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|  | **New Ross Educate Together National School**  **Barrett’s Park, New Ross, Co. Wexford**  **Tel: 0539105070**  [office@newrossetns.ie](mailto:office@newrossetns.ie)  www.newrossetns.ie  **Roll no 20458m** |

**Attendance & Punctuality Strategy**

**Table of Contents**

[**School Details:** 3](#_Toc514833552)

[**Rationale** 3](#_Toc514833553)

[**Aims of Policy:** 3](#_Toc514833554)

[**Roles and Responsibilities:** 4](#_Toc514833555)

[**The Role of the Parent/ Guardian** 4](#_Toc514833556)

[**The Role of the Class Teacher** 4](#_Toc514833557)

[**The Role of the Principal /Deputy Principal** 5](#_Toc514833558)

[**Punctuality:** 5](#_Toc514833559)

[**Procedure in the event of Poor Punctuality** 5](#_Toc514833560)

[**Recording and Reporting Attendance:** 6](#_Toc514833561)

[**Procedure in the event of Poor Attendance** 7](#_Toc514833562)

[**Referral of Absences to Tusla** 7](#_Toc514833563)

[**Transfer to another school:** 8](#_Toc514833564)

[**Suspension or Expulsion** 9](#_Toc514833565)

[**Strategies for Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality:** 9](#_Toc514833566)

[Whole School Strategies to Promote Attendance: 9](#_Toc514833567)

[**Success Criteria:** 10](#_Toc514833568)

[**Ratification and Review:** 10](#_Toc514833569)

[**Appendix 1: Pre-Referral Checklist (Tusla)** 11](#_Toc514833570)

[**Appendix 2: Referral Form (Tusla)** 13](#_Toc514833571)

[**Appendix 3: Punctuality Note** 18](#_Toc514833572)

## **School Details:**

Name: New Ross Educate Together National School

Address: Barrett's Park, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

Telephone: 0539105070

Email: office@newrossetns.ie

Roll Number: 20458m

Principal: Elaine French

The school day starts at 8.30 and finishes at 1.10 for infant classes and 2.10 for all other classes.

## **Rationale**

*The central objective of New Ross Educate Together National School’s Attendance Policy is to promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils’ learning.*

This policy complements the school ethos of nurturing potential in a caring environment where the welfare of students is paramount. This policy was developed in accordance with legislative requirements such as the Education Welfare Act 2000 and the Education Act, 1998. It also identifies the supportive role of Tusla, the Student and Family Agency, and outlines the school’s legal obligations to report absences.

New Ross Educate Together is anxious that parents be aware of the absolute necessity for regular punctual attendance at school.

## **Aims of Policy:**

The aim of the Attendance policy of New Ross Educate Together National School is to encourage attendance as an essential factor in pupils’ learning.

The policy aims to:

* Ensure that pupils are registered accurately and efficiently
* Ensure that pupil attendance is recorded daily
* Encourage full attendance where possible
* Outline strategies to encourage and improve punctuality and attendance
* Identify pupils at risk
* Promote a positive learning environment
* Raise awareness of the importance of school attendance
* Identify pupils at risk of leaving school early
* Ensure compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation (Education Welfare Act 2000/ Education Act, 1998)
* Develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of students who may be at risk of developing attendance difficulties
* Identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.

## **Roles and Responsibilities:**

All staff have input into the implementation of the policy. It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement this policy under the guidance of the school’s Board of Management.

### **The Role of the Parent/ Guardian**

A student should attend school every day. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that their student only miss school due to illness or an “unavoidable” circumstance.

Medical/dental appointments should be made outside school hours whenever possible.

Students should not be taken out of school during term time for family holidays.

If a student misses a day from school it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school of this absence. Students returning to school following an absence must have a written note of explanation from their parent/ guardian.

Parents/ Guardians should ensure that their student arrives to school punctually.

### **The Role of the Class Teacher**

Class teachers are responsible for the recording of daily attendance using computerised registration (Aladdin) so that records of attendance and punctuality are maintained accurately. The class teacher is supported in their role by the Principal/ Deputy Principal and should seek their support if they have concerns about a student’s attendance and punctuality and notifying them of observed patterns of punctuality and attendance. In some instances the class teacher may feel that referral to the Principal/ Deputy Principal is an appropriate strategy in improving attendance.

