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CBS Primary Dundalk Attendance Policy

Introduction

The CBS Primary School's attendance policy aims to promote and encourage regular attendance among our children and to convey the importance of good attendance at school.

Rationale

To promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils' learning. The school's responsibility to the legislative requirements within the Education Welfare Act 2000 and the Education Act 1998. Therefore, it is necessary to state that;

- *A child must always attend school.*
- *The only time a child may be absent from school is in the case of sickness or medical emergency.*
- **TESS** strongly advises parents not to take their children out of school for holidays during term time. [Education Welfare ServiceTusla - Child and Family Agency](#)

Aims and Objectives

- Ensure that pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Ensure that pupil attendance is recorded daily
- Encourage full attendance where possible
- Improve school attendance
- Promote a positive learning environment
- Enable learning opportunities to be availed of
- Raise awareness of the importance of school attendance
- Foster an appreciation of learning
- Identify pupils at risk of leaving school early
- Ensure compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation
- Develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
- Identifying children at risk and removing insofar as is practicable obstacles to school attendance.
- In compliance with the school ethos, this policy complements the school's ethos of nurturing potential in a caring environment where the welfare of children is paramount.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have input into the implementation of this policy. Class teachers record individual attendance patterns on Aladdin Schools, and the returns are made to EWS/TESS twice yearly. The Leabhair Tinreamh is automatically collated on Aladdin Schools.

It is the responsibility of the principal and the staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management

Punctuality

School begins at 9.05 am.

All pupils and staff are expected to be on time. The school will contact parents/guardians if pupils are consistently late.

Recording and Reporting Attendance

The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded on Aladdin (An Leabhar Rolla) at 10.00 am each morning. Class attendance is recorded in the Leabhar Tinrimh on Aladdin automatically. The annual attendance of each pupil is recorded on Aladdin together with information provided in enrolment forms, including pupil's names, date of birth, PPSN, address, religion, parent's names etc.

Any pupil not present will be marked absent for the day. If a pupil does not attend, their absence will be recorded by the class teacher (or the allocated SET teacher if the class teacher is absent) on Aladdin Schools Administration Service.

Parents/Guardians must explain each absence through the Aladdin Connect portal. The roll may not be altered once it has been filled in; however, if a child arrives late, this must be noted on Aladdin along with the arrival time.

Parents/Guardians must also contact the school if a child is to depart early during the school day.

TESS (Tusla Education Support Service)

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is provided with the total attendance in the school year through the Annual Report Form completed through the TESS (Tusla Education Support Service) portal.

The school must inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing:

- where a child has missed 20 days or more in a school year
- where attendance is irregular
- where a pupil is removed from the school register
- where a child is suspended or expelled for six days or more

Promoting Attendance

The school promotes good attendance by:

- creating a safe and welcoming environment

- ensuring children are happy
- displaying kindness, compassion and understanding
- being vigilant so that risks to good attendance, such as disadvantage and bullying, are identified early.
- Supporting parents to help them establish routines that promote good school attendance.

The role of the parent and guardian

Ireland's Constitution states that parents are the child's primary educators. Support from home is vital for your child's success in school. To support your child, you can:

- Show interest in what your child is doing in school
- Consult with the school on your child's progress
- Attend parent/teacher meetings
- Talk with the class teacher about any concerns you may have, and
- Praise your child's efforts at every opportunity. Your encouragement means a lot and will motivate your child to continue trying.
- ensuring regular and punctual school attendance
- notifying the school if their children cannot attend for any reason
- working with the school and TESS to resolve any attendance problems
- ensuring that their children understand that their parents support good school attendance
- discussing planned absences with the school
- refraining, if 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 promoting their children's achievements
- supporting their child to develop high self-esteem and a positive sense of self-worth.
- informing the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school
- ensuring insofar as is practicable that children's appointments are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- Contacting the school immediately if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.
- Notifying the school if their child/children, particularly children in Junior Classes, are to be collected by someone unknown to the teacher.

Whole School Strategies to Promote Attendance

CBS Primary Dundalk endeavours to create a safe, welcoming environment for our pupils and their parents/guardians. The teaching staff collaborates in planning and implementing the primary school curriculum to provide a stimulating learning environment for all pupils. Parents/Guardians are consulted in drafting and reviewing policies to promote a high level of cooperation among the school community.

