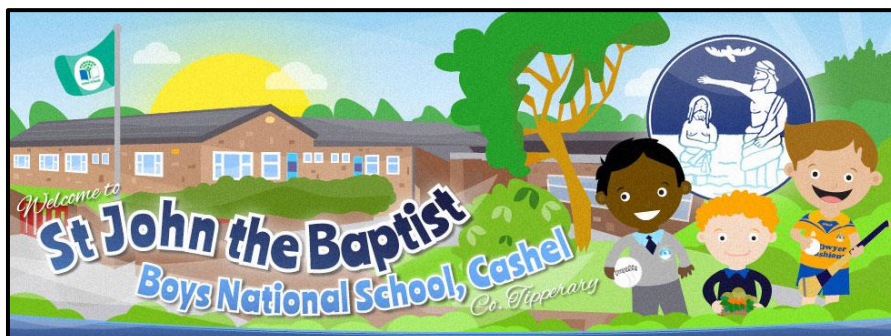


**Scoil na mBuachaillí Naomh Eoin Baiste**

# **Attendance**

# **Policy**



## **Aims**

The aims of the Attendance Policy at Scoil na mBuachailí Naomh Eoin Baiste are to:

- encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually.
- share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community.
- inform the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined in the Education Welfare Act 2000.
- identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
- identify and remove, insofar as is practical, obstacles to school attendance.

## **The school will ensure that:**

- the importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school.
- pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- pupil attendance is recorded daily.
- reason for absence is recorded.
- parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated.
- parents are informed, regardless of reasons for the absence, via text message when a pupil has missed 10 days. They are informed again via text message at 15 days and at 20 days via text message and letter.
- pupil attendance and lateness is monitored.
- school attendance statistics are reported, as appropriate, to:
  1. the Child and Family Agency (Túsla) Educational Welfare Services
  2. the Education Welfare Officer (EWO)
  3. the Board of Management

## **Punctuality**

School is open from 9.00 a.m. and children are required to be in attendance no later than 9.20 a.m. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. The Principal is obliged

under the Education Welfare Act to report children who are persistently late to the Child and Family Agency (Túsla) Educational Welfare Services.

### **Guidance for Parents**

Section [(21) (9)] of the Education Welfare Act 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.*** If a child is absent, when he returns to school he should give a written note to the class teacher at back of homework journal which contains the child’s name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence. 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 school attendance by:**

- ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- notifying the school if their children cannot attend for any reason.
- working with the school and Educational Welfare Services to resolve any attendance problems.
- making sure their children understand that parents support and approve of school attendance.
- discussing planned absences with the school.
- avoiding 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.
- ensuring, insofar as is possible, that when children’s appointments occur during school hours that children come back to school afterwards.
- ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children’s appointments (with dentists etc), 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 in writing or by phone if their child/children are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher.

### **Pupils**

Pupils have the clear responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually. Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence. Pupils are responsible for promptly showing absence notes from parents to their class teacher.

Pupils are responsible for passing 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 individual child.
  
- The school will promote development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children.
- Supports 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.
- A special reward system has been introduced for promoting good attendance at school.
- The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be utilised. The new referral system to EWOs established by Túsla in 2014-15 will be adapted by the school.
- 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, insofar as is practical, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.

### **School Principal**

The School Principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations.
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer through the online student absence management system or through the referral process in the following instances -
  - ***If a pupil is not attending school regularly.***
  - ***If the Principal is concerned about a student's attendance.***
  - ***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 cumulative period of six or more days.***
  - ***If the school has expelled a student.***
  - ***When a pupil's name is removed from the school register.***
  
- Inform, where deemed necessary, 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**

As part of her leadership and management duties, the Deputy Principal has responsibility

- For the recording and compilation of absences for entry, if necessary, into Túsła's student absence management system.
- For ensuring that all electronic roll books are fully completed throughout the year.

**The Deputy Principal will work closely with the Principal in the continued implementation of strategies to promote and improve attendance.**

### **Class Teacher**

The class teacher will:

- maintain the school electronic roll book in accordance with procedure.
- keep a record of explained and unexplained absences.
- promote a reward system for pupils with exceptional attendance.
- encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- inform the Principal of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.

The class teacher may:

- contact parents in instances where absences are not explained and/or if they have concerns around a child's attendance.

### **Record/Communication**

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 we receive written notification of transfer.

Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer from another primary school will be sought directly from the previous school.

