

Aughdreena N.S.

Attendance Policy

Rationale:

The main factor contributing to the formulation of an attendance policy can be summarised as follows:

- to foster an appreciation of learning by having good attendance practices
- to comply with requirements under Education Welfare Act 2000
- to raise awareness of importance of school attendance
- to enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- to be informed of the role of Túsla, the Child and Family Agency

Aims and Objectives:

The 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
- identify pupils at risk of leaving school early
- 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 have an input into the implementation of the policy.
- Class teachers record individual patterns of attendance and parents sign in/out in the office should a child arrive late or leave early.
- As required by legislation, regular school returns are made to Túsla during the school year.
- 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 9.20am. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being persistently late. The Principal is obliged under the Education Welfare Act, to report children who are persistently late, to Túsla. A bus also drops children to the school daily. The driver has been notified of the school starting time of 9.20am and aims to have all children at school on time daily.

Recording and Reporting Attendance:

The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded in the Leabhar Rolla (Roll Book) electronically on Aladdin on a daily basis. Class attendance data is recorded daily in the Leabhar Tinrimh (Attendance Book) electronically on Aladdin. The annual attendance of each individual pupil is recorded on Aladdin, together with information provided in enrolment forms (Pupil's name, Date of Birth, Address, Religion, Parent's names and Parent's occupations).

In order to be counted as a full day's attendance, a child must be present for 3 hours (Junior & Senior) and 4 hours (1st to 6th class). An absence note is required to be completed to explain each absence as outlined by the Education and Welfare Act. Such notes will be retained in the school office.

Parents/guardians are made aware of the requirements of Túsla particularly the by-law relating to absences of 20 days or more per school year. Parents of pupils whose non-attendance is a concern are informed of this by the class teacher during meetings and are informed of the school's concerns. Exact number of days missed are recorded on each child's end of year report.

The school must inform the Túsla, 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.

The school circulated the Túsla information booklet *Don't Let Your Child Miss Out* to all parents in January 2015. The school also informs all parents of the implications of non-attendance as per the Education Welfare Act 2000. This information is disseminated by regular school letters. Parents of new children are informed on enrolment.

Arriving late to school due to Medical/Dental Appointments:

- Where possible, all appointments should be made outside school time.
- If a child has a medical, dental or unavoidable morning appointment, a phone call to the school or a letter has to be sent in beforehand from his/her parents.
- Parents/guardians must also provide a reason orally or written, outlining the reason a child has to depart early during the school day.
- Late Arrivals/early departures are recorded in the book in the school office and electronically on Aladdin.

Parents/Guardians can Promote Good School Attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance
- Notifying the school if their child/ren cannot attend for any reason
- Working with the school and education welfare service to resolve any attendance problems
- Making sure their child/ren understand that parents support and approve of regular school attendance
- Discussing planned absences (e.g. for family reasons) with the school in advance.
- Refraining 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.
- Instilling in their children, a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth.
- Informing the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school by completing and returning the School Absence Form
- Ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children's appointments (including health and medically related), are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- Notifying, orally or in writing, the school if their child/children, particularly children in junior classes, are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher.

Responsibility of Class Teachers:

The class teachers will:

- Maintain the school roll-book in accordance with the rules for National schools.
- Ensure early leavers/late arrivals are suitably recorded (parents to sign the in/out book in the office)
- Keep a record of all absences and return Absence Forms to the office.
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Identify students who are at risk of developing school attendance problems. Inform the Principal of such concerns.
- Attendance is recorded electronically and automatically uploaded to reports each year on each individual reports
- Record punctuality on end of year school reports. The following comments will accompany the reports for 6th class Passports to Secondary School:

Very good: Always on time

Needs improvement: Regularly late

Travel by Bus: Those who come to school by bus daily

Promoting Attendance

The school promotes good attendance by:

- creating a safe and welcoming environment
- being vigilant so that risks to good attendance such as disadvantage, bullying etc. are identified early
- liaising with parents if a child's punctuality or attendance is causing concern

Túsla:

Túsla is informed if:

- a child has missed 20 days or more.
- a child is suspended
- a child is expelled

Túsla is furnished with the total absences in the school year through the Annual Report Form which is completed on-line.

Whole School Strategies to Promote Attendance

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 and punctual attendance and on the importance of developing good attendance habits from Junior Infants onwards.

The calendar for the coming school year is published annually in June. It is hoped that this approach will enable parents/guardians to plan family events around the school closures.

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 the 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 education progress as he or she consider appropriate. This applies to pupils who transfer between primary schools and to pupils who transfer from primary to second level education.

Evaluation

The success of any Attendance Policy is measured through:

- improved attendance levels as measured through Leabhar Rolla records and statistical returns
- happy confident well-adjusted children
- positive parental feedback
- teachers vigilance



Return of Educational Facility Parental Declaration Form

Name of Setting: Aghadreena N.S.

Acting Principal: Mrs. Eilish Smith

Child's Name: _____

Class: _____

Reason for Absence (please tick)

Illness

Urgent Family Reasons

Holidays

Other

This form is used when children are returning to the setting after any absence. Please give details:

No of days absent: _____

Date/s of absence: from: ____/____/____ to ____/____/____

Declaration:

I have no reason to believe that my child has infectious disease and I have followed all medical and public health guidance with respect to exclusion of my child from educational facilities.

Signature of Parent: _____

Date: _____



Return of Educational Facility Parental Declaration Form

Name of Setting: Aghadreena N.S.

Acting Principal: Mrs. Eilish Smith

Child's Name: _____

Class: _____

Reason for Absence (please tick)

Illness

Urgent Family Reasons

Holidays

Other

This form is used when children are returning to the setting after any absence. Please give details:

No of days absent: _____

Date/s of absence: from: ____/____/____ to ____/____/____

Declaration:

I have no reason to believe that my child has infectious disease and I have followed all medical and public health guidance with respect to exclusion of my child from educational facilities.

Signature of Parent: _____

Date: _____