

**Cloontuskert N.S.  
Cloontuskert,  
Lanesborough,  
Co. Roscommon.  
N39 AT80.  
Roll No. 18116S**



## **Attendance Policy**

**Drafted: May 2023**

**Ratified:**

**Review:**

# **Cloontuskert N.S. Attendance Policy**

## **Rationale for the Policy**

Whilst there is a tradition of good attendance in Cloontuskert N.S., it is important that parents/guardians are fully aware of their obligations to ensure that their children have consistent and punctual attendance at school. Regular attendance and punctuality at school is essential in order for each child to fulfil his/her educational potential. The Board of Management and school staff promote and support regular attendance and punctuality at school and consider it as an essential factor in maximizing pupil progress at school.

Cloontuskert National School's Attendance Policy is based on the obligations arising from the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 (section 22) and on the guidance provided in 'Developing the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance: Guidelines for Schools' – Tusla 2016. This policy also takes into account the updated DES requirements for recording and reporting on school attendance as per Circular 33/2015.

## **Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School**

Cloontuskert N.S. seeks to enable every pupil to actively participate in all areas of school life both curricular and extracurricular. Regular attendance and punctuality at school helps to create a stable learning environment for all pupils. The school management and staff expect the co-operation of pupils, parents/guardians and staff in encouraging and maintaining a high level of regular attendance by pupils throughout the school year.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The aims and objectives of this policy are as follows:

- To support and encourage high rates of school attendance and punctuality at all class levels.
- To raise awareness amongst parents and guardians about the importance of school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure that pupils are registered as enrolled in the school and that pupil's attendance is recorded daily and that attendance records are monitored regularly by the school.
- To promote a positive learning environment to enable all pupils to avail fully of learning opportunities.
- To comply with the requirements of the relevant legislation in relation to school attendance.
- To develop supportive links between the school and families at risk of attendance and punctuality issues.
- To identify pupils at risk of poor attendance and those at risk of underperformance at school due to attendance and punctuality issues.

## **Roles and Responsibilities in relation to School Attendance**

### **Board of Management**

It is the responsibility of the B.O.M. to

- Ensure a welcoming and safe learning environment for each and every pupil.
- Ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place for promoting and monitoring attendance and for dealing with poor attendance.

### **Principal**

It is the responsibility of the principal:

- To ensure that adequate systems are in place to record and monitor attendance.
- To monitor attendance records regularly.
- To ensure that procedures in place for dealing with high absenteeism are followed.
- To ensure both parents and pupils are reminded regularly of the importance of regular and consistent attendance.
- To communicate with parents, pupils and relevant outside agencies when deemed necessary.
- To report to the Board of Management when necessary.
- To carry out the role of day to day management of the school, ensuring a safe, welcoming and stimulating environment with quality teaching and learning.
- To identify and help alleviate problems that may lead to poor attendance.

### **Teachers**

Each teacher has the responsibility to:

- Record daily attendance.
- Set a positive example to children with their own punctuality and attendance.
- Create a warm, welcoming and stimulating learning environment for the children in their care.
- In as far as is practicable, investigate and record the reasons for absence of children from their class.
- Communicate concerns to the principal/parent should they arise.
- To acknowledge students, welcome them back and provide appropriate support following absence.

### **Pupils**

Pupils have a responsibility to play their part in attending school regularly and punctually and to take responsibility for their learning following an absence in relation to missed work.

### **Parents / Guardians**

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to:

- Ensure as far as possible, that their child/children are in school (on time) every day.
- Send a message via Aladdin with an explanation for an absence/lateness.

### **Defining and Recording Non- Attendance**

“A parent is obliged to cause a child between the ages of 6 and 16 to attend at ‘a national school or other suitable school’ on each day that the school is open for instruction.” Education Welfare Act 2000.

The following applies:

- A child is expected to attend each day.
- Non-attendance is recorded in the roll book on Aladdin.
- A message is provided by parents via Aladdin Connect explaining the absence in accordance with the Education Act 1998.
- The category of absence is also identified and recorded.
- Children are expected to be at school at 9.10am
- All children are expected to complete a full day at school.

