

Ashbourne CNS

School Attendance Policy



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School Attendance Policy

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School Attendance Policy

1. Overview

At Ashbourne CNS we are committed to our core values of courage, creativity, collaboration and care. Our school celebrates diversity of belief, language and cultural traditions and we all learn to respect, trust and encourage each other every day. We listen to each other and negotiate our differences. This makes it easy for us accept, respect and include every person for who they are.

‘Learning is the Heart of our Community’ and we are dedicated to the holistic development of every child. Our practice is informed by Glasser’s Caring Habits, Growth Mindset and a Restorative approach. By focusing on inter and intra-personal skills we seek to enhance relationships in our community and with the community. This holistic approach acknowledges that ‘learning takes place in a relationship’ and seeks to help children develop the resilience, self-esteem and relationships needed to overcome the many challenges on the road to adulthood.

We combine socio-cultural building blocks with high-quality approaches to teaching and learning in order to develop each child’s academic, social, moral, emotional, spiritual and creative capabilities. Thus, enabling them to reach their full potential and play an active part in the local community and wider civic society.

Education is a partnership, and at Ashbourne CNS experienced teaching professionals, students and parents work together with members of the wider community in a welcoming educational environment which is safe, happy, stimulating, inclusive and reflective of the diverse modern society in which we live.

At Ashbourne CNS we seek to provide a safe physical, psychological and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. We strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity, background or ability. We promote a fully inclusive education that recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We seek to prepare open-minded, culturally sensitive and responsible citizens with a strong sense of social justice.

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1.1 Clarification of Key Terms used in this policy

LMETB: Louth Meath Education and Training Board

CNS: Community National School

TESS: Tusla Education Support Service (formally known as the Education Welfare Board)

DES: Department of Education and Skills

Education Welfare Officer: An Educational Welfare Officer works with families and children in a child-centred way to overcome barriers to their school attendance, participation and retention; and work closely with schools, educational support services and other agencies to support school attendance and resolve attendance problems for the benefit of children and families.

Aladdin: Aladdin is an award-winning online Management Information System (MIS)/ Student Information System (SIS) specifically designed to simplify administration in primary schools.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is 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 Act.
- identify pupils who may be at risk of poor attendance.
- ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance/participation.
- develop, subject to availability, resources and links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing poor attendance patterns.
- Identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.

3. Scope

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This policy applies to the pupils, parents, teachers and SNAs of Ashbourne CNS.

4. Policy

The staff of Ashbourne CNS will ensure that:

- the importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school.
- pupils are registered accurately and efficiently in accordance with Circular 0028/2013
- pupil attendance is recorded daily on Aladdin
- parents or guardians are contacted by the class teacher when reasons for absence have not been completed on Aladdin app.
- pupil attendance, lateness and early departures are monitored and recorded by class teacher on Aladdin database.
- Teachers encourage attendance and punctuality
- school attendance statistics are reported as appropriate by the principal to:
 1. Tusla Education Support Service (TESS)
 2. The Education Welfare Officer
 3. The Board of Management

4.1 Punctuality

School gates open from 9.00 am. All pupils, teachers and SNAs are expected to be on time and in class by 9:10am.

“A pupil will be marked either present or absent at the time of roll call and there will be no provision for adjusting the roll book where a pupil subsequently does not complete the full school day or arrives after the roll call.” – Circular 0028/2013, Department of Education.

Time of Roll Call =10.20am*.

Where children are removed from school for any reason before the official closing time, they must be signed out via the school office, indicating the time and reason for the withdrawal. If they are returned to school before dismissal time, then they must be signed back in through the school office.

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The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. The Principal is obliged under The Act, to report children who are persistently late to Tusla Education Support Service (TESS).

4.2 Guidance for parents

Section [(21) (9)] of the 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 from school in any other instance. It is essential that parents inform the school of such arrangements.

Reasons for pupils’ absences must be communicated in writing via Aladdin by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. In some circumstances an email or written letter will suffice. These will be scanned and kept on file. These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. The school will contact parents when a written explanation for the child’s absence is not received by the school. The school does not provide schoolwork if parents withdraw children for holidays.

5. Promotion of School Attendance

5.1 Parents/Guardians

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 via Aladdin.
- working with the school and education welfare service to resolve any attendance problems.
- explaining to their children the value of being on time and being prepared.
- informing school of planned absences in writing via Aladdin.
- 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 children to participate in school activities.

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- praising and encouraging their children's hard work.
- instilling in their children, an attitude of growth mindset.
- ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children's appointments (with dentists, etc.), are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- contacting the school office or class teacher immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.
- notifying (in writing or by telephone call) the school if their child/children, particularly children in Junior Classes, are to be collected before dismissal time by someone not known to the teacher.

5.2 Pupils

Children have:

- a right to education.
- a responsibility to attend school regularly.
- an obligation to be on time and be prepared.

5.3 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 practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- the school will promote development of the holistic children growth mindset.
- supports for pupils who have special educational needs, are in place in accordance with DES guidelines.
- internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils. All teachers are responsible for informing themselves of reports, records and documents stored on Aladdin.

Good attendance will be recognised by a certificate at a presentation ceremony at the end of

each school year. School Attendance Policy

0-5 days missed = Gold Certificate.

6-8 days missed = Silver Certificate.

At Winter, Spring and Summer school assemblies, children with good attendance will be acknowledged verbally and rewarded with a certificate during assembly.

If necessary, the assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be utilised.

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. Together the class teacher and principal will process necessary paperwork.

Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in their efforts to improve their attendance.

5.4 School Principal

The school principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations.
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer/TUSLA (a) if a pupil is not attending school regularly, (b) when a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during the course of a school year and (c) if a pupil has been suspended.
- Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil.
- Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.

5.5 Class Teacher

The class teacher will:

- maintain the school roll book using the Aladdin app in accordance with procedure.
- monitor and record pupil attendance, lateness and early leavers.
- Take the roll by 10.20a.m. each day.
- keep a record of explained and unexplained absences on Aladdin.
- contact parents in instances where absences are not explained in an email or

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completed on the Aladdin App.

- inform themselves of reports, records and documents pertaining to his/her pupils stored on Aladdin.
- promote a reward system for pupils with exceptional attendance by informing the principal of full attendance at the end of each term.
- encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually and model good time-keeping for arrival and dismissal of classes.
- inform the principal of concerns he/she may have regarding the attendance of any pupil, and if necessary, work with the Principal to process the relevant paperwork.
- in the case of a **planned teacher absence**, inform the relevant SET teacher so that he/she may record the class attendance.
- Role model good punctuality.

5.6 SET Teacher

In cases where the class teacher is absent, the SET Teacher assigned to that class group will be responsible for recording the attendance and punctuality of that class group, following the procedures outlined above.

6. Recording and Communication

Subject to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act 2018, 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.

Attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils transferring to a second level school will be sent to the school, if requested, once enrolment has been confirmed.

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7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Ashbourne CNS Staff

Ashbourne CNS staff members will ensure compliance with all aspects of the Attendance Policy are adhered to.

7.2 Principal

Principal is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school and is accountable to the BoM for the implementation of the Attendance Policy.

7.4 Board of Management

The Board is responsible for ratification of the policy.

Chairperson of the Board on the date of its ratification by the Board signs the policy document.

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in January 2024.

9. Appendices

N/A