



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Template for the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	Scoil Aodan Naofa
Address	Carnew, Co. Wicklow
Roll Number	18242A
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	<p>Scoil Aodan Naofa wishes to promote, encourage and support regular attendance as an essential factor in the learning of all our pupils.</p> <p>Scoil Aodan Naofa wishes to promote and support discussion, reflection and consultation about attendance within the school community.</p> <p>The Board of Management wishes to comply with legislation, such as The Education Act, 1998 and The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.</p>
The school's high expectations around attendance	<p>School attendance has traditionally been strong in Scoil Aodán Naofa and we continue to build a culture of high expectations among all staff and with every student. We are vigilant in our efforts to maintain this standard.</p>
How attendance will be monitored	<p>The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded electronically on the Aladdin System by the Class Teacher on a daily basis. Class attendance data for the whole school is then automatically recorded in the Leabhar Tinrimh (Attendance Book) section of the Aladdin System each day. At the end of each month this is then printed out in hard copy by the teacher whose responsibility it is to monitor and maintain school attendance and policy development in this area. They are then signed by the principal and stored in a folder. The annual attendance of each individual pupil is recorded in the Clár Leabhar (Register), together with information provided in the pupils' enrolment forms (Pupil's Name, Date of Birth, Address, Religion, Nationality and Parents' Names). The school secretary also records the annual attendance of each individual pupil on the Primary Online Database (POD).</p> <p>If a pupil does not attend on a day when the</p>

	<p>school is open for instruction, his/her non-attendance will be recorded by the class teacher. The attendance is taken at 10.00am each morning. Any pupil not present by 10.00am will be marked absent for the day. Any subsequent amendments are at the discretion of the Principal or Deputy Principal. A note from parents/guardians is required to explain each absence and this reason is entered on the appropriate section of the Aladdin System (under Edit Absence Reasons tab) by the Class Teacher when known. If the school is not provided with a note a standard letter requesting a note is sent home. These notes will be retained by the school office and will form part of the reporting procedure to the Educational Welfare Services section of the Tusla - Child and Family Agency.</p> <p>Late arrivals and early departures are noted by the school secretary. Children arriving late in to school must first report their arrival to the secretary, who then records the child's arrival time on the Aladdin system.</p> <p>If children are departing early from school, the adult collecting him/her is requested to sign into the early departures book which is located by the door of the secretary's office.</p>
<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 	<p>Attendance data is analysed in order to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - set targets for improvement in attendance and reduction of absence - implement early interventions at whole-school, class, family or individual level - identify individuals with poor attendance and intervene accordingly. <p>Teachers accurately maintain and actively review the attendance patterns of all children in their care and alert relevant staff if there are concerns about pupil absences.</p> <p>We endeavour to create a safe, welcoming and supportive environment for our pupils and their parents/guardians, one in which they are valued and respected and in which provision is made for their individual learning needs.</p> <p>Parents/guardians are consulted in drafting and</p>

reviewing policies with the aim of promoting a high-level of co-operation among the school community.

The school promotes good attendance in that the teaching staff collaborates in the planning and implementation of the primary school curriculum, so as to provide a stimulating learning environment for all pupils, ensuring the school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible, relevant and differentiated to the needs and different learning styles of the individual child.

Scoil Aodan Naofa endeavours to promote the development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children and fosters an environment that encourages children to attend school and participate fully in the life of the school.

New entrants and their parents/guardians are invited to engage in an induction process, through which the school's policies and procedures in relation to attendance are explained. There is a focus on the value of regular attendance and on the importance of developing good attendance habits from Junior Infants onwards.

Scoil Aodán Naofa's homework policy, drawn up in consultation with parents/guardians, clearly outlines the school's expectations in terms of the quantity of homework assigned and in the quality of homework presented. There is a consistent approach to homework throughout the school. Homework is tailored to suit the needs of individual children with particular needs. Children can also avail of the Homework Club which runs daily from 2.50 to 3.50 Monday to Thursday inclusive. These strategies help to promote good attendance and reduce the incidents of problems with homework leading to non-attendance.

The school's policies on all subjects including Literacy and Numeracy, take into account the impact on school attendance, while the differentiation and ability grouping policies relieve pressure on children and encourage positive attitudes towards attendance.

The calendar for the coming school year is published annually in August/September and reminders are issued via the monthly newsletters. It is hoped that this approach will enable parents/guardians to plan family events around school closures, thus minimising the chances of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term.

Scoil Aodan Naofa encourages inclusivity and therefore all pupils are expected to wear the generic school uniform, thus eliminating peer pressure regarding clothes style or quality as a reason for non-attendance. The generic uniform, introduced in recent years, positively affects attendance and also reduces the pressure, financially, on parents.

The school actively supports and includes pupils, who have special educational needs, in accordance with Department guidelines and quality teaching and internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils, thereby fostering regular attendance. Likewise the school values and encourages diversity and has high expectations for all children to reach their individual potential.

