



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY 2019

Name of School: *St Corbans BNS – Scoil Chorbáin Naofa*
Address: *Fairgreen, Naas, Co. Kildare*
Roll Number: *17254C*

Introduction

One of the greatest gifts that anybody can give a child is to offer the child the opportunity to fulfil his potential. Education can provide this opportunity and attendance at school is essential if a child is to grasp the opportunity. St Corbans expects each pupil to attend school every day unless there is a legitimate reason why he should not attend. Every child has a right to education and parents have a responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

Rationale

This policy was prepared in consultation with the staff, parents, and the Board of Management in order to highlight the strategies and measures in place in St Corban's BNS to develop, maintain and improve attendance at school. It brings together all of our practices and interventions aimed at promoting and supporting school attendance. It is used to inform the day to day management of attendance.

Aims

The aims of this school attendance policy in Scoil Chorbáin Naofa are:

- ✓ To encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually.
- ✓ To share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community.
- ✓ To inform the school community of its role and responsibility
- ✓ To identify and support pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- ✓ To ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance/participation.
- ✓ To develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
- ✓ To identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.

The school will ensure that:

- The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school.
- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Pupil attendance is recorded daily.
- Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated.
- Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored.
- School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to:
 - ✓ TUSLA
 - ✓ The Education Welfare Officer
 - ✓ The Board of Management

Recording and Reporting of Attendance and Non-Attendance

Schools have a requirement to maintain accurate pupil enrolment and attendance records. In September 2016 the old Roll Book, Leabhar Tinrimh and Clárleabhar were replaced by a

digital system on Aladdin School Management Systems and the Primary Online Database.(Circular 28/2013 & Circular 33/2015). The old Leabhar Rolla has been replaced by the digital roll on Aladdin and this records the pupils' attendance each day. The Clárleabhar (a record of registered pupil enrolments) is replaced by the Primary Online Database (POD) which records all the pupils enrolled in the school and the relevant background, history and specific details. POD is now regarded as the school register. The Leabhar Tinrimh Laethúil is replaced by the Aladdin System and records the total number of pupils present in each class each day, a summary of the class attendance for each day, week, term and year. Roll books and registers are kept in digital form on the Aladdin School Administration System for recording pupil attendance as part of the school records. Each school term the Digital Roll Book and Attendance Log is printed from the Aladdin system and filed in hard copy in the school's filing system. At the end of each school year the Digital Leabhar Tinrimh Laethúil is printed from Aladdin and filed in hard copy in the school's filing system.

Guidelines on Recording Attendance

Each classroom teacher is responsible for recording his/her class attendance on a daily basis by inputting the details on Aladdin. . The roll is normally taken each morning between 09:45 and 09:50. On Swimming days the roll may be taken before they leave the school at 09:05 or when they return at 10:30. The cut-off time for entering information is 11:00. If for some reason the roll has not been taken at the designated time, the teacher may still enter the information up to the cut-off point of 11:00 am. When a late input/amendment (after 11:00) is required, the system will ask for a reason. All changes/amendments to rolls appear on the attendance log that is printed each school month and filed in the school filing system. Teachers record if the pupil is present or absent. They also record reasons for any absences, notes received and information in the notes, attempts to get notes from parents who fail to supply notes and refusal of parents to provide notes. Teachers also record a child's punctuality by recording "Lates". This shows the number of minutes late a child is on a particular day.

Punctuality

School begins at 08:45 with Assembly Time from 08:45 to 09:00 and all pupils are expected to be in before 09:00 to be on time. Tardiness is recorded on the Aladdin System by teachers recording the number of minutes late a pupil is on any particular day. The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. The Principal is obliged to report children who are persistently late, to the Tusla. If a pupil is more than a few minutes late or is coming to school late having attended an appointment outside school (Dentist, doctor etc), he must be "signed-in" at the main office and brought to his classroom teacher by the adult.

Guidance for Parents

The primary responsibility for ensuring a child's attendance at school rests with the child's parents. Section 17 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), states that 'the parent of a child shall cause the child concerned to attend a recognised school on each school day'. Section [(21) (9)] of the Act states that: "a pupil's absence can only be authorised by the Principal when the child is involved in activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved". The school principal cannot authorise a child's absence for holidays during school time. However, it is essential that parents inform the school of such arrangements.