The class teacher should ensure that all absences are explained by a note from parents. In a minority of cases the class teacher may have difficulty in accessing a note from home. If appropriate the Principal/Deputy Principal will intervene to ensure that these absences are explained.

### **The Role of the Principal /Deputy Principal**

The Principal/Deputy Principal are responsible for the effective implementation of the school’s Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

The Principal/Deputy Principal are responsible for making the appropriate attendance returns to the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB).

The Principal /Deputy Principal along with the class teachers will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

The Principal/Deputy Principal will manage the computerised registration system (Aladdin).

## **Punctuality:**

School opens at 8.20 am. Students will be supervised on yard or in a classroom by a member of staff until the bell rings at 8.28 am. Students will line up on yard and then enter the school building through the rear door.

Classes begin at 8.30am. Students are expected be in class ready for work at this time.

All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. The school will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late.

**Procedure in the event of Poor Punctuality** is as follows

* After the rear door has been closed all students must enter through the front door.
* Upon entrance they must take a late tag.
* Class teacher should record pupil name and entry time on the computerised monitoring system (Aladdin)

Persistent Poor Punctuality.

* Student recorded as a late arrival 3 times within a term - class teacher send punctuality note home.
* Student recorded as late arrival 6 times within a term – class teacher informs Principal/ Deputy Principal, and sends second punctuality note home
* Student recorded as late arrival 9 times within a term – class teacher informs Principal/ Deputy Principal, followed up by a phone call home.
* Student recorded as late arrival 12 times within a term – class teacher informs Principal/ Deputy Principal, followed up by a request for meeting with parent/guardian.
* Persistent poor punctuality over the school year- class teacher informs Principal/ Deputy Principal, and this may be followed up by a request for meeting with parent/guardian.

The Principal is obliged under the Education Welfare Act, to report students who are persistently late, to Tusla.

## **Recording and Reporting Attendance:**

Attendance of individual pupils is recorded on the school’s computerised administration system, Aladdin, on a daily basis.

If a pupil does not attend on a day when the school is open for instruction, his/her non-attendance will be recorded by the class teacher. There are seven categories of absence to be recorded as follows:

A = Illness

B = Urgent Family Reason

C = Expelled

D = Suspended

E = Other

F = Unexplained

G = Transfer to another school

H = Holiday

The roll call is taken at 10.00am each morning using the computerised administrative system, Aladdin. Any pupil not present will be marked absent for the day. **The roll book may not be altered once it has been filled in**.

A note from parents/guardians is required to explain each absence. Such notes will be retained by the class teacher until the end of the school year when they are filed in the pupil’s record file in the office. Parents/guardians must also provide a note if a student departs early during the school day and sign the sign in/out book kept at the hatch of the secretary’s office. These notes are dated and kept in a central location (office).

Late arrivals and early departures are recorded by the class teacher on the computerised administrative system.

Parents/guardians are made aware of the requirements of Tusla particularly the by-law relating to absences of more than 20 days per school year.

This information is detailed in the Information Booklet, which the parents receive on enrolment of their student.

They are notified in writing on the end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year.

**Procedure in the event of Poor Attendance is as follows**

Pupils whose non-attendance is a concern are invited to meet with the Principal during Parent/Teacher meetings or at other points in the school year and are informed of the school’s concerns.

* Cumulative absence of 10 days in the school year - parents/guardians informed via text message
* Cumulative absence of 15 days in the school year - parents/guardians informed via text message and in writing, class teacher to complete the Pre-Referral Checklist (Appendix1) in consultation with the Principal/ Deputy Principal.
* Cumulative absence of 20 days in the school year - parents/guardians informed via text message and in writing, Principal makes referral to Tusla via the school’s Educational Welfare Officer (Appendix 2)

## **Referral of Absences to Tusla**

Section 17 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), states that ‘the parent of a student shall cause the student concerned to attend a recognised school on each school day’.

When a pupil has been absent for 15 days, the class teacher will complete the Pre-Referral Checklist (Appendix 1). The purpose of the Pre-Referral Checklist is to help the school briefly note any action(s) taken to date in relation to the student in question and to prompt discussion at school level as to other interventions that may be considered and put in place prior to making a formal Referral.

