



Attendance Policy

Introduction:

Changing social habits and patterns necessitated the updating of the schools attendance policy. The redrafting was a collaborative school process involving staff, parents and the school Board of Management.

Rationale:

The main factors contributing to the formulation of a revised policy can be summarised as follows;

- The changing fabric of society
- The influx of non-nationals
- The roll of the NEWB
- Levels of disadvantage
- Legislative requirements such as the Education Welfare Act 2000
- Changing attitudes to education

Aims and Objectives:

The revised policy is geared towards;

- Encouraging full attendance where possible
- Identifying pupils at risk
- Promoting a positive learning environment
- Enabling learning opportunities to be availed of
- Raising awareness of the importance of school attendance
- Fostering an appreciation of learning

Compliance with School Ethos:

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

Roles and Responsibilities:

All staff has an input into the implementation of the policy. Class teachers' record individual patterns of attendance and the school Principal make returns to NEWB. A postholder (Eithne McBrien) has responsibility for maintaining the Leabhair Tinreamh.

Policy Content

Recording:

Individual school attendance is recorded in the Leabhair Rolla and on Aladdin's schools for each class and the class date is recorded in the Leabhair Tinreamh. All children attending and data on

parents are recorded in the school register. A sheet is circulated by the Postholder at the end of each month where teachers fill in the number of days missed by each pupil. This attendance tracking sheet is then given to the EWO at monthly attendance meetings.

A note from parents/guardians is required to cover each absence and these are dated and kept in folders in the relevant classroom. Medical certificates are kept in the child's folder in the office. Parents are made aware of the requirements of the N.E.W. B particularly the bye law relating to absences of more than 20 days per school year. This is communicated regularly via newsletters and also at our enrolment evening.

School Strategies:

Traditionally, school attendance is strong in our school and has not been adversely affected by social changes. However, staffs remain vigilant so that risk students are identified early. Risk students can be categorised as those who miss more than 5 days in a 20 day period without an accompanying note of explanation from parents/guardians. Appropriate contact takes place between the school and parents/guardians either via a letter or a note in the homework diary when this occurs. A meeting between parents and the Principal may be set up if deemed necessary. Absences of more than 20 days are automatically referred to the Education Welfare Officer and children who have missed 15 days are written to by the principal to alert them of the high absence rate.

Communication with other Schools:

- When a child transfers from Castlegar NS to another school, the schools records on attendance, academic progress etc will be forwarded on receipt of written notification of the transfer
- When a child transfers into Castlegar NS confirmation of transfer will be communicated to the child's previous school, and appropriate records sought
- Pupils transferring from Castlegar NS to a Post Primary school will have their records forwarded on receipt of confirmation of enrolment

Communication with Parents:

The school also informs all parents of the implications of non-attendance as per the *Education Welfare Act 2000*. This information is disseminated by regular school newsletters. Parents of new children are informed on enrolment and are given a copy of the schools attendance booklet.

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, bullying etc. are identified early
- Rewarding good attendance with certificates at monthly assembly.

- **National Education Welfare Board:**

The Education Welfare Officer is informed if;

- A child is expelled
- A child is suspended
- A child has missed more than 20 days

The NEWB is furnished with the total attendances in the school year through the Annual Report Form which is completed on-line.

Evaluation:

The success of any Attendance policy is measured through;

- Improved attendance levels
- Happy confident well adjusted children
- Positive parental feedback
- Teacher vigilance

Implementation/Ratification and Review:

This policy has been in operation in Castlegar NS since 2000 and was updated in 2012. It will be reviewed again in 2014.

References:

Don't let your Child Miss Out - NEWB 2004
Education Welfare Act 2000
Section 29 Education Act
"Empty Desks"- C.D.U. Mary Immaculate