives

The policy is geared towards:

- Ensuring compliance with the Admissions Policy of Cloghogue N.S.
- Ensuring that pupil attendance is recorded daily using Aladdin software.
- Encouraging full or near full attendance.
- Raising awareness of the importance of school attendance.
- Identifying pupils at risk of learning disadvantage through poor attendance.
- Ensuring compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation.
- Developing, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
- Identifying and removing, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.

Compliance with School Ethos

This policy complements the school ethos of nurturing potential in a caring environment where the welfare of children is paramount.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff will have an input into the implementation of the policy. Class teachers will record individual patterns of attendance and the Principal will make returns to NEWB.

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

Punctuality

School begins at 9.25am. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. The class teacher will contact the parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. If

there is no improvement the Principal/Deputy Principal will contact the parents/guardians. If there is still no improvement the matter will be brought to the Board of Management. The Principal is obliged under the Education Welfare Act, to report children who are persistently late, to the Education Welfare Board.

Recording and Reporting Attendance

The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded on the Aladdin software for each class on a daily basis.

If a pupil does not attend on a day when the school is open for instruction, his/her non-attendance will be recorded by the class teacher. A note, text, email or phone call from parents/guardians is required to explain each absence. Late arrivals and early departures are recorded by the class teacher.

Parents/guardians are made aware of the requirements of the NEWB particularly the by-law relating to absences of more than 20 days per school year. They are notified in writing on the end of the year report of the total number of absences during the school year. Parents of pupils whose non-attendance is a concern are invited to meet with the Principal and are informed of the school's concerns.

National Education Welfare Board

The NEWB is furnished with the total attendances in the school year through the annual Report Form which is completed online.

The school must inform the Education Welfare Officer 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

Cloghogue NS 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 learning environment for all pupils.

Teachers are vigilant with regard to early identification of 'risk students'. Risk students can be categorised as those who miss more than 5 days in a 20 day period without an accompanying note of explanation from parents/guardians. Appropriate contact takes place between the school and the parents/guardians either via a phone call or a note in the homework journal when this occurs. A meeting between parents and the Principal may be

set up if deemed necessary. Absences of more than 20 days are automatically referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

The calendar for the coming school year is sent out with report cards in June. 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.

We will award certificates to pupils who have full attendance during the school year. These certificates will be given at Christmas, Easter and Summer. Children who miss no days for the entire year will receive a prize at the end of 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 school. A successful case taken against the parent may result in a fine and/or imprisonment.

Reasons for absences are recorded and reported to the NEWB 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 the 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. This applies to pupils who transfer between primary schools and pupils who transfer from primary to second-level education.

Communication

The school maintains communication with local pre-schools and second level schools in order to make the transition for pupils as easy as possible.

Communication with other schools

- When a child transfers from Cloghogue NS to another school, the school's records on attendance, academic progress etc will be forwarded on receipt of written notification of the transfer.
- When a child transfers to Cloghogue NS confirmation of a transfer will be communicated to the child's previous school, and appropriate records sought.
- Pupils transferring from Cloghogue NS to a post primary school will have their records forwarded on receipt of confirmation of enrolment.

Communication with parents

Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- Notifying the school if their children cannot attend for any reason.
- Working with the school and education welfare service to resolve any attendance problems.
- Making sure their children understand that parents support good attendance.
- Discussing planned absences with the school.
- Refraining, if at all possible, from taking holidays during school time.
- Showing an interest in their children's school day and their homework.
- Encouraging them to participate in school activities.
- Praising and encouraging their children's achievements.
- Instilling in their children a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth.
- Informing the school in writing if the reasons for absence from school.
- Ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children's appointments are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence of other related school matters.
- Notifying the school if their child/children, particularly children in junior classes, are to be collected by someone not known to their teacher.

Evaluation

The success of any Attendance Policy is measured through

- Improved attendance levels as measured through Aladdin records and statistical returns.
- Happy, confident, well-adjusted children.
- Positive parental feedback.
- Teacher vigilance.

Review and Implementation

This policy will be reviewed in January 2023