

## **Attendance Policy**

### **Introduction:**

This policy was formulated by the teachers of Killina National School at the school planning day on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009. It was revised in June 2012.

### **Rationale:**

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

- The changing fabric of society
- The role of the NEWB
- Legislative requirements such as the Education Welfare Act 2000
- Changing attitudes to education

### **Aims and Objectives:**

The policy is geared towards;

- Encouraging full attendance where possible
- Encouraging children to be punctual
- 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. The principal makes returns to NEWB.

## **Policy Content**

### **Recording:**

Individual school attendance is recorded in the Leabhair Rolla and recorded in the Leabhair Tinreamh. All children attending and data on parents are recorded in the school register.

A note from parents/guardians is required to cover each absence and these are dated and kept by the class teacher. 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.

### **Punctuality**

Pupils are expected to be in their line at 9.20am. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. Children who arrive in late to school will be required to sign a 'Late Book'. Parents who take children out of class before the end of the school day must sign the child out also. The Principal is obliged under the Education Welfare Act, to report children who are persistently late, to the Education Welfare Board.

### **School Strategies:**

Traditionally, school attendance is strong in our school and has not been adversely affected by social changes. However, our staff remains 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.

### **Communication with other Schools:**

- When a child transfers from Killina NS to another school, the schools records on attendance will be forwarded on receipt of written notification of the transfer
- When a child transfers into Killina NS confirmation of transfer will be communicated to the child's previous school, and appropriate records sought
- On request and with parental permission pupils transferring from Killina NS to a Post Primary school will have their records forwarded.

### **Communication with Parents:**

The school circulated the NEWB information booklet "*Don't Let Your Child Miss Out*" to all parents in February 2005. The school regularly 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.

### **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 and prize

#### **Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:**

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- Notifying the School if their children cannot attend for any reason.

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- Working with the School and education welfare service to resolve any attendance problems.
- 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 in writing of the reasons for absence from school.
- Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.

### **A strategy for promoting good school attendance**

#### **The Board of Management**

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 practical, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- 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 & 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 utilized if necessary. 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 be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.
- At the end of the school year, full attendance by pupils is recognised and rewarded with a certificate and prize.

#### **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.
- If a pupil has been suspended for a period of six or more days.
- When a pupil's name is removed from the school register.
- Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil.
- Insofar as is practical, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.
- Deputy Principal is in charge of sending roll-book to each class and afterward completing the Leabhar Tinrimh daily.

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### **Class Teacher**

The class teacher will:

- Maintain the school roll-book in accordance with procedure.
- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences.
- Contact parents in instances where absences are not explained in writing.
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Inform the Principal of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil

### **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.

### **Evaluation:**

The success of any Attendance policy is measured through;

- Improved attendance levels
- Happy ,confident, well adjusted children
- Positive parental feedback
- Teacher vigilance
- A satisfactory level of accountability for all absences.

### **Implementation and Review:**

This policy will be implemented immediately in Killina NS with the support of the Board of Management. It will be reviewed again in 2014.

### **Ratification**

This policy was reviewed by parents in June 2012

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on 25<sup>st</sup> June, 2012

