



CLAREMORRIS BOYS NATIONAL SCHOOL

Kilcolman Road, Claremorris, Co. Mayo. F12 Y996. Roll no 19915H

Charity Number 20130701



Attendance Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was drawn up in consultation with the staff, parents and the Board of Management of Claremorris Boys National School.

Rationale

This policy was drawn up in order to establish a culture of optimal attendance for all students in this school, in order to ensure that every student has full access to education and an opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability. 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.

The Attendance Policy for Claremorris Boys National School 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. The policy also takes into account the updated DES requirements for recording and reporting on school attendance as per Circular 33/2015. This updated policy was circulated to school staff and representatives of parents and to the Board Of Management for comment in advance of its ratification. The policy was updated in 2023.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Ensure that each child attends school every day that they are well enough to do so.
- Support and encourage high rates of school attendance and punctuality at all class levels.
- Support the practical strategies to be employed within the school community to support high expectations of full attendance throughout the school, as outlined in the Attendance Strategy.
- To raise awareness amongst parents and guardians about the importance of school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure that pupil's attendance is recorded daily and that attendance records are monitored regularly by the school.
- To comply with the requirements of the relevant legislation in relation to school attendance.



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- Outline the role of each member of the school community in promoting good attendance.
- Reflect that this school acknowledges that low attendance rates may be linked to external factors.
- Provide positive support including focussed Attendance Plans for those children who are more vulnerable to absenteeism.
- To develop supportive links between the school and families at risk of attendance and punctuality issues.

Roles And Responsibilities

Every member of the school community has a role to play in promoting optimum attendance in our school. Emphasis is on supportive measures which involve all partners (BOM, Staff, Parents and Pupils) in the school community in understanding and supporting families and individual students.

It will be the responsibility of the Principal Teacher/Deputy Principal monitor overall school attendance levels in the school. Assistant Principal and Class teachers are responsible for monitoring individual pupil's attendance and for identifying and reporting ongoing concerns for 'at risk' pupils.

Parents/ Guardians are strongly discouraged from taking children out of school for holidays during the school term. All such absences will be noted and teachers are not obliged to assign school work for such pupils whilst on holidays.

The Education Welfare Act 2000 (Amended by the Child and Family Agency Act 2013) obligates schools to undertake the following actions in respect of school attendance matters:

- Maintain a record of students attending the school.
- Record school attendance and notify the relevant Educational Welfare Officer of issues relating to attendance.
- Support students with difficulties in attending school on a regular basis.
- Prepare and implement a school attendance strategy to encourage, in a positive way, regular school attendance and an appreciation of learning within the school.
- Prepare and implement a code of behaviour, standards of behaviour and disciplinary procedures for the school.
- Liaise with other schools and relevant bodies on school attendance issues.



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Punctuality

- School begins at 09:20 a.m. and ends at 3.00 p.m. All pupils and staff are expected to be in school in a timely manner and to remain at school for the full school day.
- School gates open at 09.10 a.m. to allow for the orderly and safe arrival of pupils into the school building.
- The school is responsible for maintaining a record of children who arrive late to school, leave school early or are collected late. A pupil will be recorded as being late to school if they arrive after 09.30 a.m. Roll Call. Teacher may access the attendance record to update the Aladdin system to note a pupil's late arrival to school and will note the time of arrival and the reason for being late if applicable.
- Pupils who are in class for roll call (normally 9.30 a.m.) are marked as present for the school day.
- Parents/guardians must contact the teacher/school if their child needs to leave class early during the school day. Parents should refrain from collecting pupils early from school unless it is for good reason.
- Class Teachers will monitor patterns of attendance and punctuality and will bring concerns to the attention of parents/guardians at an early stage if necessary

School Attendance

Recording and Reporting of Attendance and Non-Attendance

Pupils are expected to be at school on time each day. The attendance of each pupil is recorded electronically on the Aladdin School Management System on a daily basis in accordance with Circular 33/2015. If punctuality continues to be an issue then teachers should bring the issue to the attention of the Principal/Assistant Principal.