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

If a pupils has been absent for 20 days or more, the school is make a formal Referral to Tusla via the school’s Educational Welfare Officer (Appendix 2). The school is required to complete the Pre-Referral Checklist as part of a formal Referral.

In such cases the Education Welfare Officer (following all reasonable efforts by the Education Board to consult with the student’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 student to attend the school. A successful case taken against the parent may result in a fine and/or imprisonment.

Tusla is furnished with the total attendances in the school year through the Annual Attendance Report, which is completed on-line by the Principal.

Reasons for absence are recorded and reported to Tusla at least two times during the school year through an online system end of December and end of June). An 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 via email.

## **Transfer to another school:**

Under Section 20 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), the Principal of a student’s current school must notify the Principal of the student’s previous school that the student is now registered in their school.

When a Principal receives notification that a student has been registered elsewhere he/she must notify the Principal of the pupil’s new school of any problems in relation to attendance at the pupil’s former school and of such matters relating to the student’s educational progress as he or she considers appropriate.

Pupils transferring from New Ross ETNS to a post primary school will have their records forwarded on receipt of confirmation of enrolment via the NCCA’s Education Passport materials.

## **Suspension or Expulsion**

The school must inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a student is suspended for 3 days or more or has been expelled.

## **Strategies for Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality:**

### Whole School Strategies to Promote Attendance:

New Ross ETNS endeavours to create a safe, welcoming environment for our pupils and their parents/guardians by displaying kindness, compassion and understanding. Staff are encouraged to be vigilant so that risks to good attendance such as disadvantage, bullying etc. are identified early on. 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.

Parents/guardians are consulted in drafting and reviewing policies with the aim of promoting a high-level of co-operation among the school community.

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. This involves an Information Evening for parents of new Junior Infant pupils before their student commences schooling. For pupils enrolling in any other class, the principal will inform the parents of these policies and procedures. There is a focus on the value of regular attendance and on the importance of developing good attendance habits from Junior Infants onwards.

The calendar for the coming school year is published on our school website annually in May and a copy is emailed to all of our parents. A reminder is also emailed at the commencement of the new school year in late August/September. 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.

New Ross ETNS promotes good attendance by:

* Good attendance will be rewarded with certificates at the end of each school term and school year. Certificates issued for 95- 100 % Attendance.
* Certificates are also available to pupils who improve their attendance over a short period of time, and to pupils who improve their overall attendance.
* Include attendance and punctuality targets in school support plans for students highlighted in absence reports.

## **Success Criteria:**

The success of any Attendance Policy is measured through:

* Improved attendance levels as measured through computerised recording system and statistical returns
* Happy, confident, well-adjusted students
* Positive parental feedback
* Teacher vigilance.

**Ratification and Review:**This policy was ratiﬁed by the Board of Management on the 10 May 2018. It is scheduled for review in June 2019.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of the Board of Management) (Principal)

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_10th May 2018\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_10th May 2018 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 1: Pre-Referral Checklist (Tusla)**

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**EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICES**

**PRE-REFERRAL CHECKLIST**

(FOR SCHOOL REFERRALS ONLY)

Prior to submitting a referral form to the statutory educational welfare service, it is expected that the school has made attempts to resolve attendance issues. The purpose of this checklist is to note the actions taken prior to referral to the EWS. **This checklist should always accompany a referral form.**

|  |
| --- |
| **To be completed in discussion with the Class Teacher (Primary)/ Year Head (Post Primary) or a nominated teacher/principal.** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Pupil** |  |
| **Class** |  |
| **Class Teacher/Year Head** |  |
| **Number of school days absent this school year out of a possible number of school days open** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Checklist actions to address poor attendance** | **Date and by whom** |
| In-school discussion with pupil | \* |
| Contact between school and parent/guardian to express concern e.g. phone call, letter, discuss at parents evening | \* |
| Specific meeting in school with parent/guardian to identify problems and agree interventions | \* |
| Concerns and agreements communicated in  writing to parent/guardian | \* |
| Implementation of any appropriate in-school measures (e.g. change of class, ‘contact person’ in school, support in class etc.) | \* |
| Use of appropriate interventions with pupil  (e.g. attendance charts/ attendance report,  incentives, rewards etc.) | \* |
| Other school interventions (e.g. care team,  pastoral care team, student support team etc.) | \* |
| Previous EWS involvement in this case | \* |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Does the school have** | **Interventions to date (include date and by whom)** |
| School Completion Programme (SCP)  Yes No |  |
| Home School Community Liaison (HSCL)  Yes No |  |
|  |  |

