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School Attendance Policy

1. Rationale
Regular school attendance is essential for pupils' academic, social, and emotional development. This policy supports a proactive, supportive, and structured approach to improving attendance using a three-tier model of support.

2. Aims
- Promote a positive culture of attendance and punctuality
- Identify and respond early to attendance concerns
- Support pupils and families where barriers to attendance arise
- Ensure compliance with statutory requirements (e.g. 20-day reporting threshold)
- Foster strong home–school partnerships

3. Legislative Framework
This policy operates in line with: The Education Welfare Act (2000), Guidelines from Tusla Education Support Service (TESS), DES circulars and Child Protection Procedures

4. Roles and Responsibilities
- Board of Management - Approves and reviews the policy
- Principal- Oversees implementation and reporting obligations
- Class Teachers -Record daily attendance, Monitor patterns and communicate concerns
- SEN - Supports interventions and family engagement
- Parents/Guardians - Ensure regular attendance and notify the school of absences

5. **The Three-Tiered Approach**
Tier 1: Whole-School / Universal Supports (For all pupils – prevention and promotion)

Key Strategies:
- Positive school culture promoting attendance
- Clear communication of expectations to parents
- Daily roll call and monitoring
- Celebrating good attendance (attendance shops)
- Integration of wellbeing and inclusion initiatives eg. Morning Meetings, Strive for 5, Nurture Approach, Soft starts, Afterschool clubs, Student Council, Yard Monitors etc.
- Teaching routines and transitions that support engagement - eg. on task otter, transition chants, rewards systems.

Indicators:
Attendance above 90%
No concerning patterns

Tier 2: Targeted Supports (For pupils at risk – early intervention)

Triggers may include:

Attendance dropping below 90%

Emerging patterns (Mondays/Fridays, late arrivals, engagement and participation concerns)

Frequent short absences

Interventions:

- Teacher check-in with pupil
- Communication with parents (phone call / meeting)
- Monitoring over a set period
- In-school supports: At Tier 2, we move from universal provision to targeted intervention.
    - We identify pupils whose attendance is becoming a concern and seek to understand the underlying barrier.
    - We will provide a named key adult, check-in/check-out, nurture or sensory support, friendship intervention, learning support or an individual attendance plan.
    - We set achievable targets, involve the pupil and parents, monitor progress and review the intervention regularly.
    - If attendance does not improve, we consider whether a more intensive Tier 3 response is required.
- Referral to school support team, some interventions include:
    - Zones of Regulation
    - Social stories
    - Friendship/social skills groups
    - Emotional regulation and coping strategies
    - One-to-one sessions with a trusted adult

Goal: Prevent escalation and re-engage pupil quickly

Tier 3: Intensive Supports (For pupils with persistent or serious attendance difficulties)

Triggers may include:

Attendance below 80–85%

20+ days absent (mandatory Tusla reporting threshold)

Chronic absenteeism patterns

Interventions:

- Formal meeting with parents/guardians
- Individual Attendance Plan which will include student voice
    - Set small, realistic SMART targets
    - Agree supports

    - Parent/carer contribution
    - Review
- Involvement of external supports where appropriate
- Referral to Tusla Education Support Service (TESS)
- Collaboration with NEPS, social services, or other agencies

Goal: Provide coordinated, multi-agency support to address barriers

6. Recording and Monitoring Attendance

- Attendance recorded daily using Aladdin
- Monthly review by Principal
- Patterns and trends analysed
- Annual report prepared for Board of Management

7. Communication with Parents

Whole school communication about the importance of attendance

Parents must inform the school of reasons for absence

Absences recorded and categorised

Attendance discussed at Parent Teacher Meetings

Parents informed if attendance becomes a concern

Meetings arranged where necessary

8. Reporting Obligations

A child who reaches 20 or more days' cumulative absence during the relevant reporting period must be included in the school's Student Absence Report (SAR) to Tusla, subject to the statutory age/eligibility criteria. The report includes absences for reasons such as illness, family reasons, holidays, suspension and unexplained absence.

If the school remains concerned about a pupil's attendance despite efforts at school level and collaboration with the family, the principal can make an Educational Welfare Referral to TESS.

