



Attendance Policy

Introduction:

The Board of Management, Principal, teaching staff and the Parents' Association, representing parents of children attending Creevy N.S., recognise that regular school attendance and punctuality is essential if children are to engage fully in the curriculum and to avail of all learning opportunities to enhance their holistic development. This policy was formulated by the Board of Management, Principal and staff of Creevy N.S. in September 2017. The Parents' Association were consulted about its content and invited to make submissions.

Rationale:

Creevy N.S. developed this attendance policy because the existing statement was due for review and amendment. It is also a requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000. The school endeavours to encourage pupils to be in attendance on each day the school is open.

Compliance with School Ethos:

In Creevy N.S., we strive to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and safe environment for our pupils. We are concerned with the holistic development of each pupil and seek to provide our pupils with opportunities to develop their gifts and talents to the best of their abilities. We recognise that regular attendance at school is essential if children are to engage fully with the curriculum and to make the most of every learning opportunity.

Aims and Objectives:

- To encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually
- To ensure that pupil attendance is recorded daily
- To raise awareness of the importance of school attendance
- To identify pupils at risk of developing school attendance problems
- To identify and remove, insofar as is reasonably possible, obstacles to school attendance
- To foster an appreciation of learning
- To enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To promote positive attitudes to learning
- To ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner that encourage pupils to attend school
- To comply with requirements under Education Welfare Act 2000/Guidelines from TUSLA's Educational Welfare Services.

Roles and Responsibilities:

All staff and parents have an input into the implementation of the policy.

Class teachers' record each pupil's attendance on the school database, Aladdin. The school principal makes termly and annual returns to TUSLA, Child and Family Agency online. Where there are concerns about a pupil's attendance, a referral is made to TUSLA, Education Welfare Officer.

Parents have a responsibility to ensure their children get to school each day and are in a position to contribute and learn.

Recording:

The attendance for each pupil is recorded in the classroom and communicated securely to the principal through the school's online data management system, Aladdin Schools. Each child's registration information is recorded on Aladdin and uploaded to the Department of Education and Skills, Pupils Online Database (POD).

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. Rolls will be recorded online each morning. Any pupil not present will be marked absent for the day. A note from parents/guardians is required to explain each absence. Such notes will be retained by the class teacher for that school year. If there is a concern about a child's level of absenteeism the notes will be given to the principal. The Principal and/or Secretary will inform the class teacher when a parent contacts the school by telephone or emails to explain an absence.

If there are concerns about a pupil's attendance or if the pupil is absent for 20 days or more, a referral is made to TÚSLA. This is communicated to parents, verbally after 15 absences and in written form after 20 absences, as per TÚSLA requirements. We also communicate the effects of non-attendance on pupil learning by means of parent/teacher meetings, school reports and letters/notes home.

Late arrivals are recorded in the late book on arrival. The school will contact the parents/guardians in the event of the pupils being consistently late.

Punctuality

School is open from 9:30am and the children are required to be in their classrooms not later than 9:40am. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. Rolls will be called within forty minutes of the commencement of class¹. 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 call². The Principal is obliged under the Education Welfare Act (2000), to report children who are consistently late to TUSLA's Educational Welfare Services.

School Strategies:

Traditionally, school attendance is strong in our school and has not been adversely affected by social changes. However, staffs remain vigilant so that risk students are identified early. Risk students can be categorised as those who miss more than 5 days in a 20-day period without an accompanying note of explanation from parents/guardians. Appropriate contact takes place between the school and parents/guardians either via a letter or a note in the homework diary when this occurs. A meeting between parents and teacher and/or the Principal may be set up if deemed necessary. Absences of more than 20 days are automatically referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

¹ Rule 55 (4) d – Rules for National Schools – An Roinn Oideachas

² Circular 28/2013 – Department of Education and Skills

- Parents are provided with the school calendar for the next school year in the final term so that they are aware in advance of school holidays. It is hoped that this approach will enable parents/guardians to plan family events around school closures, thus minimising the chances of non-attendance related to holidays during the school term.
- The importance of good attendance is discussed at enrolment meeting.
- The importance of good attendance is discussed at school assemblies with the pupils.
- Good attendance is acknowledged at assemblies.

Communication with other Schools:

- When a child transfers from Creevy National School to another school, the school records on attendance, academic progress etc will be forwarded on receipt of written notification of the transfer.
- When a child transfers into Creevy National School, confirmation of transfer will be communicated to the child's previous school, and appropriate records sought.
- Pupils transferring from Creevy National School to a Post Primary school will have their records forwarded on receipt of confirmation of enrolment.

Communication with Parents:

The school informs all parents of the implications of non-attendance as per the *Education Welfare Act 2000*. This information is disseminated in the school newsletter. Parents of new children are informed on enrolment.

Promoting Attendance:

The school promotes good attendance by;

- Creating a safe and welcoming environment
- Displaying kindness, compassion and understanding
- Being vigilant so that risks to good attendance such as disadvantage, bullying etc. are identified early
- Sometimes rewarding good attendance with acknowledgement at the school assemblies.

TÚSLA Child and Family Agency

The Education Welfare Officer is informed if;

- A child has missed more than 20 days
- A child is suspended
- A child is due to be removed from the school register/expelled

TÚSLA is furnished with the total attendance in the school year through the Annual Report Form, which is completed by the principal online.

Evaluation:

The success of any Attendance policy is measured through;

- Continued high attendance levels
- Happy, confident children
- Positive parental feedback
- Teacher feedback

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the BOM on: 4th Oct 2017

Signed:

Chairperson, Board of Management

Next review date:

Oct 2020