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School Attendance Policy

A. Framework

1. Rationale

Glasnevin ETNS bases its School Attendance Policy on the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

The Board of Management wishes to promote and encourage regular attendance and good punctuality as an essential factor in our pupils' learning.

2. Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

Glasnevin ETNS endeavours to enable every pupil to actively participate in all school activities. Regular attendance and punctuality help to create a stable learning environment for all pupils, and the school hopes to promote co-operation among pupils, parents/guardians and staff in maintaining a high level of regular attendance through the school year.

3. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Outline Strategies to improve attendance.
- Promote regular punctual attendance at school.
- Identify students who are at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- Ensure that appropriate contact will take place between the school and the parents/guardian of these children.
- To provide for legislation concerning school attendance, in particular the Education Welfare Act.

The success of this policy will be assessed against the above aims.

The Principal, Staff Teachers, the Parents/Guardians, together with the BOM, will be responsible for the implementation of this Policy.

It will be the responsibility of the Deputy Principal to co-ordinate a review of this Policy.

School Attendance Policy

1. Recording and Reporting of Attendance and Non-Attendance

The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded electronically on the Aladdin computer-based system daily.

Class attendance data is recorded automatically, by the same system thus replacing the Leabhar Tinrimh (Attendance Book).

The annual attendance of each individual pupil is recorded in the Primary Online Database, together with information provided in enrolment forms (PPSN, name, Mother's maiden name, Address, Date of Birth, Gender, Nationality, Religion, Ethnic background whether in receipt of learning support or Irish exemption).

Parents/guardians are informed in writing on the end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year. The school must inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing, where a child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular, where a pupil is removed from the school register and where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more.

Secretary Nicky Callaghan makes returns to TUSLA.

2. Strategies

The following strategies have been put in place to help foster an appreciation of learning and good attendance:

- As stated in the Code of Behaviour parents/guardians are expected to write notifying the teacher of the reason for a child's absence. A record of pupil's absence, category of absence and reason – if any – are recorded on the school's on-line Administration software Aladdin. The Roll is called in all classes between 9.00 and 10.00am daily. Any pupils who arrive after Roll Call are marked absent but number of minutes that they are late is recorded. Pupils who arrive late but before roll call are recorded as late.
- Parents are expected to fill in a note on Aladdin explaining the child's absence.
- Parents/guardians must also provide a note if a child departs early during the school day. Late arrivals and early departures are also recorded in the early leaving records book at the reception. Parents/Guardians who pick up their children during the school day must "sign the child out" outside the office.
- The care team (Principal, Deputy & Post Holders) meet once a term to review unexplained absences and pupils who are regularly late. Staff are invited to air

concerns leading up to the meeting. Follow-up phone calls are made and referrals to school completion officer are made where deemed necessary.

- Pupils whose non-attendance/regular lateness is a concern are invited to meet with the Principal/Deputy Principal and are informed of the school's concerns.
- When a child misses 15 days in a school year a courtesy text is sent to notify the parent/guardian.
- When a child misses 20 days in a school year a letter/email is sent to notify the parent/guardian and a report, as mandated, is sent to Tusla.
- Communication:
 - ✓ Parents/guardians are asked to give feedback on this policy with the aim of promoting a high-level of co-operation among the school community.
 - ✓ The importance of good attendance/punctuality is regularly communicated to the school community through assemblies, PTA meetings, BOM meetings and newsletters.
 - ✓ There is a focus on the value of regular attendance and on the importance of developing good attendance habits from Junior Infants onwards.
 - ✓ The calendar for the coming school year is published annually in June and a reminder is published in September. 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.
- Identification of students who are at risk of developing school attendance problems. These are categorised as follows;
 - Irregular Absentee: 5 days absent in a 20-day period without a valid reason.
 - Seriously Irregular Absentee: 10 days absent in a 20-day period without a valid reason.
 - Chronic Absentee: 11+ days absent in a 20-day period without a valid reason.
 - Pattern Absentee: regular absence on a particular day of the week without a valid reason (ie Mondays) or regular lateness or early leaving on a particular day without a valid reason.
- Appropriate contact will take place between the school and parents/guardians of these children.
 - For Irregular Absentees a member of the Care Needs Team will contact parents/guardians by phone to discuss the problem.
 - For Seriously irregular Absentees the Deputy Principal/Principal will meet with parents/guardians with a view to ameliorating the situation.

- o For Chronic Absentees the Principal/Deputy Principal will inform the Education Welfare Officer and notify parents/guardians of this by letter.
- o Pattern Absentees a member of Care Needs Team will contact parents/guardians by phone to discuss the problem and may inform the Education Welfare Officer and notify parents/guardians of this by letter.

3. Strategies in the Event of Non-Attendance

Glasnevin ETNS does not have the services of a Home School Liaison Teacher. The school employs a daily attendance tracker employed to target pupils who have a history of poor attendance. At the beginning of each school year a list of such pupils is compiled. This list may be added to as the year progresses.

- Pupils who exceed 15 days' absence, which is not related to prolonged illness or a visit to the family's native country or other such acceptable excuse, will have their names added to the daily tracker list.
- If a pupil on the tracker list is noted as absent, a call will be made to parents/guardians by the attendance tracker.
- If attendance does not improve, a letter will be sent to parents/guardians requesting a meeting with school Deputy principal/principal.
- At this stage the TUSLA pre-referral form will be completed and kept on record. This form will include all strategies to date.
- If a pupil exceeds 20 days a further letter will be sent to parents/guardians informing them that the Education Welfare Officer will now be contacted.
- If parent/guardian does not respond to a request, a School Completion Worker may be contacted and asked to make a home visit.
- A referral form to TUSLA will now be completed and forwarded to our local TUSLA officer.
- Our daily attendance tracker will persist with phone calls home, as necessary, whilst the referral is being processed.
- In such cases the Education Welfare Officer (following all reasonable efforts by the Education Board to consult with the child's parents and the Principal of the school) may serve a 'School Attendance Notice' on any parent who he/she concludes is failing or neglecting to cause the child to attend the school. A successful case taken against the parent may result in a fine and/or imprisonment.
- Reasons for absence are recorded and reported to the EWB five times during the school year through an online system.
- An annual report is submitted – not more than six weeks following the end of the school year - detailing the overall level of attendance at the school during that school

year. This information will be communicated to the school community through the school's newsletter.

- Attendance, behaviour, and academic records of children who transfer into Glasnevin ETNS will be sought directly from the previous school.

4. 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 child's previous school that the child is now registered in their school.

When a Principal receives notification that a child has been registered elsewhere he/she must – with parental consent- notify the Principal of the pupil's new school, of any problems in relation to attendance at the pupil's former school and of such matters relating to the child's educational progress as he or she considers appropriate.

The principal may be consulted by the home school liaison officer of Secondary schools regarding attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils transferring to secondary schools.

5. Success Criteria

The following will provide some practical indicators of the success of this policy:

- Annual attendance rates of at least 95%
- Board of Management, Staff and parent/guardian awareness of their legal obligations under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Ratified by the Board of Management on:

Signed: Catherine Clune Mulvaney
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: R. Lorton
Principal

Date: 18/10/2023

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