The end of year report of the pupil transferring to a second level school will be sent to the school once enrolment has been confirmed.

### **Ratification and Review :**

The Board of Management ratified this policy on **14 December 2017**.

It is subject for review in **December 2019**.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal)

Note: On 1 January 2014, the National Educational Welfare Board was abolished and its functions transferred to the Child and Family Agency

## Appendix One

### What can PARENTS do to improve School Attendance?

#### AFTER SCHOOL EVERY DAY:

- Make sure that the homework is done as early as possible
- Keep the school uniform for school wear only

#### THE NIGHT BEFORE:

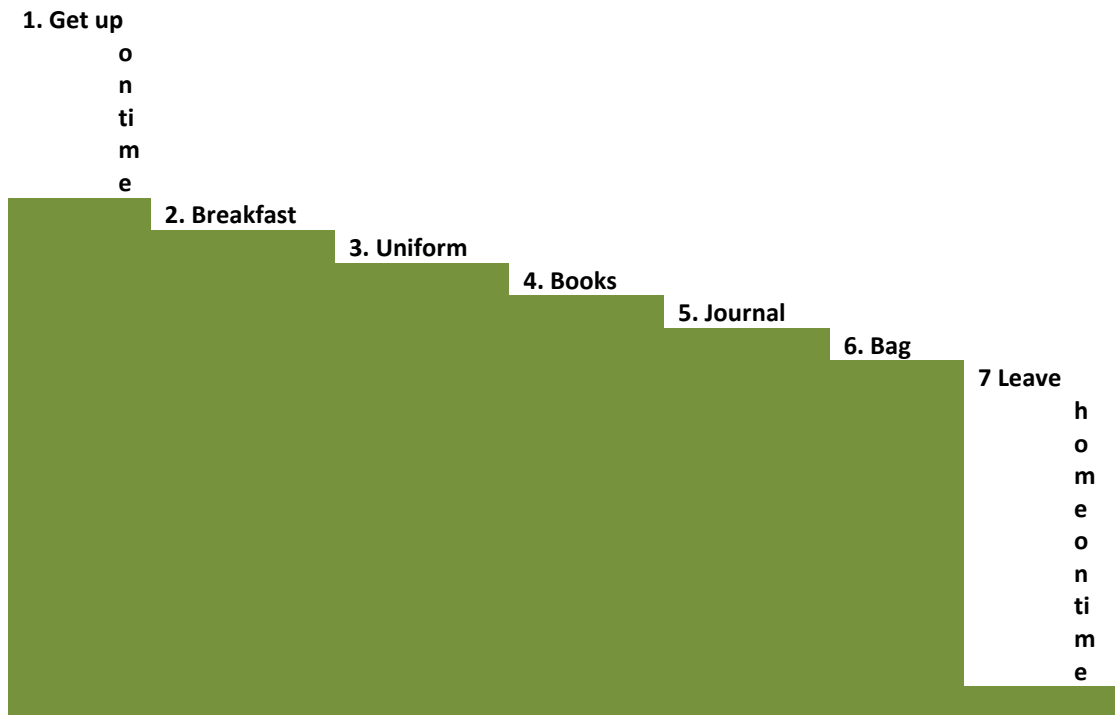
Try and have ready

- School bag
- Lunch
- Uniform
- Get your child to bed at a reasonable hour every night
- Set the alarm on your mobile phone or the alarm clock for the morning.

#### BEFORE SCHOOL EVERY DAY:

- Get up on time in the morning so that you will not be rushing
- Don't allow your child to watch television in the morning
- Get your child to eat some breakfast every morning
- Talk positively about school
- If possible don't allow your child go to the shop in the morning as this delays them and they could be late for school
- Let your child know that you will be there to collect him / her in the afternoon or that you will be waiting at home when they come in
- You know your child best. Only keep your child at home if he / she is really sick

**"Ready for School Routine" - Easy steps to get to school today**



**What can TEACHERS do to improve School Attendance?**

- Welcome students every morning
- Praise each student for their effort
- Give students a reasonable amount of homework
- All teachers should give homework each night

- No homework at weekends (at primary school)
- Reward students for good attendance

### What can SCHOOLS do to Improve School Attendance?

- Give efforts to promote attendance and attendance successes a high profile within the school
- Establish an Attendance Care Team in the school
- Keep up to date attendance records that are reviewed regularly by the Attendance Care Team in order to respond to patterns of non-attendance as well as patterns of good or improved attendance
- Create positive systems of reward for good and improved attendance
- Develop a greater awareness amongst students and their parents of the long-term benefits to be gained from a good attendance record
- Ensure a consistent approach to attendance promotion throughout the school
- Involve all stakeholders in supporting high expectations for school attendance and attainment
- Monitor that stakeholder involvement from the perspective of students, parents, teaching and other staff, school management and the community at large.



