

## 1.5 Statement of Strategy for School Attendance Scoil Choilm CNS

<b>Name of school</b>	<b>Scoil Choilm Community National School</b>
<b>Address</b>	Porterstown Road, Clonsilla, Dublin 15.
<b>Roll Number</b>	20241K
<b>The school's vision and values in relation to attendance</b>	The pupils, parents and staff of Scoil Choilm CNS recognise the importance of school attendance. As a school community we endeavour to develop a supportive, positive and welcoming school environment where the needs of every individual child are met. Our holistic approach to the development of our students as individuals underpins all our actions. To this end, Scoil Choilm CNS aims to be a safe, caring and stimulating place of education for all students.
<b>The school's high expectations around attendance</b>	<p>The school expects that in so far as is possible, all pupils fully attend school in accordance with the Attendance Act. Taking into consideration Section 21(9) of the Education and Welfare Act 2000, only absences relating to activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved can be authorised by the principal. Therefore, the school cannot give permission for holiday absences during term time. Scoil Choilm CNS strongly discourages parents from taking students on holidays while the school is in session. If a parent decides to do so, they are required to provide a letter to the school stating their intentions and that they are aware of the implications this decision will have on their child's education.</p> <p>Children who are unwell are not expected to attend school, however, the parents/ guardians must provide a letter explaining the absence to their child's class teacher upon their child's return to school. In exceptional circumstances a doctor's note may be required.</p> <p>The school expects that children remain in school for the entire school day, unless they have a valid medical appointment. Parents are required to send in the appointment letter if they wish to withdraw their child before the school day is finished. Parents are discouraged from taking their children out of school for any other reason.</p> <p>In Scoil Choilm CNS we want to commend children who have excellent attendance. This is done through attendance awards at the end of each term. Children who maintain a perfect school attendance throughout their time in our school are commended at the end of 6<sup>th</sup> class.</p>
<b>How attendance will be monitored</b>	<p>Attendance is monitored electronically on Databiz (this is the school's data base for recording attendance) each day by the class teachers. The Roll call for attendance is checked each morning at 10.00a.m.</p> <p>Attendances and absences are inputted into the Databiz system at 10.00a.m. daily. Pupils that are absent at the time of roll call are marked absent for the day. Notes are requested from parents explaining why their child was absent from school. These notes are kept in a folder by the class teacher and retained in accordance with our policy for data protection. A letter informing parents that their child has been absent from school on 15 and then 20 days is sent home by the Home School Community Liaison Teacher (HSCL). Pupils who have been absent from school for 20 days are reported to TUSLA in accordance with the Education and Welfare Act 2000 . Parents are contacted by phone when pupils do not return to school at the beginning of term.</p>

**Summary of the main elements of the school's approach to attendance:**

- **Target setting and targets**
- **The whole-school approach**
- **Promoting good attendance**
- **Responding to poor attendance**

The school will ensure that:

- The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school.
- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Pupil attendance is recorded daily.
- Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated.
- Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored by the class teacher and the HSCL.
- School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to:

TUSLA

The Education Welfare Officer

The Board of Management

**Punctuality**

School is open from 8.50 a.m. each morning. Children are required to be in their classrooms no later than 9 a.m. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. The HSCL and the class teacher monitors late comers. The teacher / HSCL will contact parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. The Principal reports children who are persistently late, to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

**Guidance for Parents**

Section [(21) (9)] of the Education and Welfare Act 2000, states that: "a pupil's absence can only be authorised by the Principal when the child is involved in activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved". The school principal cannot authorise a child's absence for holidays during school time. However, it is essential that parents inform the school of such arrangements.

Reasons for pupils' absences must be communicated in writing, by parents/ guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. To facilitate this, such communications should not be in the homework diary, but on a separate page or sheet of paper. If a child is absent, when the child returns to school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher which contains the child's name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence. These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school.

**Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:**

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- Notifying the school in writing 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 their children 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.
- 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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notifying, the school in writing if their child/children, are to be collected by someone other than the adult listed on the Emergency Information Form.</li> </ul> <p><b>Pupils</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils have the clear responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually.</li> <li>• Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence.</li> <li>• Pupils are responsible for promptly passing on absence notes from parents to their class teacher.</li> <li>• Pupils are responsible for passing school correspondence to their parents, on the specified day.</li> </ul> <p><b>A strategy for promoting good school attendance</b></p> <p>The Board of Management is committed to providing a positive school atmosphere which is conducive to promoting good school attendance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school recognises that the months of June and September have the poorest rates of school attendance. This is largely due to parents taking children out of school to visit their home countries. The school has put various initiatives in place to promote good school attendance during these months, such as: the school talent show, handball and soccer tournament, school tours and sports day.</li> <li>• The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.</li> <li>• The school will promote a safe school environment by promoting our Anti-bullying and Anti- racism policy.</li> <li>• As part of our school ethos we at all times seek to promote positive mental health in our pupils. As part of this school-wide strategy we use the programmes 'Fun Friends' in the junior school and the 'Friends for Life' programme in the senior school.</li> <li>• The school will endeavour to support pupils who have special educational needs, in accordance with Department of Education &amp; Skills guidelines.</li> <li>• Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils.</li> <li>• The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be utilised.</li> <li>• The attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance, and the class teacher will notify the HSCL and principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any child.</li> <li>• Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>School roles in relation to attendance</b></p>	<p><b>School Principal/ Post Holder / HSCL</b></p> <p>The appropriate personnel will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the school register of pupils (both Databiz and POD- the Department of Education's Pupil on-line database) is maintained in accordance with regulations.</li> <li>• Inform the Education Welfare Officer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If a pupil is not attending school regularly</li> <li>○ When a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during the course of a school year.</li> <li>○ If a pupil has been suspended for a period of six or more days.</li> <li>○ When a pupil's name is removed from the school register</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff</li> </ul> <p><b>Class Teacher</b> The class teacher will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually.</li> <li>• Maintain the school's online attendance system, Databiz, in accordance with school policy and procedure.</li> <li>• Record explained and unexplained absences on Databiz. Teachers must request a written reason for absence from parents/ guardians. These absence notes will be kept in an 'Absence Notes Folder' for the duration of the school year. These folders are collected at the end of each school year and stored in school, in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.</li> <li>• Inform the Principal &amp; HSCL of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)</b></p>	<p>Some of the initiatives used which promote attendance in Scoil Choilm CNS are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The School Completion Programme. This initiative operates in the school to target pupils who are considered to be at risk of leaving education early.</li> <li>• After School Clubs, Hip Hop dance, Fingal Athletics, Westmanstown GAA, Swim Ireland</li> <li>• Transfer programme for 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils starting secondary school</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Youth Project. The school refers pupils to NYP who are experiencing emotional and social issues.</li> </ul>
<p><b>How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored</b></p>	<p>The Statement of Strategy will be monitored by the Board of Management.</p>
<p><b>Review process and date for review</b></p>	<p>The Statement of Strategy will be reviewed when necessary or within three years. (2019- 2020)</p>
<p><b>Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management</b></p>	
<p><b>Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla</b></p>	