**Signature of Principal: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

## **Appendix 2: Referral Form (Tusla)**

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**EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICES**

**REFERRAL FORM**

**Section 1** (to be completed **in the case of any referral**)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student’s Name |  | | Gender | | Male | Female |
| Address |  | | | | | |
| Date of Birth |  | PPSN | |  | | |
| Ethnicity |  | Language  Spoken at Home | |  | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mother’s Name |  | Tel No. |  |
| Address if different  from the student’s |  |  |  |
| Father’s Name |  | Tel No. |  |
| Address if different  from the student’s |  |  |  |
| Details of Guardian/Carer  if student is not residing  with parent/s |  |  |  |
| Relationship to the student |  | Tel No. |  |
| Are other siblings  known to EWS |  |  |  |

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**EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICES**

**REFERRAL FORM**

**Section 2** (to be completed **only in the case of school referrals**)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student’s Name | \* | | |
| School Name | \* | Roll No. |  |
| Address | \* | Tel No. | \* |
| Email |  | | |
| DEIS | Yes No | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. of school days absent this school year to date | | \* | |
| Total no. of school days absent last school year | | \* | |
| Date parents/guardian were informed of referral to EWS? | | \* | |
| If Post Primary –  Year group of pupil | \* | If Primary –  Class group of pupil | \* |
| Date pupil entered the school | | \* | |
| Summary or reason for referral to EWS | | \* | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Previous school/s | \* |
| Does this student have special educational needs? | \* |
| Has the student been assessed (or is  assessment pending) by the National  Educational Psychological Service? | \* |
| What resources (if any) have been  allocated to meet the student’s needs? | \* |
| Does the student have any health issues? | \* |
| Does the school have knowledge of  other agencies involved with the student  or family? If so which? | \* |
| Has the school referred the student  or family to another agency? If so  what agency? | \* |
| Has the school made a referral to the  Social Work Department of the Student  and Family Agency in respect of student  protection or welfare concerns? | \* |
| Is there any additional information that  you feel is relevant for this referral? | \* |

**Note:**

A referral received by the statutory educational welfare service respects the responsibility of the referring school continually to support the student as required and to work in collaboration with the service in that regard.

Signature of Principal: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **For EWS use only** | | | | | |
| Case to open?  YES NO | | Referral Reference No: | |  | |
| Reason for decision |  | | | | |
| Signature of EWO |  | | Date | |  |
| Signature of SEWO |  | | Date | |  |

**EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICES**

**REFERRAL FORM**

**Section 3** (to be completed **for referrals other than from schools**)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student’s Name |  |  |
| Name of person referring |  |  |
| Name of organisation |  | Title |
| Address |  |  |
| Telephone number | Landline | Mobile |
| Email address |  |  |
| Nature and extent of  contact with Student/Family |  |  |
| Date of referral |  |  |
| Reason for referral |  |  |
| Signature of referrer |  |  |
| Date |  |  |

**Note:**

**A referral received by the statutory educational welfare service respects the responsibility of the referring agency continually to support the student as required and to work in collaboration with the service in that regard.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **For EWS use only** | | | | | |
| Case to open?  YES NO | | Referral Reference No: | |  | |
| Reason for decision |  | | | | |
| Signature of EWO |  | | Date | |  |
| Signature of SEWO |  | | Date | |  |

**Appendix 3: Punctuality Note** (printed on school letterhead)

Dear Parents/ Guardians.

I am concerned to note that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_has been arriving late for school recently. According to our records, your child has been late on \_\_\_\_\_\_ occasions, between the following dates; \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

You will appreciate that regular lateness adversely affects not only your own child’s education, but disrupts other children’s learning too. When a child arrives late he/she misses the introduction to the lesson, this can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. Your child may also feel awkward arriving to the classroom when everyone else is settled.

As part of our Attendance and Punctuality Policy all students are required to be on time, if anything can be done to support \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ getting to school on time, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_