### **If there is difficulty with poor attendance:**

- Class teachers will inform the Principal of any concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.
- Initially the class teacher will contact the parent/guardian to express concern re attendance, late arrival or early removal e.g. phone call, letter, discuss at parent teacher meeting.
- A specific meeting will be held in school with the Parent(s)/guardian to identify problems and agree interventions if the issue continues.
- Concerns and agreements will be communicated in writing to the parent/guardian.
- Appropriate in-school measures will be implemented. (e.g. 'contact person' in school, support in class etc.).
- When a child has missed 10 days a standard text will be sent as a reminder, highlighting this, regardless of absence.
- A formal letter will be sent when a child is 15 days absent to highlight this and encourage improved attendance.
- The principal may formally contact a parent if improvement is not seen following this communication
- A letter will be sent to parents of pupils who have missed 20 days or more, regardless of reason for absences, informing them that this information will be reported to TUSLA and the Board of Management.
- There will be an appropriate use of interventions with the pupil (e.g. attendance charts/ attendance report, incentives, rewards etc.)
- The Principal will work closely with various agencies who are involved with such students.
- The Principal will contact outside agencies (TUSLA, NEPS, EWO) to assist with issues, where necessary.

### **Punctuality**

- School receives children from 9.10am when doors open.
- All doors are locked for security reasons at 9.20am.
- Anyone arriving after 9.20am should be accompanied by a relevant adult and an explanation given.
- Appointments for students should be made outside of school time.

The principal will meet with the parents of children who are continually late to discuss strategies to improve punctuality. If following school intervention and strategies punctuality does not improve, the principal will report the case to the Education Welfare Officer for further intervention and action.

### **Removal of a Pupil during School Day**

It is expected that all pupils remain in school for a full school day. It is also important so as to ensure the accountability of all pupils during any emergency evacuations.

#### ***Unavoidable medical appointments/withdrawing a sick child from school***

If a pupil needs to leave early for an unavoidable medical appointment, a message should be sent via Aladdin or a phone call made to the school office. If a child is sick during the school day, the secretary or class teacher will firstly ring the parent and if uncontactable, will ring the emergency contact number. Ensure all numbers are up to date.

#### ***Arriving late to school due to an unavoidable medical appointment or emergency***

Our school day begins at 9.10am. If a child has a medical, dental or unavoidable morning appointment or emergency, a message should be sent via Aladdin or an explanation given by way of phone call to the school. The school roll is taken daily at 10am. In this case the roll will be kept open for this child

until 12pm (maximum). After this time, the child has missed half the school day and will be marked absent.

### **Recording and Reporting Attendance**

The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded in the Leabhar Rolla (Roll Book) on the 'Aladdin' database of each class on a daily basis. This automatically updates the Leabhar Tinrimh (Attendance Book) which is held on 'Aladdin' along with the annual attendance of each individual pupil being recorded in the Clár Leabhar (Register) which is also available and updated automatically on 'Aladdin'. If a pupil does not attend on a day when the school is open for instruction, his/her non-attendance will be recorded by the class teacher. The roll call is taken at 10.00am each morning. Any pupil not present will be marked absent for the day.

### **Promoting Good Attendance**

First and foremost, the school endeavours to deliver quality teaching and learning across a wide curriculum catering for the needs of each child in its care.

Cloontuskert National School endeavours to ensure that each child is happy coming to school by promoting positive relationships between teachers and students, students and their peers and through the creation of a stimulating learning environment.

The school community recognises and rewards full attendance at the half way point of the year with certificates as well as at the end of the year. Those who do not have full attendance but have very good attendance records are similarly praised.

The calendar for the coming school year is published annually in June for the following school year. It is hoped that this approach will enable parents/guardians to plan family events during school closures, thus minimising the chances of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term.

### **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. A principal may only remove a pupil's name from the school register where they have been informed that the child has been enrolled in another school or when the Welfare Board notifies them that the child has been registered or is in receipt of out-of-school education.

### **Communication**

The school maintains communication with TUSLA, the organisation that monitors attendance in schools. The school maintains communication with local pre-schools and second-level schools in order to outline patterns amongst other issues.

#### ***Communication with other Schools***

When a child transfers from Cloontuskert N.S. to another school, the schools records on attendance, academic progress etc will be forwarded on receipt of written notification of the transfer.

When a child transfers from another school to Cloontuskert N.S., confirmation of enrolment will be communicated to the child's previous school, and appropriate records sought.

Pupils transferring from Cloontuskert N.S. to a post primary school will have their records forwarded on receipt of confirmation of enrolment – NCCA Education passport.