- In cases of concern about school attendance the Education Welfare Officer/TUSLA will be contacted.

The **Primary Online Database** (POD) of the Dept of Education and Skills holds relevant data in respect of each pupil such as PPSN, name, Mother's Maiden Name, Address, Date of Birth, Gender, Nationality, Religion, Ethnic background whether in receipt of learning support or Irish exemption. School Attendance Data may be recorded on POD also.

Parents/guardians are informed in writing in the end of year (June) report of the total number of absences during the school year. The school is obliged to inform the Education Welfare



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Officer (EWO) in writing; where a child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, attendance is irregular, a pupil is removed from the school register and a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more.

The following strategies are in place in Claremorris Boys NS. to help foster an appreciation of learning and good attendance:

- The school calendar is publicised to parents (via the school website, Aladdin Connect) in advance of the beginning of each school year to ensure parents are aware of the school terms and closures.
- Attendance is called in all classes at 9.30am each morning. Pupils who come to school after Roll Call are marked Absent - however the teacher can record that the pupil arrived late and note the time and the reason for the late as necessary. The absence will be recorded as a LATE.
- Parents must provide Class Teacher with an electronic explanation of their child's absence on return to school via Aladdin Connect (such as illness, family event, appointments etc). Parents/guardians should also inform teacher in writing if their child needs to leave class early during the school day. Parents should call in person to the school office and inform the secretary when seeking to collect children early and the reason for the early withdrawal.
- The Pastoral Care Team of Principal, Deputy & Assistant Principal regularly review pupil attendance and punctuality records with particular focus on unexplained absences and pupils who are regularly late. Parents/guardians are contacted to discuss the matter and an improvement plan may be put in place.
- The school office will contact parents/guardians of target pupils who are presenting with persistent school absences on a daily basis to check if the absence is warranted.

Identification of students who are at risk of developing school attendance problems - categorised as follows:

- Irregular Absences: 5 days absent in a 20-day period without a valid reason.
- Seriously Irregular Absences: 10 days absent in a 20-day period without a valid reason.
- Chronic Absences: 15+ days absent in a 20-day period without a valid reason.

For Irregular and Seriously Irregular Absences the Class Teacher will make contact with parents to discuss the attendance matter and to ensure that improvement strategies are put in place by parents.



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For Chronic Absentees the Pastoral Care Teacher and/or Class Teacher will inform the Principal. In such cases parents will be required to meet with the Pastoral Care Teacher and/or Principal to discuss the matter.

School Attendance rates and absence reasons are recorded and reported to TUSLA in accordance with the current reporting requirements during the school year through the TUSLA online system. An Annual Report is submitted to TUSLA at the end of the school year - detailing the overall levels of attendance at the school during that school year.

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.

Required Notification for Pupils Transferring between Primary & Secondary Schools.

Pupils Transferring TO Claremorris Boys NS. FROM Another School.

Under Section 20 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), the Principal of Claremorris Boys NS. must notify the Principal of the child's previous school that the child is now registered in this school (Confirmation of Enrolment Letter).

Pupils Transferring FROM Claremorris Boys NS. TO Another School

The Principal of the receiving school is required to notify Claremorris Boys NS that an incoming child is a registered pupil in the new school. A copy of the pupil's latest school report (detailing academic progress, school attendance etc) may be sent to the new school by request with the permission of parents.

Pupils Transferring FROM Claremorris Boys NS. TO Secondary School

Upon receipt of written verification of enrolment and a written request for school reports for



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named pupils the relevant class teacher (in consultation with principal/assistant principal) will ensure that all relevant school reports regarding attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils are forwarded to secondary schools in the format of the NCCA Education Passport as necessary.

Board of Management

The Board of Management will ensure that the school community is involved in the development, implementation and regular review of the school's Attendance Policy and Strategy for Attendance. The BOM will support the Principal, staff and parents in implementing this policy by providing the following opportunities:

- Creating dialogue to deepen the understanding among staff, parents and students about the factors that affect good/poor attendance.
- Promoting attendance and follow up with 'at risk' students.
- Exploring ways of helping parents to encourage greater attendance at school
- Finding ways of helping children to understand the importance of continuity in school attendance in order to achieve to the best of their ability.

