

**Scoil Naomh Colmcille**  
**School Attendance Policy**

**Introduction**

This policy document was a collaborative school process (January 2019) involving the staff, management and Board of Management to ensure and maintain a high level of attendance at school by all pupils. Establishing good attendance habits from the very beginning of a child's time at school is very important.

**Aims & Objectives**

The aims and objectives of this policy are as follows:

- Ensuring that pupils are registered accurately and efficiently
- Ensuring that pupil's attendance is recorded daily, encouraging full attendance where possible
- Identifying pupils at risk of poor attendance and at risk of leaving school early
- Promoting a positive learning environment
- Enabling all pupils to avail fully of learning opportunities
- Raising awareness of the importance of school 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
- To comply with requirement under Education Welfare Act 2000

**Compliance with School Ethos**

This policy complements the school ethos where we endeavour to nurture each pupil within a caring, happy, positive and child-friendly environment where the welfare of children is paramount.

**Roles and responsibilities**

All staff has an input into the implementation of the policy. Class teachers record individual patterns of attendance on *Aladdin* each morning before 10.00am. The school secretary along with the Deputy Principal makes returns in December and June to *Túsla*. It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management.

## **The Education Welfare Act 2000**

Under the terms of the Education Welfare Act 2000 (amended by the Child and Family Agency Act 2013) schools are obliged to:

- Maintain a record of students attending school
- Record school attendance and notify the relevant Educational Welfare Officer of particular problems relating to attendance
- Supports students with difficulties in attending school on a regular basis
- Prepare and implement a school attendance strategy to encourage, in a positive way, regular school attendance and an appreciation of learning within the school
- Prepare and implement a code of behaviour, setting standards of behaviour and disciplinary procedures for the school
- Liaise with other schools and relevant bodies on school attendance issues

## **Punctuality**

School begins at 8.50am. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. For security reasons, all doors will be locked at 9.00am.

- It is the responsibility of each class teacher to take their roll call before 10.00am. They must also maintain a record on *Aladdin* of children who arrive late to school, leave school early or are collected late.
- A child will be recorded as being late to school if they arrive after 9am and if a child arrives to school after the designated roll time, they will be marked absent.
- A note/email sent directly to the class teacher is required from the parents/guardians for each child arriving late, departing early and for each absence. This information will be recorded in *Aladdin* and the notes will be gathered by all class teachers, returned to the office each Friday and filed safely away.
- A parent/guardian who is collecting their child/children from school early must sign out with a valid reason in the early leavers' record book in the office.
- Where teachers see a pattern of poor punctuality emerging, they should notify the parents/guardians at an early stage.
- If there is still no improvement in punctuality, then an email should be sent home notifying parents/guardians of the issue.
- If punctuality continues to be an issue then teachers should bring the issue to the attention of the Principal/Deputy Principal. A meeting with the parents will be arranged to discuss strategies to improve the punctuality.
- If school interventions and strategies do not improve, the Principal or Deputy Principal will report the case to Túsla/Education Welfare Officer.

## **Promoting Attendance**

Scoil Naomh Colmcille endeavours to create a safe, welcoming environment for our pupils and their parents/guardians. With the aim of promoting a high-level of co-operation among the school community, Parents/Guardians may view our policy on our school website. The teaching staff collaborates in the planning and the implementation of the primary school curriculum, so as to provide a stimulating learning environment for all pupils.

- We promote attendance through ongoing praise for attendance
- Class teachers will highlight good attendance in the classroom
- At the end of the school report, children's level of absence is identified
- Rewarding pupils with full attendance each quarter, by giving them a Homework Pass and / or a certificate
- The Principal will present *Excellent Attendance* certificates at the end of the school year to all pupils who achieve this level

## **Communication to parents**

- The calendar for the coming school year is published annually in June and reminder sent out in September to all families. 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.
- The school also informs all parents of the implications of non-attendance as per the Education Welfare Act, 2000. (This information is shared at least once a year to all families) *Specific references are made to the consequences of long absences' on children's progress in language and find it difficult to readapt to their class situation after a long absence.*
- While we understand that children may be absent due to illness or bereavement, where parents still fail to send in a note/email of explanation for absence, this will be recorded on *Aladdin* as absent and "unexplained." A text will be automatically sent out stating that their child is absent.
- Our school will monitor days of absence on *Aladdin* on a weekly basis. When a child reaches 12 days absence, an email will be automatically sent to parents informing them of this and the responsibility of the school to report to Túsla should the child reach the 20 days absence. (Appendix 1)
- An email will be sent to parents when pupils have missed 20 days or more and also reported to Túsla. (Education Welfare Act, 2000) (Appendix 2)
- All attendance is reported in the end of year school report to parents

## **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 enrolled 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 and secondary level education.

## **Communication with other Schools**

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

## **Parents/Guardians roles**

Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance
- Notifying the school by email 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 school attendance
- Informing 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
- 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 for school
- Ensuring, insofar as possible, that children's appointments are arranged for times outside of school hours

- Contacting school immediately, if they have concerns about absences or other related school matters
- Notifying, in writing, the school if their child/children, are to be collected by someone not know to the teacher

### **Evaluation**

The success of any Attendance Policy is measure through:

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

### **Implementation/Ratification and Review**

This policy has been collaborated together with the staff and board of management of Scoil Naomh Colmcille in January 2019.

It will be reviewed every 3 years or when seen as appropriate

*Signed:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*(Chairperson BOM)*

*Signed:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*(Principal)*

Appendix 1

**12 Days Absence**

Dear Parents/Guardian

Under the terms of the Education Welfare Act, 2000, the school is obliged to notify Túsla if a child is absent for 20 days or more, or where a child's absence gives rise to concern.

It is the school's policy to inform parents/guardians by email of children's absences, when these absences are 12 days or more. While we understand that children may be absent due to illness or bereavement, we are just bringing the number of absent days to your attention.

This letter is to inform you that our records show that \_\_\_\_\_ (name) has been absent from school on \_\_\_\_\_ days.

One of the factors ensuring the success in education is higher school attendance and habits of attendance are set in early years of schooling. Hence it is a policy of Scoil Naomh Colmcille National School to encourage children to attend our school every day. Parents/Guardians can help to develop a positive attitude to school attendance by encouraging children to come to school every day and also by ensuring that all absences are explained in writing. Our attendance policy is available to view on our website [www.durrows.com](http://www.durrows.com)

We thank you for your cooperation.

Yours Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

Frank Kelly

Principal

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Maireád Cusack

Deputy Principal

## Appendix 2

### **20 Days Absence**

Dear Parents/Guardian

Under the terms of the Education Welfare Act, 2000, the school is obliged to notify Túsla if a child is absent for 20 days or more, or where a child's absence gives rise to concern.

It is the school's policy to inform parents/guardians by email of children's absences, when these absences are 20 days or more. While we understand that children may be absent due to illness or bereavement, we are just bringing the number of absent days to your attention.

This letter is to inform you that our records show that \_\_\_\_\_ (name) has been absent from school on \_\_\_\_\_ days.

One of the factors ensuring the success in education is higher school attendance and habits of attendance are set in early years of schooling. Hence it is a policy of Scoil Naomh Colmcille National School to encourage children to attend our school every day. Parents/Guardians can help to develop a positive attitude to school attendance by encouraging children to come to school every day and also by ensuring that all absences are explained in writing. Our attendance policy is available to view on our website [www.durrows.com](http://www.durrows.com)

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