We have high expectations regards attendance in our school. Students at risk can be categorised as those who miss more than five days in a calendar month. Any child missing school for more than 3 consecutive days due to illness must provide a medical certificate.

In the case of Covid19, 7 days from the first sign of symptoms or the day of a positive test,

proof of a positive test may be required.

The calendar for the coming school year is sent through Aladdin Connect and published on the school website every September. It is hoped that this will encourage Parents/Guardians to plan family events around school closures, minimising the chances of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term.

- Every day counts campaign in November run with HSCL and SCP
- An end-of-term class reward for the highest attendance
- An end-of-term reward for 95%+ attendance
- A monthly class reward for 95%+ attendance at the assembly
- A copy of our Attendance policy will be sent home at the start of each academic year
- Our Attendance strategy will be highlighted in each termly newsletter
- Attendance is highlighted at the beginning of every staff meeting
- Attendance is specifically addressed in our DEIS plan

Pupils are expected to wear the correct school uniform, if a parent is having difficulty purchasing the school uniform, they can contact Maria Doyle HSCL, and help will be available. Children are provided with free lunches through the Schools Meals (Local projects) Programme, Dept of Social Protection.

Strategies in the Event of Non-Attendance

Parents/Guardians are made aware of the requirements and the role of the EWO when children begin school and updated regularly through newsletters and Aladdin Connect notices. The law relating to absences of more than 20 days per year must also be communicated.

- Parents/Guardians will be informed of their child's attendance record at the beginning of each Parent/Teacher meeting.
- Parents/Guardians are notified on the end-of-year report of the total number of absences during the school year.
- Class teachers will report any patterns of absence that they observe to Maria Doyle (HSCL)
- Maria Doyle (HSCL) will monitor patterns of absence through Aladdin Schools.
- Class teachers will inform Maria Doyle about late arrival and early leaving patterns, including leaving with siblings.
- Reasons for absence are recorded and reported to the TESS during the school year through the online portal. An annual report is submitted at the end of the school year detailing the overall attendance during the school year.
- Parents/Guardians are notified through a phone call with HSCL when their child hits absences of 5 days or more.
- Parents/Guardians are notified through text message when their child hits absences of 10 days or more.
- Parents/Guardians are notified through a letter from the principal when their child hits

absences of 15 days or more.

- Pupils with 20 days of absence will be asked to meet with the HSCL and SCP and are informed of the school's concerns. If there is no improvement, the parents will be asked to attend a meeting with the Principal, HSCL and SCP.

Under the Education Act, children with 20 days absence or more are reported to the EWO. In such cases, the EWO (following all reasonable efforts by the TESS to consult with the child's Parents/Guardians and the HSCL, SCP and the principal of the school) may serve a 'School Attendance Notice' on any parent who they conclude is failing or neglecting to cause the child to attend the school. A successful case against a Parent/Guardian may result in a fine or imprisonment.

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 previous school that the child is now registered in their school.

When a principal receives notification that a child has been registered elsewhere, they must notify the principal of the pupil's new school of any problems with attendance at the pupil's former school and of such matters relating to the child's educational progress as they consider appropriate. This applies to pupils who transfer between primary schools and those who move from primary to second-level education.

Communication

The school has developed a good relationship with the TESS personnel, and there is ongoing communication concerning at-risk children.

The school communicates with local pre-schools and second-level schools to make the transition for pupils as easy as possible.

Communication with other Schools

When a child transfers from this school to another, the school's records on attendance, academic progress, etc., will be forwarded on written notification of the transfer.

When a child transfers to the CBS Primary School, confirmation will be communicated to the child's previous school, and appropriate records will be sought. Pupils transferring to a post-primary school will have their documents forwarded on receipt of confirmation of enrolment, including Educational Passport, School Support Plans and other documentation supporting the child's transition.

Evaluation

The success of any Attendance Policy is measured through improved attendance throughout the whole school, including specific target families identified by HSCL and SCP.

Implementation and Review

The Board of Management adopted this policy on _____ 2022.

Signed: Deirdre Kerr, Chairperson, BOM Date: _____ 2022.

Signed: Eileen Hart, Principal, Date: _____ 2022.

Date of next review: May 2025