



Lismullen National School

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Principal: Violet Molloy Deputy Principal: Jenny Dempsey



Attendance Policy

Ratified: 18th June 2024

INTRODUCTION

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

RATIONALE

Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) operates under the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, a piece of legislation that emphasises the promotion of school attendance, participation and retention.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The revised policy is geared towards:

- Ensuring that pupils are registered accurately and efficiently
- Ensuring that pupil attendance is recorded daily
- encouraging full attendance where possible
- identifying pupils at risk
- promoting a positive learning environment
- enabling learning opportunities to be availed of
- raising awareness of the importance of school attendance
- fostering an appreciation of learning
- identifying pupils at risk of leaving school early
- ensuring compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation
- identifying and removing, obstacles to school attendance.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff have an input into the implementation of the policy. Class teachers record attendance daily and monitor individual patterns of attendance in their class. 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 9:10 am. Teaching officially starts at 9:20am. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. Teachers will record late arrivals on Aladdin. The Principal will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. The Principal is obliged under the Education Welfare Act, to report children who are persistently late to TESS.

RECORDING ABSENCES

The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded of each class on a daily basis on Aladdin. 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. The roll call is taken at 10:10am each morning. Any pupil not present will be marked absent for the day. The roll book may not be altered once it has been filled in. Parents need to explain absences on the Aladdin app or email teachers explaining absences. Late arrivals and early departures are recorded by the class teacher.

Parents/guardians are made aware of the requirements of TESS particularly the by-law relating to absences of more than 20 days per school year. They are notified in writing on the end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year.

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.

REPORTING ABSENCES

School Returns: Schools report all student who have been absent 20 days or more by submitting Student Absence Reports (SAR) twice each year.

Annual Attendance Report (AAR). Schools report the total number of days lost through absence by submitting an Annual Attendance Report (AAR) at the end of the academic year.

Educational Welfare Referrals. Where a school principal has a concern in relation to the school attendance of a pupil and having exhausted in-school interventions an Educational Welfare Referral can be made to TESS in relation to these individual pupils.

Reduced School Day Notifications. Since January 1st, 2022, all students who are on a reduced school day must be notified to TESS.

Expulsions and suspensions. Schools are obliged to notify TESS where there is an intention to expel a pupil and also must notify TESS where the expulsion has been confirmed. Where a student has been suspended for a period of six consecutive days or a cumulative total of 20 school days a notification must be sent to TESS. These notifications are currently paper based and will be added to the portal in the autumn.

PREVENTION FOCUSED TIER CUT OFF SCORES

Tier 1 Satisfactory regular attendance

95% attendance

Goal: 80% of pupils

Tier 2 At risk for chronic absenteeism

<95% and >90% attendance:

Goal: no more than 15% of pupils

Tier 3 Chronic absenteeism

<90% attendance

Goal: no more than 5% of pupils

PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

The school promotes good attendance by:

- Creating a safe and welcoming environment
- The power of 1 good adult and 1 good friend
- Discuss attendance and punctuality at parent teacher meetings
- Reference will be made to attendance and punctuality on school reports
- Being vigilant so that risks to good attendance are identified early
- Parents/guardians of new entrants are invited to engage in an induction process
- The calendar for the coming school year is published annually in June and September
- Parents are encouraged to plan family events around school closures
- Pupils are expected to wear the correct school uniform
- Parents/guardians are informed if a child has no lunch

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'.

- Parents/guardians are made aware of the requirements of TESS particularly the by-law relating to absences of more than 20 days per school year.
- They are notified in writing on the end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year.
- Parents will receive a reminder on Aladdin once 10, 15, and 20+ days are missed.
- Parents will receive a letter from the school once 20 days are missed.
- 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
- Parents will receive a phone call from the Principal once 25 days is missed.
- A referral to the Education Welfare Officer will be made once 30 days are missed.
- 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 TESS twice during the school year.

SCHOOL REFUSAL

Please refer to the Roscommon School Refusal Resource Pack (on dropbox) for information on how to best support children who are identifying as school refusing.

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 or she considers appropriate. This applies to pupils who transfer between primary schools and to pupils who transfer from primary to second-level education.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

The school also informs all parents of the implications of non-attendance as per the *Education Welfare Act 2000*. This information is disseminated throughout the year. Parents of new children are informed on enrolment.

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 to resolve any attendance problems
- making sure their children understand that parents support good school 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 children's homework
- encouraging them to participate in school activities
- praising and encouraging their children's achievements
- ensuring, that children's appointments are arranged for times outside of school hours
- contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about school matters
- notifying, in writing, if children are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher.

REFERENCES

National School Attendance Campaign 2023/2024 webinars

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In school management and teachers

RATIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION

State when the BoM officially ratified the policy. Make provision for the circulation of the ratified policy. Provide the policy to all new applicants on enrolment.

REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed as requested or required.

Signed _____ Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Principal

Date _____