

Attendance Policy

Scoil Eoin Phóil

Introductory Statement

This attendance policy was devised by the staff of Scoil Eoin Phóil in consultation with the Board of Management and following the guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and Túsla: Educational Welfare Services, Child and Family Agency. It was reviewed in September, 2017.

Rationale

Scoil Eoin Phóil decided to devise the attendance policy in order:

- To promote excellent attendance as an essential factor in excellence in learning.
- To fulfil the legislative requirements of the Education Welfare Act 2000 and the Education Act 1998.
- To comply with Túsla, Educational Welfare Services guidelines.

Scoil Eoin Phóil's vision and values in relation to attendance

In Scoil Eoin Phóil, we endeavour to provide a welcoming, supportive and inclusive environment where the children are happy and their welfare and well being are of the utmost importance. We recognise the importance of school attendance as an essential factor in helping our pupils to reach their potential.

Scoil Eoin Phóil's expectation in relation to Attendance

We believe that excellent attendance is essential for excellence in learning. We expect children to be in school unless they are ill, have medical appointments or in the case of bereavements.

Aims

The aims of this attendance policy are:

- To encourage full attendance where possible.
- To encourage punctuality.
- To raise awareness of the importance of school attendance.
- To identify pupils at risk.
- To develop links between the school and the families of children who may be/are at risk of developing attendance problems.
- To identify and remove, as far as is possible, obstacles to school attendance.
- To ensure that all pupils are registered accurately.
- To ensure that pupil attendance is recorded daily.
- To record, where possible, reasons for non attendance and late attendance.
- To identify ways of promoting excellence in attendance.
- To reward good attendance and excellence in attendance.

Scoil Eoin Phóil's Approach to Attendance / Strategies

Whole School Approach

- The provision of a warm, welcoming, secure environment for our pupils where they are respected, valued and happy.
- The value of school attendance is promoted throughout the school and communicated to all partners through Parent Teacher meetings, at B.O.M meetings, at staff meetings, in newsbrief and on our website.
- Class teachers recognise full attendance for the week within their class.
- The awarding of prizes (extra playtime, Golden time etc) to class/es with highest % attendance each month. These are announced at the school assembly. Photos are taken of winning class/es and displayed in the school hall.
- The awarding of certificates for full attendance at the end of year presentation ceremony.
- The inclusion of attendance monitoring in Special Duties Post (Deputy Principal, Claire O’Gorman, has responsibility for this task).
- Reminders by principal and Ms O’Gorman re the importance of good attendance and punctuality – at Assembly, on visits to classrooms etc.
- Risks to good attendance such as bullying, lack of friends, disadvantage are identified early.
- The provision of a curriculum where the children are engaged, challenged and where their learning needs are met.
- The provision of support for children with special educational needs in accordance with Dept of Education and Skills’ guideline.
- The involvement of all partners in the children’s education in the promotion of excellent attendance and the recognition of its importance in achieving learning outcomes.
- Outlining clearly the responsibilities of all – B.O.M., P.T.A, parents/guardians, staff and children in encouraging and promoting excellent attendance.
- The identification of barriers to school attendance resulting in the implementation of strategies to reduce /remove those barriers.
- The provision of the School Calendar in June for the following academic year to minimise the number of children taking holidays during the school term.
- A letter from the Principal is sent in September advising the parents/guardians of Scoil Eoin Phóil’s policy in relation to attendance and re-iterating that the school does not give permission or facilitate absence on holidays during term time.
- Inclusion of record of attendance at Parent Teacher meetings and in end of year reports to parents.
- Liaison between child and Ms O’Gorman and parent and Ms O’Gorman in relation to issues around attendance.

Target Setting

A detailed examination is made of

- overall school monthly attendance.
- monthly attendance class by class.
- Individual pupil attendance using the attendance records on Aladdin.
- Identification of individual children who are presenting with poor attendance
- Identification of children who are presenting with ongoing poor attendance (year on year).
- Identification of late comers from “Late log”

From an analysis of these statistics, relevant targets will be decided

- On a whole school basis.
- On a class basis.
- On an individual basis.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the Teacher

- Monitors pupil attendance and punctuality.
- Monitors patterns of absence in respect of individual children about whom there are concerns and in particular where absence notes are not presented.
- Maintains attendance on the school administration system, Aladdin, including reasons for absences and late arrivals.
- Maintains explanatory notes for the duration of the academic year and submits those relating to children with 20 or more days absence to the Principal in June.
- Contacts parents where absences are not explained in writing and requests a written note. This may be done via note in the homework journal.
- Informs Principal/Deputy Principal of concerns regarding a child’s attendance.
- Praises individual children / class where attendance is excellent.