9. Supporting Pupils with Additional Needs

The school recognises that some pupils may face additional barriers:

- Medical needs
- SEN
- Family circumstances

Supports will be tailored and aligned with:

- Student Support Plans
- SEN Continuum of Support

10. Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed: Every 2–3 years or as required by new legislation/guidelines

11. Success Criteria

Improved attendance rates

Reduced chronic absenteeism

Positive engagement from families

Early identification and support of at-risk pupils

Board of Management Approval

Date of approval: 16.11.26

Signed: Catherine Campbell

Chairperson, Board of Management

Appendix 1

STRIVE FOR 5

Every School Day Counts!

What is "Strive for 5"?

A school attendance initiative encouraging children to attend **5 days every week** – for better learning, friendships, and confidence!

Why It Matters

Better Learning
Don't miss important lessons

Stronger Friendships
Be with friends & build connections

More Confidence
Join in activities & succeed

How You Can Help



- **Make school attendance a priority**
- **Inform the school** about medical or unavoidable absences
- **Talk to us** if your child is finding it hard to come to school

What the School Will Do

- Track attendance **every week**
- Recognise & celebrate **5-day achievers**
- Contact families **if support is needed**

"Together, we can help every child **STRIVE FOR 5** and make the most of every school day!"

Every Day Counts – Let's Strive for 5!

SNF Individual Attendance Support Plan

Tier 2 – Targeted School Support

Pupil: _____

Class: _____

Date of Plan: _____

Review Date: _____

Lead Staff Member: _____

1. Reason for Attendance Support

Current attendance: _____ %

Attendance pattern/concerns identified:

☐ Frequent absence
☐ Increasing absence
☐ Persistent lateness
☐ Difficulty returning after absence
☐ School avoidance/reluctance
☐ Anxiety/wellbeing concerns
☐ Friendship/social difficulties
☐ Bullying concerns
☐ Learning difficulties
☐ SEN-related barriers
☐ Family/circumstantial factors
☐ Other: _____

Brief description of concern:

_____

_____

2. Pupil Voice

How do I feel about coming to school?

☐ I enjoy coming to school
☐ I usually enjoy coming to school
☐ I sometimes find school difficult
☐ I often find school difficult
☐ I really don't want to come to school

What do I like about school?

_____

What makes coming to school difficult for me?

Are there particular times or situations that I find difficult?

☐ Getting up/morning routine
☐ Leaving home
☐ Arriving at school
☐ Separating from parent/carer
☐ Going into the classroom
☐ Particular subjects
☐ Break time
☐ Lunchtime
☐ Playground
☐ Friendships
☐ Noise/sensory environment
☐ Changes to routine
☐ Homework/learning
☐ Other: _____

What would make coming to school easier for me?

Who in school helps me?

What could adults do differently to help me?

What can I do to help myself?

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3. Strengths and Protective Factors

What helps this pupil to attend and engage successfully?

☐ Positive relationship with particular adult
☐ Friendship/peer support
☐ Particular subject/activity
☐ Structured routine
☐ Visual timetable
☐ Sensory/regulation supports
☐ Praise/positive reinforcement
☐ SET support
☐ Nurture support
☐ Breakfast/morning provision
☐ Extracurricular activities
☐ Parent/carer support
☐ Other: _____

Pupil's strengths/interests:

4. Identified Barriers to Attendance

Following discussion with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant staff, the main barriers identified are:

Barrier 1:

Barrier 2:

Barrier 3:

What evidence/information supports this?

5. Attendance Targets

Targets should be **specific, realistic and achievable**.

Target 1 – Attendance

How will we know this has been achieved?

Target 2 – Punctuality/engagement

How will we know this has been achieved?

Target 3 – Wellbeing/engagement

How will we know this has been achieved?

6. Agreed In-School Supports

Support	Who will provide it?	Frequency	Start date
Morning check-in			
Trusted/key adult			
Nurture support			
SET intervention			
Sensory/regulation support			
Friendship/social support			
Supported arrival			
Playground/lunchtime support			
Visual timetable/routine			
Calm/safe space			
Other			

7. Pupil's Agreed Strategies

I will try to:

☐ Attend school each day where I am well enough to attend
☐ Arrive on time
☐ Speak to my trusted adult when I am worried
☐ Use my agreed regulation strategy
☐ Follow my morning routine
☐ Ask for help when I need it
☐ Take part in agreed activities/interventions
☐ Other: _____

My personal goal is:

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8. Parent/Carer Support

Parents/carers agree to support attendance by:

☐ Maintaining a consistent morning routine
☐ Encouraging positive attitudes towards school
☐ Communicating concerns promptly with the school
☐ Supporting agreed strategies at home
☐ Ensuring the school is informed of absences
☐ Attending review meetings
☐ Other: _____

Additional parent/carer comments:

9. Staff Responsibilities

Class Teacher:

SET/School Support Team:

Named Key Adult:

School Leadership:

10. Monitoring Progress

Attendance will be monitored alongside the pupil's **wellbeing, engagement and experience of school**.