At the end of the school year, children are rewarded publically for excellent attendance with Certificates of Attendance, which affirm the success of these children while at the same time encouraging others to improve their own attendance.

The attendance rates of children will be monitored by the Special Duties Teacher who has responsibility for the roll and school attendance. He/she will advise parents/guardians in writing if their child has missed 15 days. They are then invited to discuss with the school ways in which this can be improved. If a child does not attend for 20 days parents/guardian are informed that the Education Welfare Officer must be notified. The school will utilise the assistance of the Education Welfare Officer in order to promote good school attendance.

Support programmes within the school which can enhance attendance include - Green School Project, Active School Project, Show and tell, Project work, Buddy Reading, programmes in the area of behaviour, confidence and self esteem.

Should children come to school without a lunch, parents/guardians are informed and if one cannot be provided for him/her, the school will provide one when possible, thereby reducing the incidents of early departure from school.

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Code Of Behaviour actively promote and encourage positivity towards attendance. The school is promoted as a Bully Free Zone and attention is drawn to this during weekly Assembly talks, school procedures e.g. Restorative Practice and catchy slogans. Clear procedures are outlined in the Code Of Behaviour regarding suspension and returning to school following suspension.

Scoil Aodan Naofa has introduced a Book Rental Scheme in recent years and this is another positive influence on school attendance, reducing pressure on all members of the school community.

- Responding to poor attendance

Throughout the year, parents/guardians are advised in writing when their child has not attended for 15 days with a view to rectifying the problem before reaching a 20 day target. Parents/guardians of pupils whose non-attendance is a concern are invited to meet with the Principal to discuss the school's concerns. If non-attendance continues to be a concern, parents/guardians are then informed in writing that their child has reached or passed the 20th day of absence. The school must then inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing.

Section 21 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) obliges schools to inform the Education Welfare Officer if a child is absent on more than 20 days in any school year, or if a child does not attend school on a regular basis.

In addition to reporting any child who has missed 20 or more days in a school year, the Welfare

	<p>Officer must also be informed where attendance is irregular, where a pupil is removed from the school register and where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more.</p> <p>In such cases the Education Welfare Officer (following all reasonable efforts by the Education Board to consult with the child's parents and 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 may result in a fine and/or imprisonment.</p> <p>Reasons for absence are recorded and reported to the EWB five times during the school year through an online or form system - at the end of September, October, March and June and finally, an annual report. The annual report is submitted - not more than six weeks following the end of the school year - detailing the overall level of attendance at the school during that school year. This information will be communicated to the school community through the school's newsletter. Parents/guardians are informed in writing on the end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year.</p>
School roles in relation to attendance	<p>It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management.</p> <p>Role of the Principal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff. • Promote the development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children. • Promote the reward system for pupils. • Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations. • Ensure support is in place for pupils, who have special educational needs, in accordance with Department guidelines. • Ensure internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the

	<p>special needs of pupils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the support provided by the Education Welfare Officer is utilised. <p>Role of the Teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually. • Promote the reward system for pupils. • Promote the development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children. • Maintain the school attendance records in accordance with procedure. • Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences. • Ensure the school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is interesting, flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child. • Support pupils, who have special educational needs. • Inform the Principal of concerns he/she may have regarding the attendance of any pupil. <p>Special Duties Teacher: The attendance rates of children will be monitored by the Special Duties Teacher who has responsibility for the roll and school attendance. He/she will advise parents/guardians in writing if their child has missed 15 days. They are then invited to discuss with the school ways in which this can be improved. If a child does not attend for 20 days parents/guardian are informed that the Education Welfare Officer must be notified. The school will utilise the assistance of the Education Welfare Officer in order to promote good school attendance.</p>
Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)	<u>Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, if at all possible, 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.
- Instilling in their children, a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth.
- 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.
- Pupils are responsible for promptly passing on absence notes from parents to their Class Teacher.

Pupils:

- 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.
- Pupils are responsible for passing school correspondence to their parents, on the specified day.
- Pupils are responsible for promptly passing on absence notes from parents to their class teacher.

The school maintains communication with local pre-schools and second-level schools in order to make the transition for pupils as easy as possible.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a child transfers from Scoil Aodan Naofa to another school, the schools records on attendance, academic progress etc will be forwarded on receipt of written notification of the transfer. • When a child transfers into Scoil Aodan Naofa, confirmation of transfer will be communicated to the child's previous school and the appropriate records are requested. • Pupils transferring from Scoil Aodan Naofa to a Post Primary school will have their records forwarded on, if requested, on receipt of confirmation of enrolment. • The school will also follow the four steps to update POD as per Circular 0033/2015.
How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored	<p>The Statement will be monitored</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by staff at regular staff meetings. • At each Board of Management meeting • As part of the Board of Management 's annual report on attendance
Review process and date for review	Statement to be reviewed in Sept 2017
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla	