

Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí



**Polasaí Tinrimh
agus Poncúlachta**

2015

STATEMENT FOR ATTENDANCE

Rationale

The ethos of this school places a high value on the regular attendance and punctuality of all pupils. Every lesson in Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí has an educational value; therefore attendance and punctuality support the school's foremost aim of pupil learning. Prolonged absence, irregular attendance and lack of punctuality can all serve to undermine educational achievement and result in considerable long term disadvantage to children. Pupils who have prolonged absences and irregular attendance often fall into the underachieving or low achieving categories and therefore a direct correlation may be drawn between attendance and achievement.

Aims

- 1 To maximise attendance rates for all pupils individually and for the school community as a whole.
- 2 To clarify staff roles and responsibilities regarding attendance and punctuality.
- 3 To inform pupils and parents of the clear procedures to be followed in cases of absence or lateness.
- 4 To make effective use of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) when the attendance or punctuality of individual pupils causes concern.

Methods

1. All adults in school to provide a good role model for pupils in terms of punctuality and attendance.
2. Accurate and thorough marking of the registers at the beginning of each school session, using the agreed system of symbols.
3. Parents will either inform the school by telephone before 9.15am that their child is ill and will not be attending school that day or they will supply a note when the child returns to school explaining the reason for their absence.
4. Teachers/Admin staff to pursue reasons for all absences when they have not been given and to inform Principal if no satisfactory reason is given by the parent/carer.
5. Principal and relevant staff to use SIMS to monitor and analyse whole school, group and individual pupil attendance.
6. Full attendance certificates will be awarded every term with a special prize for those pupils achieving full attendance for the complete academic year. Certificates will be issued on the following basis: one term; bronze certificate is issued and noted in the SIMS system. Two consecutive terms of full attendance, a silver certificate will be issued and noted. A full academic year's attendance will be rewarded with a gold certificate and noted. Gold certificates will be accompanied by a small prize.
7. Parents are requested not to take their child on holidays during term time. If parents wish to take their child on holidays during term time, a request should be made in writing to the Principal in advance of the proposed dates.
8. Absence will be marked as unauthorised if:
No explanation is forthcoming.
The pupil is on a family holiday during term time and the parent has not submitted a written request.

9. Pupils late for the start of the morning will report to the school office accompanied by a parent/carer. Pupils will be registered as late after 9:00 a.m. The secretary will register them in the late book and, if necessary, record if a meal is required. The school secretary will escort the pupil to his/her classroom. If a pupil is recorded in the late register on more than **four occasions**, in any calendar month, a letter will be issued to parents informing them of this. **If a letter is issued on two or more occasions in any one academic term the Education Welfare Officer will be informed.**

10. The Principal will report to the governing body on the levels of attendance and punctuality.

Half Termly letters to parents of pupils whose attendance falls below 85% are to be sent out.

11. When an individual pupil's attendance falls below 80% for any term, this will be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer.

12. Pupils who are late for sessions more than four times in any one term will also be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer.

13. Persistent absence or lateness will result in careful monitoring by the Education Welfare Officer and parental discussions.

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities of the Principal/ Designated Teacher for Pastoral Care:

- The **Principal** is responsible for managing pupil attendance within school in liaison with the **Designated Teacher for Pastoral Care**.

The Principal rewards good attendance each week, with the weekly attendance star for the highest attending class group.

- The Principal rewards 100% attendance at the end of each year, with pupils presented with a certificate for full attendance during the Prize-giving ceremony.

- Each term, the Education Welfare Officer and Principal review the registers and identify any patterns of attendance that are of concern. Where appropriate, visits are made to the family home by the Education Welfare Officer.

- Monitor punctuality

- Each year a report on school attendance is provided for the consideration of the Board of Governors.

- Support parents who are having difficulty getting their child to attend each day

Roles and responsibilities of the Board of Governors:

- To consider the Principal's report on school attendance each year.

Roles and responsibilities of the those in charge of attendance:

- The teachers are responsible for managing pupil attendance within their key stage in liaison with the Principal and Designated Officer.

- To work closely with the EWO to monitor attendance through SIMS.

- To send initial letters home to parents whose children are beginning to show signs of frequent absenteeism.

- To refer children to the EWO if there is a pattern to their non-attendance or if their attendance falls below 85%.

Roles and responsibilities of **Teaching Staff:**

- To ensure the register is maintained accurately at the commencement of each school session, and returned to the school office every day. Registers are legal documents and can form evidence based in court cases.
- To alert the Principal/Designated Officer when a child is beginning to show signs of frequent absenteeism.
- To report any notable and concerning patterns of absence to the **Designated Teacher for Pastoral Care**. They in turn may contact Education Welfare Officer,
- To use the latecomers book to record pupils who are frequently late for class.

Roles and responsibilities of **Parents and Guardians:**

- Parents should ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.
- If their child is genuinely unable to attend school, Parents and Guardians are expected to contact school at the start of each day of absence to provide a reason for absence. On the child's return to school, a letter signed by the Parent or Guardian, explaining absence should be provided.
- If their child starts avoiding school, parents and guardians should contact the school straight away and work with them to sort things out.
- If their child needs to miss school, for example for a special occasion, the parent or guardian should seek the school's agreement well in advance and give full details.
- Parents and guardians are requested to make routine medical or dental appointments outside school hours.
- Parents and guardians are discouraged from taking holidays during term-time. However, if this is a necessity, parents and guardians are required to apply to the Principal for authorised holiday absence prior to booking the holiday.

Roles and responsibilities of **Pupils:**

- To attend school every day, arriving on time and ready for work.