

Convent Primary School, Killaloe, Co.Clare

Attendance Strategies

In Convent Primary School, Killaloe we value the individuality of all our children and respect their right to access all areas of learning. We work to enable them to develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that are necessary for their self-fulfillment and their development into active and responsible adults.

We decided to review its attendance strategies because:

- It is a priority area identified by staff, including HSCL Teacher
- It is a requirement under Education Welfare Act 2000
- The school needs to encourage pupils to be in attendance

Aims

In Convent Primary School, Killaloe we aim:

- To foster an appreciation of learning
- To raise awareness of the importance of school attendance
- To identify pupils at risk of early school leaving
- To enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To promote positive attitudes to learning
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner that encourages pupils to attend school
- To comply with requirements under Education Welfare Act 2000/Guidelines from NEWB.

Compliance with School Ethos

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

Roles and Responsibilities

- All staff have an input into the implementation of the policy
- Class teachers record individual patterns of attendance.
- The Deputy Principal has responsibility for maintaining the Leabhar Tinreamh on Aladdin and making returns to TUSLA Child and Family Agency.
- The Deputy Principal will prepare a report on attendance for the Board of Management on a term basis or as the need arises.
- It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management
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Punctuality

- School begins at 9.20 am.
- All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time.
- The school 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 TUSLA Child and Family Agency.

Recording Attendance

- The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded on Aladdin school administration software, on a daily basis. If a pupil does not attend on a day when the school is open for instruction, her non-attendance will be recorded by the class teacher. The roll call is taken at 10.00 am each morning. Any pupil not present will be marked absent for the day. The roll may not be altered once it has been filled in. Late arrivals and early departures are discouraged by the staff unless absolutely necessary. They are monitored by the class teacher and records are kept on the Aladdin school administration software. Should a child be absent, they are required to have an explanatory note from their parents. This may be recorded in the home school diary. The Education and Welfare Act 2000 ‘obliges the parents of an absent child to notify the school of the cause of absence not later than the third day of absence’. Notes or record of non- attendances are duly dated and need to be kept.
- The annual attendance of each individual pupil is recorded by Aladdin.

Strategies to encourage good attendance

- **Caring Environment** – All staff at our school aim to ensure that children are taught in a safe secure and caring environment where their intellectual, physical and spiritual development are catered for. We try to create a welcoming environment for pupils and parents. Teachers consistently try to encourage good attendance in their respective classrooms
- **Special Needs** – pupils needing support are identified as early as possible and the appropriate support systems put into place. We emphasise positive achievements and do all we can to enhance self-esteem
- **Rewards** - Certificates are issued for perfect and improved attendance, at the end of the school year. We have an Attendance Noticeboard where all pupils who have missed no days each month are recorded on the board. The class who have the best attendance each month are rewarded with extra golden time.

Communication

- **Parental Support** - It is the policy of Convent Primary School to encourage and maintain open communication between home and school and to encourage parents in their role as primary educators of their children. The Principal and teachers are available, on an appointment basis, to meet parents.
- Attendance is one of the issues addressed at meetings for new parents when their child is enrolled in our school.
- It is also covered in the information pack given to all parents of Junior Infant children
- At the beginning of each school year, the school holds an information session for new parents and one of the issues addressed is that of the importance of regular school attendance among a range of other topics
- Parents are made aware of the requirements of the Education Welfare Act at pre-enrollment information meetings. Each family is given a copy of the information leaflet - **Don't Let Your Child Miss Out** (Leaflet for parents NEWB 2004) This leaflet outlines
 1. The importance of regular attendance
 2. Parental obligations in relation to attendance under the Education Welfare Act

3. Advice to parents on what they can do to help children attend school regularly.

Parents are reminded regularly of the importance of good attendance (i.e. newsletters, parent/teacher meetings etc.). An awareness of the importance of good attendance by the children, is kept to the forefront in the classroom and at assemblies.

- When a child has accumulated 15 days of absence the school notifies the parents in writing. The letter outlines that should a child reach 20 days the school are obliged to notify the Education Welfare Board.
- When a child has missed 20 days, the absence is reported to the EWO for the county and to Education Welfare Board as required by the Education Welfare Act. If the absenteeism persists, the school requests active intervention from the EWO.

Evaluation

The success of this Attendance Policy is measured through:

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

Implementation/Ratification and Review

This policy was ratified by the BoM of Convent Primary School, Killaloe on 27th September 2017.

It will be reviewed again in 2018.