



## **Attendance Policy Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa Ballymurn**

### **Introduction**

It is the policy of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa to encourage good attendance and punctuality. There are several reasons why the school believes that good attendance and punctuality are essential, including:

- Pupils who attend school regularly are better able to keep up with schoolwork and therefore often enjoy school more.
- Coming to school on time is a good habit, which will stand to all pupils through their working life.
- Late arrivals are disruptive for the pupil's classmates, teacher and for the pupil who is arriving late.
- Late arrival at school means a pupil misses out on valuable assembly and socialisation time with his/her classmates and teacher.
- The opportunity for pupils to line up in the school-yard each morning and enter school with their peers fosters a sense of independence in pupils, and has a positive influence on their self-development.

### **Rationale**

This review and amendment of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa's Attendance Policy has been undertaken for a number of reasons. These are as follows:

- In line with Section 21.1 of the 2000 Education Welfare Act, it is the responsibility of the school principal to maintain a record of the attendance of all pupils enrolled in the school.
- Section 22.1 of the 2000 Education Welfare Act, outlines the responsibility of the Board of Management of the school to formulate a strategy on attendance that rewards good attendance, identifies pupils at risk of developing poor attendance and establishes closer links with the families of such pupils and in so far as is practicable to implement a programme of activities designed to encourage pupils to participate in the full life of the school.
- It is the responsibility of the school to liaise with, and report relevant pupil absences to the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB).

## **Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School**

In Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa all staff aim to create a happy, child friendly environment, where children can grow and learn in confidence. In order to create this kind of atmosphere, full attendance of all pupils must be encouraged and rewarded. The welfare of pupils is of paramount concern to the Board of Management and staff of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa. For this reason the school aims to adhere to all sections of the 2000 Education Welfare Act relating to school attendance and punctuality.

## **Aims**

In implementing this policy, Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa aims to:

- Foster an appreciation of learning that motivates pupils and parents to work towards achieving full attendance and daily punctuality.
- Raise awareness of the importance of school attendance for all parents and members of the school community.
- Identify pupils at risk of leaving school early with a view to putting a support structure in place for the pupil and her parents/guardians.
- Promote positive attitudes to learning through reward schemes such as golden time, group reward charts etc.
- Ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner that encourages pupils to attend school.
- Comply with requirements under the 2000 Education Welfare Act and current guidelines from the NEWB.

## **Defining and Recording of Non-Attendance**

A parent is obliged to cause a child between the ages of 6 and 16 to attend at "a national school or other suitable school" on each day that the school is open for instruction. For the purposes of our records in Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa, non-attendance is recorded as any day a child fails to attend school from the first day of his/her enrolment, irrespective of age.

Non-attendance will be recorded in the official school roll books. Each teacher will keep a second written daily record of his or her class' attendance. Any pupil not present will be marked absent for the day. The roll book **may not** be altered once it has been filled in. Records of this will be kept in the Principal's office. The roll will be taken at 10am. Late arrivals and early departures are recorded at the school office.

The calendar for the coming school year is published annually in June and on the school website. It is hoped that this approach will enable parents/guardians to plan family events around school closures, thus minimising the chances of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term.

In line with the 2000 Education Welfare Act, parents/guardians will be obliged to notify the school of the reasons for a child's absence, no later than on the third day of absence.

The school requests that all pupils returning to school after an absence of one day or more, has an explanatory note from a parent/guardian.

The principal will adhere to the NEWB reporting of absences dates each year. Pupil absences will be reported to the NEWB under the following circumstances:

- A student is absent for a cumulative total of 20 days or more.
- A student is suspended for 6 days or more.
- A student moves to another school.
- A student is expelled.
- The Principal is concerned about a student's attendance.

## **Parents**

At all Parent-Teacher meetings the importance of good attendance and punctuality will be conveyed to parents/guardians.

The taking of holidays during school term time will be strongly discouraged by all teaching staff. All parents will be encouraged to inform the school in writing of the reason for a child's absence. If a parent has reading/writing difficulties the need for written notes can be waived and an oral explanation to the teacher/principal will suffice.

All medical certificates should be passed on to the school.

In the event that a child has missed ten days without sufficient explanation (an example of a sufficient explanation would be a lengthy illness accompanied by a medical cert.), the principal will contact the pupil's parents in writing in order to alert them to this fact and to outline the procedure to follow.

In the event that a child has missed fifteen days without sufficient explanation as above, the principal will contact the pupil's parents by phone or in person in the school in order to alert them to this fact and to outline the procedures to follow.

In the event that a child is brought late to school e.g. family over-slept, then they are encouraged to attend. A child attending school at 11am is preferable than a not attending at all on that day.

## **Positive Strategies**

Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa will implement a number of positive strategies to encourage excellent attendance and punctuality. They are as follows:

- Award certificates are presented to pupils who have full attendance during the school year. Certificates are also available to pupils who improve their attendance over a short period of time, and to pupils who improve their overall attendance.
- The principal will engage in regular contact with the school's assigned (Education Welfare Officer) EWO.
- The EWO will be invited to speak at the Junior Infant open morning to encourage positive attitudes towards school attendance and punctuality.

## **Procedures in relation to the Removal from Register/Transfer from another school**

A principal may only remove a pupil's name from a school register where they have been informed that the child has been enrolled in another school or when the Welfare Board notifies them that the child has been registered by it as in receipt of out-of-school education.

Where parents remove a child from a school the principal is obliged to give them and the new school a certificate stating child's record of attendance and absences in the school, the last class the child attended, and any other relevant information pertaining to the education of the child.

## **Success Criteria**

The success of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa's Attendance Policy can be measured in the following ways:

- Increase in attendance levels.
- Up to date maintenance of school roll books and registers.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

## **Roles & Responsibilities**

- Parents are responsible for ensuring their child's punctual attendance at school and informing the school in writing of the reason for any absences.
- The Class Teachers are responsible for the daily recording of pupil attendance and punctuality. Attendance will be recorded daily in the official roll book and also in a separate copybook to allow for accurate cross-checking.
- The Deputy Principal will assist in the checking of class teacher rolls at end of the school year and will assist new teachers with correct roll taking procedures.

- The Principal will be responsible for parental contact on issues of attendance - sends half-termly attendance notices, contact parents in writing when absences reach 10 days, contact parents by phone or in person in the school when absences reach 15 days, submits NEWB reports.

### **Implementation Date**

This policy will be implemented from 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2012

### **Section 5.1 - Timetable for Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the principal.

### **Ratification & Communication**

This policy was ratified by the BoM on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2012. Copies of the policy will be made available in the office and on the school website, in keeping with our green school status. A copy of the policy will be given to parents of all new pupils at the June information meeting each year.

Signed: *Nick Byrne*

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2012

Nick Byrne  
Chairman  
Board of Management