### ***Communication with Parents***

The following applies in terms of communicating with the parents:

- Our Attendance Policy will be published on the school's website [www.cloontuskertns.ie](http://www.cloontuskertns.ie).
- Our school calendar for the next school year will be communicated in June of the previous school year.
- Reminders of importance of punctuality and attendance will be made in our newsletter.
- When a child has missed 10 days of school a standard text will be sent, regardless of reason for absence, to notify and remind parents that their child has missed 10 days (2 weeks) of school is sent.
- 15 day absence letter – A standard letter will be sent to parents, regardless for reason for absence, to notify them that their child has missed 15 days (3 weeks) of school .
- 20 day absence letter – A standard letter will be sent to parents, regardless of reason for absence, to notify parents that the absence is now reported to TUSLA.
- Parent Teacher Meetings are held in November every school year. Attendance will be discussed at this meeting if deemed necessary.
- Our end of school report communicates the number of days missed in the school year.
- The Pupils' teacher and/or principal will contact parents when appropriate and as outlined above in this document

### ***Communication with TUSLA/Education Welfare officer***

We are obliged to inform TUSLA if:

- A child is expelled
- A child is suspended
- A child has missed more than 20 days.

We are obliged to furnish TUSLA with numbers of pupils absent for 20 days or more on two occasions during the school year. The Board of Management is also informed of the numbers of students who have missed 20 days or more at school

Where deemed necessary the Principal will refer cases of ongoing and chronic absences and poor punctuality to the Educational Welfare Officer/TUSLA. In such cases the Education Welfare Officer (following all reasonable efforts by TUSLA to consult with the child's parents and with 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/guardian may result in a monetary fine and/or imprisonment.

### **Success Criteria**

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

- High rates of school attendance and punctuality in Cloontuskert N.S.
- Increased parent/guardian awareness of their legal obligations in relation to school attendance and punctuality under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.
- Positive reinforcement of 'very good school attendance' and 'improved school attendance' at all class levels.
- Monitoring and tracking of pupils who are 'at risk of ongoing patterns of poor school attendance' by class teachers with emphasis on early intervention to address identified concerns.
- Good practice and procedures in relation to electronic recording of daily pupil attendance (Aladdin System).

- Ongoing liaison with the Educational Welfare Officer /TUSLA to address cases of concern at an early stage.

**Ratification and Review**

This policy will be formally ratified by the Board of Management at our next meeting.

It will be reviewed when the school deem it is necessary to do so based on emerging needs.

Signed: *Paran Collins*

Chairperson, BoM

Date: 09/06/2023

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Cloontuskert N.S.**

**Lanesboro,**

**Co. Roscommon**

**18116s**

**Tel: 043 3321817**

**Email: [cloontuskertns63@gmail.com](mailto:cloontuskertns63@gmail.com)**

Dear Parents,

Under the terms of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the school is obliged to notify TUSLA if a child is absent for 20 days or more, or where a child's absence gives rise to concern.

It is the school's policy to inform parents of children's absences, when these absences are 15 days or more. While we understand that children may be absent due to illness or bereavement, we are just bringing the number of absent days to your attention.

This letter is to inform you that our records show that \_\_\_\_\_ has been absent from school for \_\_\_\_\_ days.

One of the factors ensuring success in education is regular school attendance and habits of attendance are set in the early years of schooling. Hence it is policy in Cloontuskert N.S. to encourage children to attend school every day. Parents can help to develop a positive attitude to school attendance by encouraging children to come to school every day and also by ensuring that all absences are explained via Aladdin. Our Attendance Policy is available at [www.cloontuskertns.ie](http://www.cloontuskertns.ie).

We thank you for your cooperation in this.

Yours Sincerely





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Dear Parents,

Under the terms of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the school is obliged to notify TUSLA if a child is absent for 20 days or more, or where a child's absence gives rise to concern.

You will have already received a letter when your child reached 15 days or more absence. While we understand that children may be absent due to illness or bereavement, we are legally obliged to report all absences of 20 days or more to Tusla.

This letter is to inform you that our records show that \_\_\_\_\_ has been absent from school for \_\_\_\_\_ days.

One of the factors ensuring success in education is regular school attendance and habits of attendance are set in the early years of schooling. Hence it is policy in Cloontuskert N.S. to encourage children to attend school every day. Parents can help to develop a positive attitude to school attendance by encouraging children to come to school every day and also by ensuring that all absences are explained via Aladdin. Our Attendance Policy is available at [www.cloontuskertns.ie](http://www.cloontuskertns.ie).

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