Attendance Strategy.

Canal Way ETNS

This document was drawn up to ensure and maintain a high level of attendance at school by all pupils.

RATIONALE:

The policy was drafted for the following reasons:

• The Board of Management wishes to comply with,

- The Education Act, 1998

- The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000

- Circular 25/15

• The Board of Management wishes to promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils’ learning. Regular attendance helps to create a stable learning environment for all pupils, and the school hopes to promote co-operation amongst pupils, parents/guardians and staff in maintaining a high level of regular attendance throughout the school year.

AIMS:

• Raise awareness of the importance of school attendance

• Encourage full attendance where possible

• Identify pupils at risk

• Promote a positive learning environment

• Enable learning opportunities to be availed of Compliance with School Ethos

This policy complements the school ethos of nurturing potential in a caring environment, where the welfare of children is paramount.

RECORDING AND REPORTING OF ATTENDANCE AND NON ATTENDANCE:

The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded electronically in compliance with circular 25/15. 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. At the end of each year, the Deputy Principal will arrange to dispose of these notes. Parents/guardians are informed in writing (in their child’s end-of-year School Report) of the total number of absences during the school year.

The school calculates the attendance of each child four times a year. (Dates provided by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB.)) At these times, and from Term 1 2015, parents/guardians of pupils who have missed 15 – 19 days are informed by letter, detailing number of days missed and the fact that the NEWB may be informed of these absences.

Also at these times, parents/guardians of pupils who have missed 19+ days are informed by letter, detailing number of days missed and the fact that the NEWB will be informed of these absences.

 The above letters are updated at each NEWB cut-off date (and if a pupil has missed 3 more days since a previous letter, another letter is sent.)

The school must inform the NEWB where a child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and/or where a child is suspended or expelled.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

All members of staff have a responsibility to implement this policy. Class teachers to record individual patterns of attendance, and the Principal will be responsible for returns and electronic recording (circular 25/15). School year 2015 / 2016, this will be delegated to middle management.

After submitting the NEWB returns, if there is a concern about a child's serious non-attendance, the school will contact the local Educational Welfare Officer regarding this attendance.

If a child's non-attendance is thought to be linked to Child Protection issues, the Designated Liaison Person will be informed and the school’s Child Protection Policy will be implemented.

WHOLE SCHOOL STRATEGIES: Canal Way Educate Together NS endeavours to create a safe, welcoming environment for our pupils and their parents/guardians.

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. 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.

SCHOOL STRATEGIES: School Strategies

1. Communication with Parents - The school will guide parents to NEWB information booklet “Don’t Let Your Child Miss Out” in newsletters, and also provide them to all new parents during an induction meeting. The school also informs all parents of the implications of non-attendance as per the Education Welfare Act 2000. (This information is disseminated at least once a year in a school newsletter.)
2. Specific reference is made to the consequences of long absences on children’s progress in language acquisition and general academic progress, and also to the fact that children can become unsettled and find it difficult to readapt to their class situation after a long absence.
3. Early identification of children at risk will be vigilant, so that risk students are identified early. These pupils will be identified on receiving information from class teachers on the dates before the NEWB submissions are required.
4. Reasons for absence are recorded on Aladdin and reported to the NEWB five times during the school year through an online system. 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.
5. School Reports: Days attended / 183 detailed in school report.

TRANSFER TO ANOTHER SCHOOL: Transfer to Another School Under Section 20 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), the Principal of a child’s current school must notify the Principal of the child’s previous school that the child is now registered in their school. When a Principal receives notification that a child has been registered elsewhere he/she must notify the Principal of the pupil’s new school of any problems in relation to attendance and of such matters relating to the child’s educational progress as he or she considers appropriate. (This applies to pupils who transfer between primary schools and to pupils who transfer from primary to second-level education.)

SUCCESS CRITERIA: The following will provide some indicators of the success of this policy:

• An increase in annual attendance rates

• Increased Board of Management, staff and parent/guardian awareness of legal obligations under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000

IMPLEMENTATION: This policy will be implemented immediately following ratification by the Board of Management, and communicated to the Parent-Teacher Association and wider school community.

RATIFIATION AND REVIEW: This document was ratified by the Board of Management as school policy on 29.09.2015.

Review Date 09.2017