

St. Aidan's National School

Clonroche, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford. Y21PY59
(053) 9244441

Email: info@clonrochens.ie

Most recent review: 28th May 2020

Attendance/ Absenteeism Policy

(The compilation of this policy had an input from members of the Board of Management, staff, Parent's Association, Community members and students.)

In Clonroche National School, 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.

Clonroche National School decided to review its attendance strategies because:

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

Aims

In Clonroche National School 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.

Strategies to encourage good attendance

- **Caring Environment** – Clonroche National School, at all times, aims to ensure that children are taught in a safe secure and caring environment where their intellectual, physical and spiritual development are catered for.
- **Welcoming Environment** - We try to create a welcoming environment for pupils and parents. Teachers consistently try to encourage good attendance in their respective classrooms

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- **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.
- **School Curriculum** – Insofar as is practicable, will be flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- **Rewards** – Attendance certificates/rewards are issued for perfect and improved attendance, both at Christmas and at the end of the school year. The pupils are reminded of the importance of good attendance twice weekly at assembly.
- **Lunches** – The School's Meal Programme is in place to provide all children with a healthy lunch and drink. These measures enhance the school experience for those children who might otherwise be at risk of poor attendance.
- **Attendance Monitoring** – Attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance and the class teacher will notify the Principal/Deputy Principal of any concern regarding the attendance of any pupil. Parents are obliged to submit a note of all absences to the school, if a child doesn't submit a note a reminder will be sent to the parent via the school management system.
- **Regular Communication re. Attendance Concerns** – The school uses regular Newsletters and Text-a-parent to promote attendance and punctuality.

Communication

- **Parental Support** - It is the policy of Clonroche National 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 likewise 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 Clonroche National School.
- It is also covered in the information pack given to all parents of Junior Infant children.
- On induction day the Junior Infant teacher holds a general meeting of 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.

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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.

Strategies/Procedures for dealing with poor attendance.

1. A roll call is taken every day and 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 '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.
2. Parent/Guardians receive a text-a-parent at 10/15/20 days absence, through the Aladdin School Management System.
3. When a child has missed 20 days, the absence is reported to Tusla, as required by the Education Welfare Act.
4. After 20 days of unexplained absences a phone call will be made between school and parent to express concern and to identify problems, agree interventions etc.
5. If situation has not improved, a meeting may take place with parents/guardian to identify problems and agree interventions.
6. If unexplained absences reach 30-35 days, concerns will be communicated to parents in writing and a Pre-Referral Checklist will be completed by the class teacher.
7. If and when a pupil reaches 40 days of unexplained absences, a pre-referral and a referral form will be forwarded to Educational Welfare Services, Tusla.

References

Don't let your Child Miss Out - NEWB 2004

Education Welfare Act 2000

Education Act 1998

Section 29 Education Act

Empty Desks - CDU Mary Immaculate

Review ratified:

Chairperson

Principal

Date

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Note: 28th May 2020

On 12th March 2020, under instruction from the Department of Education, Clonroche National School closed it's doors due to the Covid 19 pandemic. The school, following government protocols, remained closed for children for the remainder of the school year.