

Attendance Policy



Scoil Pól



Ratified by BOM 23.06.2026

Mission Statement

Scoil Pól is a co-educational, Catholic, voluntary secondary school. Founded by the Sisters of Charity of St. Paul the Apostle, the school is now under the trusteeship of the Le Chéile Schools Trust. Scoil Pól is committed to the provision of an inclusive broad-based education, within a Christian community, where mutual trust and respect facilitate personal, social, vocational, academic and spiritual development.

Scoil Pól seeks to nurture the dignity, wellbeing and potential of every child. Regular school attendance is recognised as a key factor in promoting educational achievement, personal development, positive relationships, and overall wellbeing. This policy reflects our commitment to care, inclusion, justice, and partnership with families.

Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled in Scoil Pól and to all staff, parents/guardians. It relates to attendance, punctuality, late arrival, early departure, and support for students experiencing attendance difficulties.

Rationale

This policy is necessary to:

- Promote the holistic development and wellbeing of students
- Foster a positive culture of attendance grounded in care and encouragement
- Meet statutory obligations under the Education Welfare Act (2000)
- Support early identification of attendance concerns
- Ensure accurate attendance recording and analysis
- Strengthen home–school partnerships
- Provide clear, graduated structures for support and intervention
- Create a welcoming, inclusive school climate that values diversity

Principles

- **Attendance matters:** Attendance is central to school ethos and policy
- **High expectations for every student:** Building a culture where all staff and students expect full participation
- **Whole-school approach:** Recognising how all areas of school life impact engagement
- **Whole-child approach:** Understanding the complexity of students' lives
- **Partnership with parents:** Working collaboratively with families
- **Valuing diversity:** Ensuring every student can access learning opportunities
- **Personal responsibility:** Building students' ownership of their learning
- **Early intervention:** Acting promptly when concerns emerge

Whole-School Climate Review

We commit to regularly reviewing aspects of school life that influence attendance, including:

- Curriculum differentiation and relevance to student interests
- Quality of teaching and student-teacher relationships
- Timetabling and classroom organisation
- School climate, culture and sense of belonging
- Anti-bullying and behaviour management approaches
- Support for transitions (Primary to Secondary, Junior Cycle to Senior Cycle, Secondary to Post-secondary)
- Accessibility of school activities and costs (uniform, materials, trips, etc.)

Attendance Standards

School Hours:

- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: 8:55am – 3:45pm
- Thursday, Friday: 8:55am – 2:45pm

Students are expected to attend every day school is open unless genuinely unable due to illness, urgent family circumstances, or other unavoidable reasons.

Notification of Absences: Parents/guardians must notify absences via the Scoil Pól app on the day of absence by **(8:30am)**, providing the reason. Extended absences should be discussed with Deputy Principal/Year Head in advance.

Punctuality: Students arriving after 8:55am must sign in via electronic tablet at the office. Repeated lateness may trigger support interventions.

Leaving during School Day: Permission must be obtained via Scoil Pól app. Students must sign out at office and sign back in on return.

Graduated Response Framework based on Response to Intervention (RTI) Model

Tier 1: Support for All

Universal supports promoting attendance for all students:

- Welcoming, inclusive school environment
- High-quality, differentiated teaching
- Positive student-teacher relationships
- Effective pastoral care structures
- SPHE and Wellbeing programmes
- Student Leadership involvement in attendance awareness
- Clear communication of attendance expectations

- Study support interventions
- Extra-curricular activities (sport, arts, music, drama, etc.)
- Celebration and rewards for good attendance

Tier 2: Support for Some

Triggers (include but not limited to): Absence of 5 days, repeated lateness, pattern of Friday/Monday absences, concerning behaviour changes

Targeted interventions when concerns emerge (5-10 days absence or emerging pattern):

- Informal discussion with student by Subject teacher/Year Head
- Phone call/letter home to parents by Year Head
- Individual attendance monitoring chart
- Mentoring support
- Check-in/check-out system
- Tailored timetable adjustments where appropriate
- Access to Guidance Counsellor
- Referral to Student Support Team (SST)
- Targeted programmes addressing specific barriers
- Breakfast club

