

# Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa Junior School



Bettystown, Co Meath A92 H762

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Principal- Maria White

Deputy Principal- Sarah Liddy



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

STATEMENT OF STRATEGY FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

2021-2022

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# Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

## Vision and Values

At Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa we aim to ensure that each child reaches his/her full potential in all areas of learning and development. In order for this to happen it is essential that all children attend school as much as possible. Good attendance will therefore be encouraged and promoted. We aim to build a culture of high expectations for each student's learning, participation and attendance. There will be a focus on the importance of good attendance and punctuality from Junior Infants onwards.

## Aims/Expectations

- To raise awareness of the importance of regular school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure there is a standard system in place for keeping records about arriving late, leaving early, attendance and non-attendance.
- To identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- To develop links between the school and the families of those children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
- To ensure compliance with relevant legislation, circulars and statutory guidelines.

## Punctuality

School begins at 9.00am, however as part of our Covid measures the entry doors will be open from 8.50 am to allow for the staggered arrival of pupils. Junior and Senior Infant children are expected to be in their line in the hall when the class teacher brings the line to their classroom. First and Second Class children are expected to be in their classroom by 9.00am. The entry doors will be closed shortly after 9.00 am. If a child arrives at school after the doors have closed, it is the duty of the parents/guardians to ensure that the child enters school safely.

## Monitoring Attendance

With the introduction of the Primary Online Database (POD), we record pupil enrolment and attendance details in electronic format. Each teacher will record attendance/absence on the system by 10.00 am daily. The reason for a child's absence will also be recorded once the parents/guardians have given the teacher the relevant explanation.

## Attendance Targets

We at Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa are committed to promoting good attendance. Regular attendance has a significant impact on a child's success at school. To achieve this, a high level of attendance must be maintained throughout the whole year.

In the 2021/22 school year we aim to:

- Focus our efforts on improving the attendance of chronic poor attenders (the top three chronic non-attenders from last year)
- Reduce the highest absent rate to 40 days.

\*Given the impact of Covid on attendance rates and the fact that we must encourage parents to keep unwell children at home, our attendance targets have been reduced.

## **Whole School Approach**

We endeavour to enable all our students to participate in all areas of school life. There will be regular communication between parents and the school regarding absenteeism and lack of punctuality. We will support and work with parents in cases where children have poor attendance.

## **Promoting Good Attendance**

- Praise for good attendance by the class teacher and principal
- Children who have a poor attendance record and their families will be supported in an effort to improve their attendance
- Principal to meet with the parents (phone call) of the three most chronic poor attenders at the start of the school year

## **Responding to Poor Attendance**

- The teacher will follow up on absenteeism notes.
- After 5 days of being absent the teacher will contact parents/guardians to discuss their child's absenteeism
- Parents will be sent a text after their child has reached 10 absences through the Aladdin attendance system
- A text will be sent to parents again when a child reaches 15 absences.
- A letter will be sent to parents when their child has reached 20 absences. The school must notify the Education Welfare Officer when a child is absent 20 days or more.
- If a child reaches 20 absences, they will then receive a text every day that their child is absent asking them to contact the school.

\*The use of these strategies will be monitored during the year and may be adapted where illnesses are as a result of Covid/ close contact/ restricting movements

## **School Roles**

### **The School Principal will:**

- Ensure that the school register is maintained in accordance with regulations
- Promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality among pupils, parents and staff
- Comply with the provisions of the Education Welfare Act
- Meet with parents of chronic poor attenders
- Monitor the attendance of chronic non-attenders and stay in regular communication with the parents of these children in order to explore with parents how school can support attendance.

### **The Class Teacher will:**

- Encourage good attendance and punctuality
- Record attendance details each day
- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences

- Contact parents when an absence is not explained
- Inform the Principal of any concerns he/she may have regarding the attendance of any child in relation to absences/ punctuality

This policy was reviewed on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021.