

## **Attendance Policy/Strategy for Scoil na Tríonóide Naofa**

### **Mission Statement**

**Scoil na Tríonóide Naofa is a Catholic School that provides an inclusive education which strives to enable students to achieve their potential. We seek to promote the wellbeing of all members of the school community in a respectful, safe and caring environment which values the dignity of each individual.**

Daily attendance is promoted in Scoil na Tríonóide Naofa by a culture of high expectations, encouraging each student to take responsibility for his/her own learning and achieve full potential through regular attendance in school. It is expected that students will attend daily and any absences will occur only when absolutely necessary.

### **Rationale**

- Attendance at school and full participation in school life is extremely important in a student's development.
- To facilitate continuity and progression in the learning process.
- To ensure that all parents/guardians, students and teachers are aware of their responsibilities to ensure high levels of attendance.
- Parents are the primary educators and the school seeks to work in partnership with parents to ensure that an environment is created where students want to come to school and wish to participate in school life.
- The school and parents have obligations under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 regarding attendance and participation.

### **Goals**

- To develop a positive approach to attendance and punctuality.
- Keep accurate records of students' whereabouts during the school day.
- Establish procedures for monitoring attendance.
- Students learn to take responsibility for their punctuality and attendance.
- Support students and parents to strive for maximum attendance.
- Support students and parents where attendance issues arise.
- Develop working relationships with relevant agencies such as TUSLA.

### **A positive approach to attendance and punctuality**

- Daily attendance is promoted in school by a culture of high expectations, which encourages students to take responsibility for his/her learning and achieve full potential through regular attendance in school.
- Within each subject and through the teacher and Year Head students are made aware of the incremental nature of learning and the implications for them of irregular attendance. This is also promoted through the Pastoral Care team and the Special Need department.
- The Year Head/or member(s) of the Pastoral Care team meet with students for whom attendance and punctuality has been identified as an issue.
- The school also works with the School Completion Programme to support student(s) who may be developing a non-attendance pattern.

- School reports to parents/guardians include a breakdown of attendance for the period of the report.
  - The school acknowledges at the end of the year excellent student attendance.
- How attendance is monitored**
- All students clock in on arriving at school to register attendance in the morning at the school office. Those students who do not have their clock in card sign the attendance book which is kept in the school office and monitored by the school secretary.
  - Those students who arrive late to school must sign in the office and give a written explanation as to why they are late.
  - The teacher takes an electronic roll at the start of the first class which commences at 8.50am. A text message is sent to parents/guardians informing them that their son/daughter is not in school.
  - Any late arrivals to school sign in at the school office and are logged electronically by the school secretary.
  - A second roll call takes place first class after lunch 1.45pm by the class teacher.
  - Students who leave the school during the school day due to illness or appointment must be collected by a parent/guardian or in some cases a designated adult at school reception and must then sign out, stating the reason for leaving the school.
  - When that student returns to school they must sign back in at school reception.
  - Where students are absent from school for school-related extra-curricular activities, this is entered into the system by the administrative staff. The teacher who oversees the activity prepares a list of names and prior to departure provides a list of students to staff and also a list to the administrative staff.
  - If a student is absent from school on their return they must furnish an absent note to school office. This note should state the date(s) the student was absent and the reason for the absence. Absent notes will be carefully monitored by the Year Head.
  - If a student is absent for an extended period of time it is expected that the parent/guardian will keep in contact with the Year Head and if the extended absence is for medical reasons a doctor's note should be given to the Year Head.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Principal:**

- To ensure that adequate systems are in place to record attendance and absence of students.
- To monitor attendance records.
- To make reports to the relevant statutory authorities as required under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.
- To liaise with and make reports where necessary to the Education Welfare Officer
- To remind students, parents/guardians of the importance of daily attendance at school.

### **Deputy Principal:**

- To work in cooperation with the Principal, Year Heads, Class Teachers and Administrative Staff, parents and students to implement this policy/strategy.
- To liaise with the Year Heads, Pastoral Care Team and School Completion Team to address the difficulties surrounding a particular student's attendance.

- To meet, if required, with students who had unauthorised absence from school.

### **Year Head**

- To monitor regularly the attendance records of students for the given year.
- To ensure absent notes are returned and logged.
- To contact parents/guardians where there is a concern about absences and or unauthorised absences. To contact parents/guardians when patterns of absences are developing and to inform the Deputy Principal of same.
- To liaise with teachers, the Pastoral Care Team and the School Completion Team to address the difficulties surrounding a particular student's attendance.
- To meet students for whom attendance or punctuality is a problem to discuss the issue with the purpose of putting strategies in place to improve attendance and or punctuality.
- To remind students during assemblies of the Year Group of the importance of daily attendance and punctuality.

### **Class Teacher**

- To take an electronic roll at 8.50am each morning and 1.45pm each day. It is expected that each teacher takes a roll for every class which is recorded in their own personal teacher's journal. When substituting under the S&S scheme or when providing cover for personal leave, the teacher will complete registration for that class on the electronic recording system.
- To impress upon students, the importance of regular attendance and insist on punctuality.
- Set example by their own punctuality.
- Support students who may have a prolonged absence from school.
- Where they are concerned about a student's absence of an emerging pattern of absence they need to discuss this with the Year Head and or parents/guardian.
- Where a student has missed time in school this should be highlighted at parent/teacher meetings and as a teacher comment on school reports.

### **Parent/Guardian**

- To support the school Attendance Policy/Strategy in compliance with the legal responsibilities.
- To ensure daily and punctual attendance of students and to avoid unnecessary absences. Where possible to arrange appointments outside of school time as well as family holidays.
- To provide a written explanation for the student's absence on the first day of return to school
- To inform the school in advance of any planned absences from school.
- To provide to the school reliable contact telephone numbers and alternative emergency numbers.
- To adhere to the procedures set out in this policy/strategy for the withdrawal of students from school during the school day.
- To acknowledge and where necessary to reply to communications from the school in relation to attendance issues.
- Signing in and out of school. Any student who needs to leave school early must be collected and signed out by parent/guardian or designated adult. Parents/Guardians are expected to cooperate fully with this procedure.

**Student:**

- To be in school on time.
- To clock in before 8.50 am each morning.
- When late to school to sign in at the school office and explain reason for being late.
- Following an absence from school, to present written explanation to their Year Head/school office on the day of return to school.
- To be on time for each class.

**Administration Staff:**

- To input attendance data as required.
- To work in cooperation with the Year Head/Deputy Principal and Principal in providing data re. school attendance.
- To assist the Principal in making returns to TUSLA.
- To administer the signing and out of students.

**Suspensions:**

On the occasion a student may be absent from school due to suspension for breach of the Code of Behaviour parents/guardians will be informed in advance of the suspension that the student is in their care and are expected to use their time productively by applying themselves to their studies. **In such instances, where a student is suspended, they should not be on the school premises or engaged in any school activity.**

**Monitoring:**

Monitoring school attendance is the responsibility of the subject teacher, Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal, School Completion Team and other agencies with responsibilities to individual students within the school. Attendance data will be analysed on a regular basis by the Year Heads at Year Head meetings and appropriate consultations, strategies and interventions will be put in place where deemed necessary.

**Links to Other Policies:**

- Code of Behaviour
- Admissions Policy
- Child Protection
- Pastoral Care

**Review:**

This policy/statement will be reviewed by the Board of Management in conjunction with related policies at intervals set by the Board.

Ratified on the 14/11/17

