

## LACKAMORE NATIONAL SCHOOL

### Attendance Policy

#### ***Introduction:***

This policy aims to promote and encourage an ethos of good school attendance for all students. Lackamore National School recognises the link between good school attendance habits and educational outcomes for children.

#### ***The aims of the attendance policy are:***

- Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community.
- Inform the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined in the Educational Welfare Act 2000.
- Identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- Ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance/participation.
- Develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.
- Identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.

#### ***The school will ensure that:***

- The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school.
- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Pupil attendance is recorded daily.
- Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated.
- Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored.
- School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to:
  - ✓ The Educational Welfare Service
  - ✓ The Board of Management

#### ***The School Day: Punctuality & Absence***

- The school opens from 9.05 am
- Children are required to be in their classrooms not later than 9:20 a.m.
- All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time.

- The roll is taken at 10am, if a student is not in school at this time, they will be marked absent.
- If a child is late to school or absent (full day or part day), this must be explained by a note from their parent/guardian.
- The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late or where absences are unexplained.

### ***The Educational Welfare Act 2000***

Under this act, the school are obliged to maintain a register of the students enrolled in the school. The school must also maintain attendance records for all students and submit an Annual Attendance Report and Student Absence Reports to the Educational Welfare Service of the Child and Family Agency. The school are obliged to inform the Educational Welfare Service if a child is absent for more than 20 cumulative school days in a school year.

The Educational Welfare Act places a legal obligation on parents/guardians who have registered their child in the school to cause their child to attend school on each school day. Parents/Guardians are also obliged to inform the school of the reasons for any absences from school.

### ***Guidance for Parents***

- The school principal cannot authorise a child's absence for holidays during school time. Section [(21) (9)] of the Act states that: "a pupil's absence can only be authorised by the Principal when the child is involved in activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved".
- Reasons for pupils' absences must be communicated in writing, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school.
- If a child is absent, when the child returns to school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher which contains the child's name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence.
- These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. The school will contact parents when a written explanation for the child's absence is not received by the school.

### ***Parents/Guardians can promote good school attendance by:***

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- Notifying the school if their children cannot attend for any reason.
- Working with the school and education welfare service to resolve any attendance problems;
- Making sure their children understand that parents support and approve of school attendance;
- Discussing planned absences with the school.
- Refraining from taking holidays during school time
- Showing an interest in their children's school day and their children's homework.
- Encouraging them to participate in school activities.
- Praising and encouraging their children's achievements.

- Informing the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school.
- Ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children's appointments (with dentists etc), are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.
- Notifying, in writing, the school if their child is to be collected by someone not known to the teacher.

### ***Pupils (age appropriately)***

- Pupils can help by getting to school on time and being in class not later than 9:20am.
- Pupils are responsible for promptly passing on absence notes from parents to their class teacher.
- Pupils are responsible for passing school correspondence to their parents, on the specified day.

### ***School Attendance Strategy:***

The Board of Management is committed to providing a positive school atmosphere which is conducive to promoting good school attendance.

In this regard:

- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- The school will promote development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children.
- Support for pupils, who have special educational needs, are in place in accordance with Department of Education & Science guidelines.
- Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils.
- The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be utilised.
- The attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance, and the class teacher will notify the Principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any child.
- Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.

### ***School Principal***

The School Principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations.
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer:
  - If a pupil is not attending school regularly.
  - When a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during the course of a school year.
  - If a pupil has been suspended for a period of six or more days.
  - When a pupil's name is removed from the school register.
- Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil.
- Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff

### **Class Teacher**

The class teacher will:

- Maintain daily attendance on Aladdin,
- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences,
- Contact parents in instances where absences are not explained in writing,
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually,
- Encourage or promote improved attendance with daily incentives to attend school such as lunch time activities gardening/book club, after school activities such as sport/art etc.
- If required, as part of an agreed strategy with parent/guardian a reward system may be used to encourage improved attendance.
- Inform the Principal of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.


### **Records/Transfers**

- Subject to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer to another primary school will be passed to the Principal of the school, by post, as soon as we receive written notification of transfer.
- Attendance, behaviour and academic records of children who transfer from another primary school will be sought directly from the previous school.
- Attendance, behaviour and academic records of pupils transferring to a second level school will be sent to the school, if requested, once enrolment has been confirmed.

The attendance policy was drawn up in 2017 and reviewed in 2019.

This version of the Attendance Policy was drawn up in 2021 and will be reviewed in 2023.

Signed BOM Chairperson 

Signed Principal  Kieran O'Brien

Date: 27/1/22