

TINREAMH

ATTENDANCE

Gaelscoil Raifteirí,
Faiche an Aonaigh,
Caisleán a' Bharraigh,
Co. Mhaigh Eo
Uimhir Rolla: 19832D





Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	Gaelscoil Raifteiri	
Address	Páirc an Aonaigh, Gort na bhFuaráin, Caisleán an Bharraigh, Co. Mhaigheo	
Roll Number	19832D	
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	<p>The School Attendance policy was formulated by Staff based on existing practice and in consultation with the Board of Management and Parents to comply with relevant legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Education Act 1998</i> - <i>The Education Welfare Act 2000</i> <p>Gaelscoil Raifteirí recognises the positive impact high attendance has on student engagement and on teaching and learning. It is acknowledged that positive experiences of engagement with the school contributes positively to the quality and quantity of school attendance. The vision and values of Gaelscoil Raifteiri encompass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The promotion of a caring and positive school environment, where every pupil, their welfare, wellbeing and health is a priority. The uniqueness of each child is celebrated and individual needs identified and support personalised. • Gaelscoil Raifteiri fosters a positive school culture, where pupils have positive and respectful interactions with their teachers and peers. Pupils are active and valued members of the school community. • Pupils are nurtured to have respect for themselves and others, and be responsible for their behaviour and their learning. • Pupils are encouraged to have high expectations for their learning and work diligently and creatively to learn knowledge and skills to prepare them for a future of life-long learning. • All pupils are supported to attend, participate and achieve in school through the implementation of whole school policies and practices in line with our school values. Pupils requiring additional support for attendance receive suitable interventions and guidance. 	
The school's high expectations around attendance	Under the Education (Welfare) Act, 2005, parents are responsible for making sure their child receives an education. In this regard, Gaelscoil Raifteiri expects a high level of pupil attendance. All teachers encourage good attendance and absences are explained by parents to the school/class teacher via an attendance note on the Aladdin Connect App.	

	<p>Children are encouraged to come to school every day and the school's approach to, and promotion of, attendance is outlined in this strategy. Good attendance is encouraged at whole school assemblies and is acknowledged at the end of the school year.</p> <p>Tusla and the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Raifteiri strongly advise that parents do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time. Holidays should be taken during the allocated holiday time as outlined in the school calendar. The Board of Management acknowledges that there are cases where a child has a genuine reason for absenteeism, including; illness, urgent family reasons, expulsion, suspension, or transfer to another school.</p>	
<p>How attendance will be monitored</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All class teachers take a daily roll call which is recorded on the school's data software programme Aladdin. • If a child does not attend on a day when the school is open, their absence will be recorded by the class teacher on the Aladdin system. • If the teacher has been made aware of the reason for absence, this is also recorded on the Aladdin system. • If a teacher is concerned about student absences, they alert the Principal. • The roll call is taken by 10:00am each morning. • The annual attendance of each child is recorded by Aladdin and is printed in the end of year school reports. • Late arrivals and early departures are discouraged unless absolutely necessary. Parents are asked to record all late arrivals and early collection on the Aladdin app. • School begins at 8:50am and pupils who arrive after 9pm will be recorded as arriving late on Aladdin. • The school will contact parents/carers in the event of children being consistently late. The school principal is obliged, under the Education Welfare Act, to report children who are persistently • Teachers are responsible for informing Principal/Deputy Principal re: frequent absentees • The Aladdin/student management system flags when a child has missed 10/15/20 etc. days and informs class teacher and office. • Parents will be informed by text/phone/email if absences are persistent/unexplained. • If a child is absent for 15 and 20 days cumulatively then an automatic text is sent to parents by Aladdin. • The principal may in certain circumstances contact a parent/guardian if a child has been absent from school for a shorter number of consecutive days i.e. 3 or more. • Teachers keep a written record of communication with parents regarding matters of attendance • Parents receive a letter of notice from the school if a child has been absent for 20 days (post Covid-19). • Procedure for reporting to the Educational Welfare Board is explained in letter to parents and improved attendance is encouraged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a pupil enrolls in our school from another school, a letter of transfer is sent to the pupil's former school. • The Principal must be informed before a pupil's name is removed from the roll. • Homework Journals, E-mails and text messages and notices via the Aladdin Connect App. are used to correspond with parents. 	
<p>Summary of the main elements of the school's approach to attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target setting and targets • The whole-school approach • Promoting good attendance • Responding to poor attendance 	<p><u>Target setting and targets</u> The policy aims to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage full attendance at school • Highlight the importance of punctuality and attendance amongst students and parents • Ensure that adequate records of attendances and absences are maintained by the school as per the Education Act 2000 in respect of each individual student • Report on student attendance to Tusla – the Educational Welfare Service • Implement suitable intervention strategies to improve school attendance and punctuality. • Average attendance rate for the first five months of 2021-2022 is 88%. <p><u>The whole-school approach</u> -Staff and Board of Management will collaborate to implement this policy. -All teachers will promote and encourage excellent attendance. -Accurate records of attendance are regularly monitored by the Principal and Deputy-Principal for children at risk.</p> <p><u>Promoting good attendance</u> The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, will be inclusive and relevant to the needs of the individual child to facilitate each pupil to experience success. Inclusive Support for pupils who have special educational needs is in accordance with NCSE and DES guidelines.</p> <p>The following are strategies employed by the school to promote good school attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a positive learning environment • Attendance awards are posted on school noticeboard • Attendance and punctuality are promoted in school newsletter. • Staff meet and greet with pupils every morning • Positive affirmation of attendance is given when the roll is being taken raising awareness of the importance of school attendance. • The importance of attendance is highlighted during school assemblies with certificates awarded at the end of year for pupils with full attendance, almost full attendance. • Attendance is recorded in pupils' annual school report • Tusla's Educational Welfare Services' leaflet entitled 'Don't Let Your Child Miss Out' is referenced at new parents' 	