## Appendix Two

### When is a child TOO SICK FOR SCHOOL?

There are three key reasons to keep a child home from school

1. Fever over 100.4 degrees F or 38°C
2. The child may have a contagious illness or rash
3. The child is not well enough to participate in class

- The average child has 6 to 12 illnesses per year, so sickness is a part of normal childhood. It can be difficult to balance the child's school attendance with the risk of spreading the illness to others in school.
- Fever is a symptom which usually indicates that the body is fighting an infection. A child with fever over 100.4 degrees F (38°C) needs to stay home until the fever is gone for 24 hours.
- Rashes that are itchy or scaly may be contagious and need to be checked by the nurse or doctor. If a child with a rash is ill looking, is having trouble swallowing or breathing, they need to be seen by the doctor.
- A cough need not keep a child from school unless it is interfering with sleep or ability to take part in activities.
- Coughs and runny noses can persist for up to two weeks after a cold. Children can return to school once they no longer have a fever.
- Children can attend school with a mild sore throat unless they have other symptoms as well, such as fever, vomiting or abdominal pain.
- Children with a vomiting illness (repeated vomiting) need to stay home until the vomiting stops and they are eating normally.
- Children with diarrhoea also need to stay home until stools have been normal for at least 24 hours.
- Frequent hand washing with soap and water is the most important and effective way of preventing the spread of contagious diseases.

## **Appendix Three**

### GUIDELINES FOR **COMMON CHILDHOOD ILLNESSES**

<b>ILLNESS</b>	<b>SYMPTOMS &amp; SIGNS</b>	<b>WHAT TO DO.</b>
<b>FEVER</b>	<b>100.4°F or 38°C</b>	<b>Stay home, must be fever free for 24 hours before returning.</b>
<b>HEADACHE</b>	<b>If the child can't do normal activities</b>	<b>Stay home</b>
<b>VOMITING</b>	<b>More than twice in 24 hours or if diarrhoea also</b>	<b>Stay home until 24 hours after the last vomit.</b>
<b>DIARRHOEA</b>	<b>More than 3 stools in 24 hours.</b>	<b>Home until 24 hours after last bout.</b>
<b>SORE THROAT</b>	<b>If not eating or fever</b>	<b>Return as soon as well or 24 hours after starting antibiotic if prescribed.</b>
<b>COLD SYMPTOMS</b>	<b>Stuffed or runny nose, sneezing mild cough</b>	<b>No need to stay home.</b>
<b>COUGH</b>	<b>If the cough disrupts normal activity</b>	<b>Return to school after doctor has cleared child of serious illness e.g. whooping cough.</b>
<b>ASTHMA</b>	<b>If the child can't do normal activities. If coughing a lot.</b>	<b>Needs to see the doctor or asthma nurse to review treatment.</b>
<b>CONJUNCTIVITIS (red eyes)</b>	<b>With yellow or green pus</b>	<b>May return 24 hours after treatment started.</b>
<b>CHICKEN POX</b>	<b>Some children have a fever, abdominal pain, sore throat, headache, or a vague sick feeling a day or 2 before the rash appears</b>	<b>Return when the blisters are all dry and crusted over.</b>
<b>HAND, FOOT &amp; MOUTH DISEASE.</b>	<b>Not infectious once rash appears</b>	<b>No need to stay home unless drooling</b>
<b>IMPETIGO</b>	<b>Patch of red, itchy skin. Blisters develop on this area, soon forming crusty, yellow-brown sores.</b>	<b>May return 24 hours after starting antibiotics medicine, 48 hours after starting antibiotic cream. Sores must be covered with dressing.</b>
<b>RINGWORM</b>	<b>Ring-shaped or oval patch of scaly red skin</b>	<b>Return once started on treatment. Keep area covered.</b>
<b>HEAD LICE</b>	<b>Spread directly from head to head so short and tidy hair may help</b>	<b>They are a nuisance not a reason to stay home.</b>
<b>DOCTOR OR DENTIST VISIT</b>		<b>Back to school afterward unless the dentist or doctor say stay home</b>

## Appendix Four

# Remember...

Good Attendance means....

Being in school at least 96% of the time...This means 7 days off!