The BOM and school community will ensure that systems are in place to acknowledge and reward good attendance, progress in attendance and efforts to improve attendance. Some children need more active intervention to encourage good attendance. The BoM will review its Attendance Strategy annually in order to ensure that every effort is made to monitor and promote attendance.

Principal

The Principal will promote a positive climate in the school which focuses on affirming good attendance and sets expectations for high rates of attendance throughout the school. The principal will also:

- Ensure that procedures for monitoring and encouraging full attendance are followed.
- Communicate with parents where there is an ongoing concern regarding attendance/punctuality and /or evidence of patterns in absenteeism.
- Assist in coordinating an Attendance plan for 'at risk' students setting targets for improvement and identifying strategies for home and school which will promote improved attendance.



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Staff

All staff members have a role in praising and reinforcing good attendance. At the start of each school year, staff will establish and clearly communicate expectations for attendance with students, by explaining the connection between a child's attendance and success in learning. Staff use strategies to motivate children not to miss school. Staff are regularly reminded of their role in monitoring and recording attendance, noticing patterns or concerns, through discussion at Staff Meetings, regular discussions regarding attendance with the Assistant Principal and the principal.

Parents

Parents are required to inform the school of the reason for a child's absence in writing/through the school's Aladdin Connect App.

Parents are encouraged to

- Ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect their child's attendance.
- Meet with the class teacher and principal where an Attendance Plan is required for their child and engage with the plan in order to improve attendance.

Parents are reminded that the school starts at 9:20am and finishes and at 3:00pm. Parents must ensure that children attend school for the full school day, unless there is a valid reason for late arrival or early leaving. A system is in place to log and monitor regular late arrival and early leaving, in order to gauge the amount of school time missed by a student.

TUSLA Education Officer

It is acknowledged that children with poor attendance rates are at risk of failing, behaviourally, socially and educationally. Where a concern remains and there is no improvement following an Attendance Plan, the school will contact the Education Welfare Officer for advice and if advised will make a referral to TUSLA. Involvement with Social Workers and/or or Family Support workers may provide support in some individual cases.

The school is required under the obligations of the Education Welfare Act 2000 to record and report children's absences to TUSLA. The school is obliged to report to the NEWB when a student has accumulated 20 days of absence, in one school year.



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Record Keeping

A vital component in monitoring attendance school-wide is the recording of daily attendance of each student and each class. The Class Teacher has responsibility for recording attendance for their class at 9:30 a.m. daily. The Assistant Principal with responsibility for monitoring attendance liaises with class teachers and parents where high rates of absenteeism are evident. Our Attendance Strategy outlines the procedures in place to follow up on poor attendance. Late arrivals are recorded by the school office, via the Aladdin system. Early leavers are recorded via a 'early leavers' tab on Aladdin by staff/secretary who collect children early.

The school submits a quarterly and annual report on Attendance to the TUSLA Education Welfare Officer.

Success Criteria

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

- All absences are explained by a written note / message on the Aladdin App by parents/guardian.
- Good practice and procedures in relation to electronic recording of daily pupil attendance (Aladdin System).
- Continued high rates of school attendance and punctuality.
- Overall Attendance levels in the school are maintained or increase.
- For those with a poor record of attendance; evidence of improvement through our records on the Student Management System Attendance Log.
- 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.
- 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.
- Ongoing liaison with the Educational Welfare Officer /TUSLA to address cases of concern at an early stage.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually with in line with our attendance strategy to maintain optimal targets, or as new guidelines are issued by the Department of Education and Skills.



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Ratification & Communication

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the board of management of Claremorris Boys N.S. on the 6th of November 2023 and subsequently communicated to the school community via the school's website.

Signed: Colman Warde

Date: 06-11-2023

**Colman Warde, Chairperson,
Board Of Management.**

Signed: Ciarán Murray

Date: 06-11-2023

**Ciarán Murray, Secretary/Principal
Board Of Management.**