information days/evenings and is available on the school website.

- The importance of good attendance is addressed by the Principal at the initial meeting with new parents.
- The annual school calendar is published in May and shared on website with all parents. Parents are encouraged to plan holidays and family events around school closures.
- A broad range of curricular and extra-curricular activities are provided e.g. music, sports training to encourage high levels of attendance.
- Full participation by all pupils in school activities is encouraged and supported
- Parental involvement in the Parents' Association and in activities within the school is encouraged.
- Pupils with a poor attendance record are supported insofar as is practical to improve their attendance.
- Updates on school attendance are given at Board of Management meetings
- Engagement with support agencies such as:
Department of Education and Skills
National Psychological Service (NEPS)
National Behavioural Support Service (NBSS),
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
HSE, Tusla and Local Family Support Services

Responding to poor attendance

The Board of Management acknowledges that despite the best efforts of the school and of families, some children will need extra support to prevent patterns of poor attendance developing. The following are strategies employed by the school to respond to poor attendance

- Working with groups or individuals who may need additional support (Guidelines for Schools, p.30)6
- Tailoring whole-school approaches to group or individual needs
- Engaging in early dialogue with parents and students
- Using school-led, multi-agency support processes
- Referral to Tusla's Educational Welfare Services

Approach to attendance concerns

School-based

- Where there is a concern regarding a child's level of attendance or pattern of absenteeism, the Principal will speak to the parents/guardians.
- A text will be sent to parents/guardians informing them when their child has reached 15 days and 20 days of absenteeism (post-Covid).
- Parents/guardians will also be informed when the school has made a referral to Tusla regarding attendance.

Tusla

- The school must notify Tusla if a child is absent for 20 days or more, or where absences/patterns of absence give rise to concern.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a child is sick or is absent for another explained reason, no action is likely to be taken by Tusla. However, if there is a concern about a child's attendance at school or about the reasons given for absenteeism, families may be visited by an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to discuss the situation. Unexplained absences are of particular concern to the school and to Tusla. • The school is obliged to report regularly to Tusla regarding attendance. There are four reporting periods each year. The report is generated by the school, based on the guidelines provided by Tusla. • Any child who has missed 20 days or more, or any children about whom there are absenteeism concerns, must be reported to Tusla in these periodic reports. • Tusla Child and Family Agency is also informed if a child is suspended for 6 days or more, or in the case of the expulsion of a child. 	
<p>School roles in relation to attendance</p>	<p>The Board of Management acknowledges a collective responsibility for the promotion of attendance. The following outlines the roles and responsibilities of people within the school community regarding attendance:</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>The school principal will provide leadership for the creation of a school ethos and climate that is supportive of high levels of engagement and attendance. It is the responsibility of the Principal to lead the development and implementation of this policy, under the guidance of the Board of Management. The Principal will undertake the following responsibilities in relation to this plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with parents/carers regarding attendance concerns. • Prepare a report on attendance for the Board of Management on a yearly basis, or as the need arises. • Provide opportunities for staff to engage actively with the development and monitoring of the school's Attendance Strategy. • View the attendance statistics on the Aladdin system each week • Initiate links with relevant bodies on school attendance issues • Making the periodic returns to Tusla • Notifying Tusla's Educational Welfare Services and the relevant EWO of particular problems in relation to attendance and ensure support for the work of the EWO with students who have chronic attendance difficulties • At the end of each school year the Principal forwards the attendance information to Tusla. • Organising attendance assemblies, including certificates where relevant. 	<p style="text-align: right;">6</p>