Role of Principal

The school Principal will:

- Ensure that attendance is maintained in accordance with regulations
- Ask parents to respect the integrity of the school day by not taking children out of school unless for a specific appointment. We use a ‘sign out’ sheet for parents who collect their child early and in this way we can monitor how much time is missed by children. A note is to be provided if child has to leave early.

- Oversee regular contact by the Post holder with responsibility for attendance (Claire O’Gorman) with parents of children who are at risk.
- Oversee the provision of attendance record to all students in end of year report.
The following scoring system is used:
 - 0 absences: excellent
 - 1 – 5 days: very good
 - 6 – 10 days: good
 - 11 - 12 days: high average
 - 13 – 15 days: low average
 - 16 – 20 days: Fair
 - Over 20 days: 4 school weeks etc.
- Request parents to provide a written note at the back of the child’s journal in the event of absence to include date(s) absent and reason for the absence(s). In Junior and Senior Infants parents/guardians will be supplied with template notes to explain absences. These will be kept in homework folder and used in the event of absence.
- Provide parents with the school calendar in May / June for the following academic year thus enabling them to plan family events/holidays around school closures and not during term time.
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer
 - a) Where a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during that school year.
 - b) Where a pupil has been suspended for a period of 6 or more days.
 - c) Where a pupil has been expelled
- Submit a report to Túsla – Educational Welfare Services twice a year. This is done through the online system.
- Submit an annual report detailing the overall level of attendance in the school during that school year.
- Give regular updates to B.O.M on levels of attendance in the school.

Role of the parent

- Parent(s) / Guardian(s) are obliged to have their children engaged in full time education from 6 – 16 years of age.
- To support the school’s attendance strategy.
- Parent(s) / Guardian(s) should ensure that their child is in the class line at 9.20 for collection by class teacher
- Parent(s) / Guardian(s) must provide a written explanation in child’s journal following their child’s absence. In Junior + Senior Infants parents/guardians will be supplied with template notes to explain absences. These will be kept in homework folder and used in the event of absence.

Responsibility of the children

- Children coming to school unaccompanied should avoid delays ie. stopping at the shop, dawdling enroute – and be in their line at 9.20 for collection by class teacher.
- Children should pass absence notes from parents to class teacher.
- Children should pass school correspondence to their parents when requested to do so

Role of the Board of Management

The Board of Management of Scoil Eoin Phóil aims to provide a well maintained, well resourced school where the needs of the children are met thus encouraging excellent attendance. The Board of Management support the principal and staff in the full implementation of this policy.

Transfer to another school

- When a child transfers from Scoil Eoin Phóil to another school, the child's school report will be forwarded on receipt of written notification of the transfer.
- When a child transfers to Scoil Eoin Phóil, confirmation of transfer will be sent to the child's previous school and appropriate records will be sought
- Pupils transferring from Scoil Eoin Phóil to a post primary school will have their records forwarded on receipt of confirmation of enrolment

Practical Details

- Roll is called between 10am - 10.20 daily using Aladdin system
- School commences at 9.20. Children are expected to be in the line at 9.20
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must sign the 'sign out' register when child is removed early.
- Children who need to leave school before 2pm (Infants) and 3pm (1st – 6th) must be collected by a parent / named adult. The school should be informed in written form of the intention to remove a child early.
- Parent(s) / Guardian(s) and older children unaccompanied will sign the late log in the reception area.

Monitoring of this Policy

- This policy will be monitored by teachers.
- By Principal and post holder with responsibility for attendance (Claire O Gorman)
- By the Board of Management

Evaluation of this Policy

The success of the Policy is measured through:

- Analysis of targets set for the year.
- Improved attendance levels for the whole school.
- Improved attendance for individual children who have come to attention previously.
- Improved attendance level for individual classes
- Improved punctuality.
- Less time lost through withdrawal of children before 2pm/3pm.


Implementation date: Academic year 2017 – 2018

Timetable for Review: Review at the end of 2017 - 2018 school year, and every year thereafter.

Communication

- This policy will be circulated to all staff
- This policy will be published for all parent(s)/guardian(s) on the school website www.scoileoinphoil.scoilnet.ie
- This policy will be included in the school handbook which is distributed to all parents of Junior Infants and new children enrolling up through the school.
- This policy will be communicated to the children through discussion in class and at assemblies.

Date of next review: June 2018

Signed: 

Chairperson of Board of Management.

Date: 14/11/17