

Clonburris National School, Clondalkin, Dublin 22.

School Attendance Policy

The law in Ireland states that all children are required to attend school every day. It is the responsibility of every parent or guardian to make sure that their son or daughter attends school every day. This leads to increased self-confidence and self-esteem and also to better school performance.

The aims of the attendance policy in Clonburris National School are to:

- Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually;
- Inform the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined in the Education Welfare Act 2000;
- Share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community
- Identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems;
- Ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance/ participation;
- Develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems;
- Identify and remove, insofar as is possible, obstacles to school attendance.

The school will ensure that:

- Parents will receive a reminder of the importance of good attendance and their duty under the Education Welfare Act at the start of each year;
- The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school;
- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently;
- Pupil attendance is recorded daily;
- Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored;
- Parents will receive reminders through the school newsletters regarding the importance of children coming to school on time and staying for the full day;
- Pupil attendance statistics are reported as appropriate:
 - The Education Welfare Board;
 - The Education Welfare Officer;
 - The Board of Management.

The Aladdin Software System has been purchased by the school and is being used as a tool to help monitor each child's attendance.

Punctuality

School is open from 8.30am. The pupils are allowed to enter the hall where they are supervised by three members of staff until 8.45am. At this time the children go to their class line and walk to their classroom. Teachers will supervise the corridors as the children leave the hall and go to their classrooms. The school will contact parents/ guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late.

Guidance for Parents.

Section (21) (9) of the Education Welfare Act 2000 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 in writing, by parents/ guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. To facilitate this, the school journal has pages where parents/ guardians may write reason(s) for absence(s). These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school.

Parents/ Guardians can promote good attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance;
- Notifying the school 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 from the school;
- Refraining from taking holidays during school time;
- Showing an interest in their child’s school day and their child’s homework;
- Encouraging their children to participate in school activities;
- Praising and encouraging their child’s achievements;
- Instilling in their child a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self- worth;
- Encouraging parents to make appointments for dentist/ doctor etc outside school hours;
- Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters;
- Notifying the school, or the teacher, if their child (particularly in infant classes) is to be collected by someone not known to the teacher.

Pupils will:

- Attend school regularly and punctually;
- Inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence;
- Remind their parents/ guardians to write a note explaining an absence, in their school journal (1st to 6th class) and Teddy Bear books (Junior and Senior infants);
- Pass school correspondence to their parents, on the specified day.

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 pupil;
- The school will promote 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 and Skills guidelines;
- Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils;
- The assistance of the education welfare officer will be utilised;
- Early identification of students who are at risk of developing school attendance problems;
- Establish closer contacts between school and families, through the H.S.C.L. teacher;
- The Principal will make contact with parents of children under 6 years who are missing for over 20 days, at the teacher's request;
- The attendance rates will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance, and the class teacher will notify the H.S.C.L. teacher and the Principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any child;
- Parents will be informed, in writing, when their child's absences become a concern;
- The Attendance Committee meets every two to three weeks to track and monitor attendance. The Committee consists of the H.S.C.L. co-ordinator, Education Welfare Officer and a representative from the School Completion Programme. A specific number of children are targeted for this programme.
- The school encourages attendance through extra curricular activities: Homework and Activity Club, School Completion Club, Toe By Toe Programme, Gaelic Football, Soccer and Chess Club
- One of the factors in the "Going for Gold" reward incentive scheme, is the child's attendance record.
- At the end of each quarter, those children who have full/ near full attendance receive a special School Attendance Reward Certificate from the Principal.
- At the end of each school year, children who have full attendance for the year, receive a special prize and their parents are invited to attend the awards ceremony.
- Many students receive Art Therapy, Play Therapy and the Rainbows Programme weekly, and a Care Team has now been established in the school.

Teachers with responsibility for promoting/ monitoring attendance will:

- Check Aladdin System and record names of all children who have had full attendance for each quarter and/ or the school year;
- Organise presentation of certificates of attendance at the end of each quarter and at the end of each school year;
- Distribute and collect sheets, check Aladdin System and record all children who have 20 days absence during the previous period i.e. from the beginning of the school year to date specified by the education welfare board. (This will be done 4 times annually);
- Liaise with the attendance officer, principal, H.S.C.L. teacher and class teachers regarding children who have a poor attendance record;
- Record details of children who have transferred to another school;
- Contact parents in cases of poor attendance and develop links with these parents;
- Identify and remove, where practical, obstacles to school attendance;
- In May and June, following final report to education welfare board, monitor and record additional children who may have been absent for more than 20 days.

Class Teacher:

The class teacher will:

- Maintain the Aladdin System in accordance with procedure;
- Ensure that a record of absences is kept in the school journal and on the Aladdin system each day. The Aladdin system is used to record attendance and non-attendance, along with reasons for absences if the school has been notified by parents/guardians. A text message is sent out each day to those parents whose children are absent from school without explanation.
- Promote the reward system for pupils with exceptional attendance;
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually;
- Inform the teacher in charge of monitoring attendance of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.
- Document each child's attendance for the school year in the annual school report cards sent home to parents at the end of June.

School Principal:

The School Principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations;
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer:
 - If a pupil is not attending school regularly;
 - When a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during the course of a school year;
 - When a pupil has been suspended for a period of 6 or more days;
- A reminder note is sent to parents when a pupil has been absent over 15 days;
- Insofar as practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.

Record/ Communication

Attendance and non-attendance is monitored daily via the school roll books and the Aladdin system.

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, by post, as soon as written notification of the transfer is received.

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, if requested, once enrolment has been confirmed.

This policy was reviewed and updated in April 2018

Ratified by Board of Management on _____
(Date)

Signed: _____

(Chairperson, Board of Management)