Tier 3: Support for Few

Triggers: Absence of 20+ days, severe persistent lateness, disengagement despite Tier 2 supports

Intensive, individualised support for chronic absenteeism (20+ days or persistent non-engagement):

- Formal meeting with parents, student, Year Head, Home School Community Liaison (HSCL), Principal/Deputy Principal
- Individual Attendance Plan developed collaboratively
- Assessment of barriers using Tusla framework
- Multi-agency support (NEPS, CAMHS, Tusla, youth services)
- HSCL communication where appropriate
- Referral to Educational Welfare Officer (Tusla)
- Ongoing monitoring and plan review

Vulnerable Groups

We recognise that some students face additional barriers to attendance and we will provide proactive, sensitive support for the following but not limited to:

- Students with Additional/Special Educational Needs
- Ethnic minority groups
- Students experiencing homelessness or in-care

- Students with mental health difficulties, anxiety, or school refusal
- Young carers and young parents
- LGBTQ+ students
- Students from families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage
- Students with chronic health conditions

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management: Ensures policy compliance, reviews data termly, ensures Annual Attendance Report submitted to Tusla

Principal: Overall responsibility, ensures Education Welfare Act compliance, oversees referrals and ensures Annual Attendance Report submitted to Tusla

Deputy Principals: Leads termly attendance review meetings, coordinates interventions

HSCL: Works with Deputy Principal and Year Head to monitor attendance, supports families non-judgmentally, addresses practical barriers, coordinates community referrals

Year Heads: Academic tracking, promotes attendance importance, first-line pastoral support

Subject Teachers: Accurate roll-taking every period on our school's Management Information System (MIS), raise concerns promptly

SENCO/Guidance: Provides targeted support for students with additional needs

Parents/Guardians: Ensure regular attendance, notify absences, engage with supports

Students: Attend regularly and punctually, engage with supports offered

Monitoring and Data Use

- Roll taken every class period via the school's MIS
- Termly analysis of whole-school data identifying patterns (times of year, days, vulnerable groups)
- SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound) attendance targets set annually
- Progress reported to Board of Management termly
- Intervention effectiveness evaluated regularly

Current Target: Increase attendance rate as per school development plan

Promoting Good Attendance

Rewards:

- Monthly attendance: Prize raffle entry
- Best class attendance (termly): Class reward
- Most improved attendance (termly): Separate raffle

Awareness Raising:

- Attendance discussed at parent-teacher meetings, assemblies
- Posters and displays celebrating attendance
- Attendance records on school reports
- Student Leadership campaigns

Community Partnerships

We foster links with:

- Feeder primary schools (transition supports)
- Work experience hosts
- Providers for further and continuous education

Re-engagement After Absence

Following extended absence:

- Welcome-back meeting with Year Head
- Catch-up plan for missed work
- Liaison with hospital, school/home tuition if applicable
- Phased return considered where appropriate
- Peer buddy support

Suspensions and Reduced Timetables

Suspension is rarely used for attendance/lateness issues. When necessary, procedures follow the *NEWB Code of Behaviour Guidelines*. Reduced timetables are minimised and follow suspension protocols where they constitute partial exclusion.

Leaving Certificate Applied

LCA students require 90% attendance for certification. Medical absences excepted, students and parents informed of this requirement at course commencement.

Referral to Tusla Educational Welfare Services

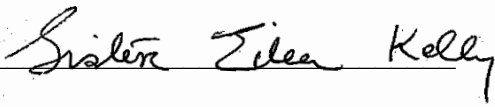
When school-based interventions are exhausted without improvement, referral made to Tusla using Pre-Referral Checklist documenting all prior interventions. School remains actively involved in EWO-led plans.

Review

Policy reviewed annually by the Board of Management in consultation with staff, Parent's Association, Student Council, ensuring continued reflection of Le Chéile ethos and legislative compliance.

Ratification

Policy adopted by the Board of Management on: 23rd June 2026
Next Review Date: June 2027

Signed: 	Signed: 
Chairperson, Board of Management	Principal

Date: 23rd June 2026

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