Reasons for pupils' absences must be communicated, by parents/guardians to the school and a record of same will be retained by the school. If a child is absent, when the child returns to

school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher which contains the child's name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence. This information is recorded on Aladdin. These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. The school will contact parents when an explanation for the child's absence is not received by the school.

A strategy for promoting good school attendance

The Board of Management is committed to providing a positive school atmosphere which is conducive to promoting good school attendance. In this regard:

- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- The school will promote the development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children.
- Support for pupils, who have special educational needs, are in place in accordance with Department of Education & Skills guidelines and resources.
- Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils.
- The school will positively acknowledge students with good attendance during the school year.
- The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be utilised.
- The attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance, and the class teacher will notify the Principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any child.
- Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.
- The school has developed a Strategy for School attendance to help address poor attendance and support parents and pupils.

Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance and creating a regular routine.
- Notifying the School by note or by phone 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/approve of school attendance;
- Discussing 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 of the reasons for absence from school.
- Ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children's appointments (with dentists etc), are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.

Pupils

- Pupils have the clear responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence.

- Pupils are responsible for promptly passing on absence notes from parents to their class teacher.
- Pupils are responsible for passing school correspondence to their parents, on the specified day.

School Principal

- The School Principal will:
 - Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations.
 - Inform parents of a decision to contact TUSLA/ Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil.
 - Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.
 - Inform TUSLA/Education Welfare Officer:
 - ❖ If a pupil is not attending school regularly.
 - ❖ When a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days cumulatively in one school year.
 - ❖ If a pupil has been suspended for a period of six or more days.
 - ❖ Of the date when a pupil's name is removed from the school register.
 - ❖ Of our Statement of Strategy for School Attendance and provide TUSLA with a copy.

Class Teacher

The class teacher will:

- Maintain the school roll-book on Aladdin in accordance with procedure (the roll is usually taken each morning between 09:45 and 09:50 and recorded on the Aladdin System.) On Swimming days the roll may be taken at 09:05 or 10:30.
- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences on Aladdin.
- Keep a record of attempts to get notes from parents on Aladdin.
- Keep a record of "lates" by recording the number of minutes late a pupil is, on any morning.
- Contact parents in instances where absences are not explained and seek an explanation. A record will be kept of communications with parents regarding absences.
- Promote a reward system for pupils with exceptional attendance.
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Inform the Principal/ Assistant Principal of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.
- Differentiate the curriculum to facilitate and address the needs of the pupils in his/her class.

Records/Communication

Subject to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act, attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer to another primary school will be passed to the Principal of the school, as soon as we receive notification of transfer and registration in the next school.

Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer from another primary school will be sought directly from the previous school.

Attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils transferring to a second level school will be sent to the school on the standard forms, once enrolment has been confirmed.

Strategies in the Event of Non-Attendance

Section 17 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), states that 'the parent of a child shall cause

the child concerned to attend a recognised school on each school day'.

Section 21 of the act obliges schools to inform the Education Welfare Officer if a child is absent on more than 20 days in any school year, or if a child does not attend school on a regular basis.

In such cases the Education Welfare Officer (following all reasonable efforts by the Education Board to consult with the child's parents and the Principal of the school) may serve a 'School Attendance Notice' on any parent who he/she concludes is failing or neglecting to cause the child to attend the school. A successful case taken against the parent may result in a fine and/or imprisonment.

Reasons for absence are recorded and reported to the TUSLA four times during the school year through an online system. An annual report is submitted - not later than six weeks following the end of the school year - detailing the overall level of attendance at the school during that school year. This information may be communicated to the school community through the school's newsletter.

Success Criteria

The following will provide some practical indicators of the success of this policy:

- A high level of annual attendance rates
- Board of Management, Staff and parent/guardian awareness of their legal obligations under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000

Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal and staff will implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school and they will be supported by the school in this regard.

Implementation

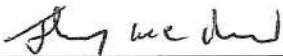
This policy will be implemented immediately following ratification by the Board of Management and communication to the Parents' Association.

Communication

A copy of this policy has been given to each teacher and is available for parents to view in the school.

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in 2019.

Signed: 
(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date: 15/01/19

Appendix:

Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management. 15/01/2019

Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla. 16/01/2019

Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Patron. 16/01/2019

