



Statement on Attendance & Absence

Ratified at BOM Meeting on 14th April, 2021 (Online Meeting due to Covid-19)

Signed Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed Principal

Date.....

Date of next review.....**April 2024**

Rationale:

- Rush & Lusk Educate Together National School is committed to providing a learning environment that will foster all children's learning and encourage them to attend school regularly.
- The school wishes to foster an appreciation of learning among children.
- It is essential that parents/ guardians are aware of the absolute necessity for regular, punctual attendance at school.
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000.
- It presents an opportunity to review and strengthen existing procedures and to inform our new parent body.
- Our ethos promotes the values of respect and harmony and allows each child to develop to their full potential in a safe and nurturing environment.

Aims:

- Our aim is to provide a stimulating school day, with clear guidelines and structures, so that children feel welcome and nurtured while attending school.
- We believe that our children will benefit from this education through regular attendance. We aim to support children and parents/ guardians in achieving good attendance.
- By reviewing this statement we hope to
 1. Raise awareness of the importance of school attendance
 2. Foster an appreciation of learning
 3. Enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
 4. Promote positive attitudes to learning
 5. Identify children at risk of becoming early school leavers
 6. Ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions used in the school are implemented in a fair and consistent manner that encourage children to attend school.
 7. Comply with requirements under the Education Welfare Act 2000/ Guidelines from the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB).

Defining and Recording Non-Attendance:

The school community recognises that a parent/ guardian of a child is obliged '*to cause the child concerned to attend a recognised school on each school day*'. (Education Welfare Act, 2000)

Whole school strategies/ measures to promote high levels of attendance:

Among the many strategies/ measures we use to ensure regular attendance are:

- We aim to provide a warm, welcoming and supportive learning environment for our children, one in which they are valued and respected and in which provision is made for their learning needs.
- Our teachers have high expectations of children's attendance.

- We hold regular and open class-level discussions with the children on the importance of regular attendance.
- We praise those who are making a serious effort to improve their attendance.
- The calendar for the upcoming school year is published annually and is available on our school website www.ralet.ie. It is hoped that this approach will enable parents/ guardians to plan family events around school closures, thus minimising the chance of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term. Teachers will not prepare work for a child to bring on holidays with them.
- We have regular communication with parents/ guardians and provide them with updates on their child's attendance if it is a cause for concern.
- Our class teachers and special education needs teachers seek to ensure that children who may be experiencing learning difficulties are actively supported and encouraged with appropriate teaching. Homework is tailored to the individual needs of these children.
- Our school's Code of Behaviour takes a positive approach to fostering good behaviour.
- We ask parents/ guardians to value every minute that the children spend at school and therefore make sure that the children are at school on time. Children that arrive late to school will enter the school by the main door, they will be recorded as late on Aladdin. In the same way we ask parents/ guardians not to ask to let the children off early, unless for a specific appointment. If a child has to leave the school early, parents/ guardians must inform the class teacher or school secretary in advance to make such arrangements.

School procedures for non-attendance:

- Parents/ guardians can view attendance of their child(ren) at any time on the Aladdin Connect app.
- Parents / guardians are advised to use Aladdin Connect for attendance notes or alternatively send an email or a written explanation of the child's absence to the school immediately after the child's return to school. The school journal note section can also be used whereby the teacher can detach the written note for filing. Where a phone-call is made to the school indicating a child's absence, the school secretary provides the class-teacher with a written record of the phone-message.
- All written notifications of absence are retained initially by the teacher for the academic year and later in the school archive.
- If a parent/ guardian does not provide a written explanation, a form is sent home to the family stating the date of absence and requesting the reason for non-attendance. The obligation is with the class-teacher to follow up on this note the following day.
- Parents / Guardians are made aware at the beginning of the school-year of the importance of good attendance and punctuality, that the Aladdin roll-call is held by 10.00am and that a child who comes into school after this time is deemed absent.

- Parents/ Guardians are reminded not to withdraw a child early from school unless for very urgent reasons. A record is taken of early withdrawals.
- The NEWB is informed of the names of pupils who are absent for 20 or more days in the school-year. Parents/ Guardians are informed when a referral to the NEWB is forwarded about their child. Parents/ Guardians who do not have English as a first language receive information in their home language on obligations concerning pupil attendance.
- The total number of days missed in the school year is recorded for parents on the annual school-report, given to parents in June.
- When there is a real concern over the non-attendance of a child, the Principal meets with the parents/ guardians and discusses possible difficulties as well as the important role that regular attendance has in contributing to educational progress and outcomes.
- With regards to child protection, we will pay particular attention to trends in non-attendance. We will also monitor non-attendance in correlation with signs of neglect/physical/emotional abuse.

Procedures in relation to Removal from the School Register / Transfer to another school

- A child's name is only removed from the school register where the principal has been informed that the child has been enrolled in another school or when the Welfare Board notifies the principal that the child has been registered by the Welfare Board in out-of-school education or at the end of a school year in which the child has not returned to school.
- When a child transfers to our school, a letter of transfer is sent immediately to the school of previous enrolment. When a child transfers to another school and when information is requested, the Principal informs the other school of the child's attendance record and any other matters relating to the child's educational progress as is considered appropriate.

Roles and Responsibility:

- Each class teacher is responsible for keeping daily attendance records on Aladdin and for recording the reasons for absence. When a reason for absence is not forthcoming once the child has returned to school, the class teacher is responsible for follow-up with parents/ guardians.
- The principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of the attendance procedures. Also he is responsible for following up with parents on issues of concern, for keeping an accurate report of attendance, for reporting annual attendance figures, implementing strategies to promote good attendance and any issues of concern to the Board of Management.

Evaluation:

The success of any Attendance & Absence Policy is measured through:

- Improved attendance levels as measured through the online records and the statistical returns.
- Happy, confident, well-adjusted children.
- Positive parental/ guardian feedback.
- Teacher vigilance.

Reference:

Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Ratified by the Board of Management – 14th April, 2021.