Date	Attendance %	Pupil's view	What is working?	What needs to change?

11. Pupil Review

How do I feel about school now?

What has helped me most?

Has anything become easier?

What would I like to change?

What should we keep doing?

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12. Review Outcome

Following review:

☐ Attendance improving – continue current supports
☐ Attendance improving – reduce/phase supports
☐ Attendance remains a concern – modify Tier 2 support
☐ Further School Support Team intervention required
☐ Consider escalation to more intensive/individualised support
☐ External support/referral should be considered
☐ Other: _____

Next review date: _____

Comments:

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13. Agreement

The purpose of this plan is to **remove barriers to attendance and help the pupil feel safe, included, supported and connected to school**.

Pupil: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Carer: _____ Date: _____

Class Teacher: _____ Date: _____

SET/Support Staff: _____ Date: _____

Principal/Deputy Principal: _____ Date: _____

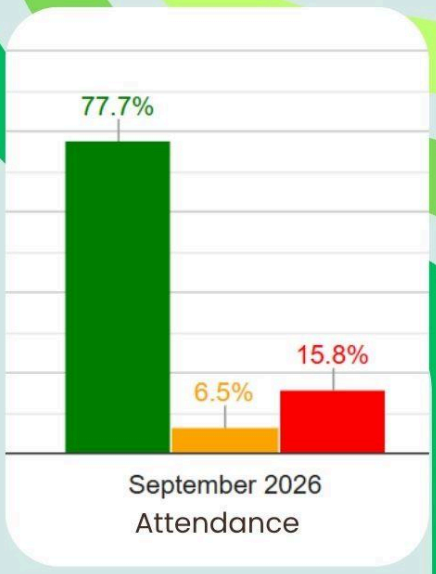
Attendance Information

SCHOOL YEAR 2026/2027

WWW.SCOILNAOMHFEICHIN.IE

WHY IS SCHOOL ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY SO IMPORTANT?

Regular attendance and being on time have a positive impact on children's learning, as well as helping them feel happier and more connected to their school.



WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD IS ABSENT?

- There will always be situations where a child has to stay home, due to illness and other unavoidable situations.
- Where a child has been vomiting or has diarrhea, they must be **kept home until 48 hours after the last episode**.
- Please fill in relevant reasons for absences on Aladdin.

◎ Monthly Target: At least 80%

THE LEGAL REQUIRMENTS

- School starts at 9:20am each day and **late attendance is recorded on Aladdin** and will be reported on school reports at the end of year.
- **School Attendance Reports are sent to Tusla** in January (for the previous September to December) and in June (for January to June of that year). On this form we are required to list any pupils, over the age of 6, who have missed 20 school days for any reason. You will receive a letter if your child is included in the report.
- The reports are not a cause for concern on their own. We understand that there are times when children need to miss school. **If we have any concerns about your child's attendance, we will contact you directly.** Please remember that missed days can quickly add up, so where possible, it is important to minimise absences.

Attendance Information

SCHOOL YEAR 2026/2027

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PLEASE NOTE

- If our school has concerns about your child's attendance or punctuality, we **may refer them to the Education Welfare Officer for support**. This could be due to frequent absences, unexplained absences or regular lateness.
- The school will always contact parents first and offer support where possible.

KEY THINGS TO NOTE

The aim of our attendance and punctuality procedures is to help children get the most from their education

Aim to have your child in school for 9.20am each day. We understand this isn't always possible. Chat to Ms Leonard if it's an ongoing challenge .

We are here to support families where needed.

There is no need for concern if you get a letter saying your child has been included on the attendance report. Explained absences are recorded on Aladdin.

Be sure to enter your absence reason on Aladdin each time your child is absent.

TUSLA An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency

The Tusla Education Support Service have more information for parents/guardians on their page here.