

## Lecarrow Community National School

# SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance by pupils at school is key to educational attainment and success and must be actively encouraged within the school environment.

Our school aims to foster a culture of regular attendance at school for all pupils – furthermore we seek to identify and support those pupils who are experiencing problems with attendance at school.

Formal and informal structures are in place in our school to monitor, report and evaluate patterns of non-attendance amongst pupils.

The provisions of the Education Welfare Act (2002) inform and support the policy on attendance in the Infant School.

### EDUCATION (WELFARE) ACT 2000

The following extracts taken from the above act are binding on all schools:

‘The parent of a child shall cause the child concerned to attend a recognised school on each school day.....

Where the child is absent from the school at which he or she is registered during part of the school day or more than a school day, the parent of such child shall, in accordance with procedures specified in the code of behaviour prepared by the school notify the principal of the school of the reasons for the child’s absence.....

The Principal of a recognised school shall cause to be maintained in respect of each school year a record of the attendance or non-attendance of each student on each school day of each student registered at the school.

A record maintained shall specify where a student fails to attend, the fact of his or her failure and the reasons for such failure.

A record shall be maintained where the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from a recognised school during the school year is not less than 20’

- To comply with this Education Welfare Act the following procedures will be respected in the Lecarrow CNS.
- A note/medical certificate must be sent to class teacher explaining reason for absence for part or whole of any school day. All absences must be accounted for.
- These notes/certificates will be kept on file as record of absences.
- Any student who is absent for more than 20 school days (irrespective of reason) will be reported to National Education Welfare Officer.
- Failure to comply with this Act will be deemed an offence and liable to fine.

## Lecarrow Community National School

Monitoring School Attendance and Reporting Absences in the Lecarrow CNS:

- Individual pupil attendance is recorded in the Leabhar Rolla, *daily in line with circular 0028/2013*
- 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 (Leabhar Rolla) where a pupil subsequently does not complete the full school day or arrives after the roll call.
- Regular School Attendance is actively promoted, praised and rewarded.
- Pupil Absence from school is monitored by class teacher and noted by the Principal/Deputy Principal on a monthly or bi-monthly basis or as deemed appropriate.
- Parents are notified as early as possible of any concerns regarding non-attendance in an effort to remedy the situation. In cases where pupil has missed 15 days a letter will be sent to parents to alert them about the matter.
- In accordance with the Education Welfare Act the Education Welfare Officer or National Education Welfare Board (TUSLA) will be informed in writing by the school if a pupil is absent for 20 days or more during a school year.
- One day absences must be explained with an oral explanation or a written note. Longer absences must be explained with a written note and /or medical certificate to class teacher. The class teacher will retain these notes/certificates for inspection (notes will be held on file for the school year in which they pertain to). All absences, for part or whole of any school day, must be accounted for. It is the responsibility of the parents to inform the teacher in writing about all absences.
- In situations where despite all efforts, a child's attendance at school does not improve, the Health Board will be informed and they may then exercise their powers to ensure the safety and welfare of the child.

A comment on attendance is included on the end of year reports.

### **Role of Parents:**

According to the Education Welfare Act, parents/guardians are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that their child attends at a recognized school until they are 16 years of age or have completed three years post-primary education.

The responsibility for attendance at school lies ultimately with the parents/ guardians.

Parents are urged to co-operate with the school to ensure that their child's education is unhampered. Persistent failure to attend school constitutes neglect.

### **Punctuality:**

In the case of pupils whose punctuality is a source of on-going concern - parents will be notified and invited to meet teacher and/or principal, in an effort to eliminate the problem.

It is our hope that the development of this policy will lead to improved attendance and punctuality on behalf of all our pupils and significantly contribute to their over all education.

## Lecarrow Community National School

### Guidelines for Teachers in Dealing with Pupil Absences in Lecarrow CNS

1. All absences from school are noted in the Leabhar Rolla by the class teacher each morning. Teacher Please Note: Pupils who have been marked absent for 20 consecutive days must be removed from the Leabhar Rolla (B) by the class teacher, and the Principal should be informed about the matter. The pupil will be re-entered on the Leabhar Rolla on return to school (G). This is procedure in accordance with The Rules for National Schools until such time as another directive is issued by the NEWB
2. Where a pupil is absent for one or more days a note from parents explaining the absences must be given to class teacher, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardian to give notice in writing to the teacher – teacher will keep these notices on file for the entire school year. These notes may be requested by the Officers of the Education Welfare Board in cases where absences are being investigated by the Board.
3. In cases where a pupil has accumulated absences of 15 days in a school year, a letter will be sent to parents by post (a) alerting parents of the accumulated absences and (b) informing parents that the child may being brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Board under the 20 days absence rule. This letter is intended to highlight the issue for parents and to impress upon them the need to keep all absences to a minimum.
4. All absences are monitored monthly and the Deputy Principal shall note the children with 20+ absences and shall submit notification of absence for each child concerned to the Education Welfare Board on-line
5. Parents with concerns about their child's attendance are encouraged to speak with class teacher or the Principal about the matter. Every effort will be made by the school to support families with difficulties around attendance.
6. In cases where there are on-going medical concerns causing a child to be frequently absent, parents should meet with their child's teacher. Teachers may allocate schoolwork to be done at home to help the child to catch up with work missed and so lessen the disruption to the child's education.
7. Teachers with concerns about a child's attendance should speak with the parents of the child and should bring the matter to the attention of the Principal/Deputy Principal and to the attention of the Principal. In cases where no explanation for absences is forthcoming the Principal may contact the parents by telephone and EWO. In cases where the welfare of the child is considered to be under threat the matter may be referred to the Health Board who will intervene as necessary.

Ratified by the Board of Management on