Class teachers (and substitute teachers where relevant) have responsibility for recording daily attendance and for inputting reasons of absenteeism on the Aladdin system. It is the responsibility of teachers to:

- Provide a classroom climate and classroom management that support participation and engagement, especially with students who may be at risk of poor attendance
- Actively use the school's Attendance Strategy to promote attendance
- Set high expectations for attendance and punctuality in their classrooms
- Use their own punctuality to lead by example
- Ensure attendance data are recorded accurately and reviewed in line with school procedures, as set out above
- Alert Principal if there are concerns about student absences
- Support the attendance plan (if one is in place) for students who have difficulty in attending school on a regular basis
- Support students on return when they have missed periods of schooling.

Parents/Guardians

The Board of Management acknowledges the important role of parents/guardians in the attendance of their children at school. In line with Tusla's guidelines for school (p.44)7, parents/guardians are expected to:

- Set high standards for their child in relation to attendance and punctuality
- Engage with the school if there is a problem about their child's attendance and support plans to address the problem
- Ensure that their child regularly attends and arrives at school on time.
- Avoid taking their child out of class unless there is a serious reason
- Notifying the school via the Aladdin app. in advance of planned absences.
- Notifying the school via the Aladdin app./in writing if their children cannot attend for any reason.
- Showing an interest in their children's school day and their children's homework
- Encouraging their children to participate in school activities
- Praising and encouraging their children's achievements in 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 the teacher/office if their child/children, are to be collected by someone other than the adult listed on the Emergency Information Form.
- Avoid taking their child on holidays during term time.

	<p>Pupils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils' have the clear responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually. • Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence. 	
<p>Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)</p>	<p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental involvement in supporting school policies is encouraged. • Policy development and review includes input from parents. • School activities and achievements are celebrated in our school newsletters and on our website. • Parental attendance at school events (e.g., Concerts, Masses, Graduation etc.) is acknowledged. <p>Students</p> <p>Students are key participants in this process and they can promote attendance by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in school activities, such as Cumann na mBunscoil, Cross Country, etc. • Engaging with the Zippy Friends and other SPHE related programmes. <p>Other Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links with local schools and other Gaelscoileanna are fostered. e.g. Credit Union Quiz, Chess Tournament, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Féile Scoil dramaíochta, Scór, E O Shea Hurling Tournament, Cumann na mBunscoil etc. • Provision of relevant information e.g. school reports, educational information (SEN) to other primary or second level schools to which a student may be transitioning or transferring. <p>Youth and Community Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaelscoil Raifteirí maintains positive links with local Post-primary schools with initiatives such as Peer to peer, Spike-ball coaching etc. TY students participate in many school-based projects with all classes. • Community Workers e.g Gardaí, Fire Safety Officer, Litter Warden are invited to speak to the children on a variety of topics. • We liaise with support organisations such as NEPS, NCSE, HSE and CAMHS to support our pupils with special educational needs. • We encourage the students to become involved in local programmes and activities such as the Tidy Towns, Love Castlebar, GMIT science week etc. 	
<p>How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored</p>	<p>The principal will monitor the implementation of the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance on an ongoing basis by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities at staff meetings for staff to share experiences and review the attendance strategy. • Update the Board of Management at each meeting with reference to the school's attendance figures. 	<p>8</p>

Review process and date for review	A formal end-of-year review of the Statement of Strategy will be conducted annually as part of the preparation of the Board of Management's annual report on attendance (as per Section 21(6)(a)(b) of Education (Welfare) Act 2000) to Tusla's Educational Welfare Services	
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	This strategy was reviewed by the Board of Management and approved on 29.3.22	
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla	Same date	

Rinneadh athbhreithniú ar an mbeartas seo i gcomhairle le tuismitheoirí agus leis an bhfoireann agus daingníodh é ag an mBord Bainistíochta ar an 29.3.22

Sínithe:  Dated: **29.3.22**

Cathaoirleach an Bhoird Bainistíochta
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Review Date: **29.3.24**