



Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna
LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR
LIMERICK & CLARE
Education & Training Board

Attendance Policy and Statement of Attendance Strategy



Policy Area	Operations
Version	1.0
Date	Created: January 2026
Monitored	Every 3 years
Responsibility	Principal
This policy is an uncontrolled copy. Each staff member should consult school website for the latest version of this document.	



Limerick Community Special School Dromdarrig Munret Co Limerick V94DN77	Roll Number: 20579B Phone Number: 0862014881 Email: lcss@lcetb.ie Website: limerickcss.ie
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1. Relationship to School's Mission Statement:

Limerick Community Special School is a co-educational, multi denominational special school which is underpinned by the core values of excellence in education, care, equality, community and respect.

In Limerick Community Special School, we are dedicated to helping each student to achieve their individual potential. The school policies are central to ensuring the provision of quality education in a holistic manner. Attendance at school helps to ensure pupils receive a quality education.

Every child to whom the School Attendance Act applies is obliged by law to attend school every day the school is in operation, unless there is a reasonable reason for not attending. The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 provides a framework for promoting regular school attendance, tackling the problem of absenteeism and early school leaving.

All parents have a duty to have their children at school every day and on time in accordance with Section 17 of the Education Welfare Act (2000).

The main factors contributing to the formulation of this policy are as follows:

- To promote, encourage and maintain regular attendance and punctuality as an essential factor in our pupils' learning
- Legislative requirements such as the Education Welfare Act 2000 and the Education Act, 1998
- The role of TUSLA and Education Welfare Officers (EWO)
- Maintain very good attendance amongst our students

2. Rationale

Limerick Community Special School is a happy child centred friendly and caring school, where pupils are encouraged to work to the best of their ability. The staff is committed to the development and education of each pupil to reach their full potential. We are a regulation first and neuro-affirmative environment.

The school provides a supportive environment, for pupils, parents/guardians and staff. Limerick Community Special School endeavours to enable every pupil to actively participate in all school activities. We believe that pupils can learn most effectively if they attend school regularly. It is important too that pupils arrive to school punctually.

Most of our pupils attend school on school transport, punctuality is not always within their family's control. Most of our pupils live a long distance from the school traffic, weather can be an issue. Some of pupils have medical needs or weak immune systems which may hinder school attendance. It is understood that pupils with complex special needs and medical needs may sometimes be absent due to their medical condition or to attend appointments with medical and multidisciplinary professionals. It is equally important that pupils should not attend school if they are unwell or have an illness.

3. Aims:

The aims of the School Attendance Policy of Limerick Community Special School:

- Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and punctually
- To raise aware of attendance at school. TUSLA has launched a new attendance campaign due to raise awareness that children in Ireland are missing too much school. More than 1 in 5 students are missing a month or more of their school year (TUSLA, 2025).
- Identify pupils who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- Ensure that the school has procedures in place to promote attendance/participation.
- Develop links between school and families of pupils who are at risk of developing attendance problems.
- Identify and remove, insofar as is practicable, obstacles to school attendance.

The school will ensure that:

- The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school
- Ensuring that pupils are registered accurately and efficiently on POD and Aladdin
- Ensuring that pupil attendance is recorded daily on Aladdin by the class teacher
- Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated
- Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored
- School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to: (a) TUSLA, (b) The Education Welfare Officer, (c) The Board of Management

3. Recording and Actioning Non- Attendance:

"A parent is obliged to cause a child between the ages of 6 and 16 to attend at 'a national school or other suitable school' on each day that the school is open for instruction." Education Welfare Act 2000.

- A child is expected to attend each day
- Non-attendance is recorded in the roll book on Aladdin
- An absence note is provided by parents via Aladdin, explaining the absence in accordance with the Education Act 1998
- All explanatory notes are kept on student's file on Aladdin
- The category of absence is also identified and recorded
- If a note/letter isn't forthcoming the Class teacher will remind parents to let the Teacher know reason for absence on the home school diary. If not supplied after this request the absence will be recorded as unexplained.
- Pupils are expected to be at school at no later than 8:50am.
- All pupils are expected to complete a full day at school.

If there is difficulty with poor attendance:

- A formal letter will be sent when a pupil is 15 days absent to highlight this and encourage improved attendance. The class teacher will contact home prior to this letter being issued.
- The principal may formally contact a parent if improvement is not seen following this communication.
- A letter will be sent to parents of pupils who have missed 20 days or more, regardless of reason for absences, informing them that this information will be reported to TUSLA and the Board of Management (if over 6 years and under 16 years). Under 6 years and over 16 years will still be sent an attendance letter but no referral to TUSLA.
- The Education Welfare Officer (EWO-TUSLA) and principal will work together to support families of pupils with particularly poor attendance if necessary.

Punctuality

- School receives pupils from 8.50am.
- Families are asked to ensure pupils are ready for school transport so as not to delay transport getting to school on time.
- All doors are locked for security reasons. Car park gates close by 9.10am.
- Anyone arriving after 9:10am should be accompanied by a relevant adult to school office to sign in.
- Appointments for students should be made outside of school time. (When possible)
- The principal will meet with the parents of pupils who are continually late to discuss strategies to improve punctuality. If following school intervention and strategies

punctuality does not improve, the principal will report the case to the Education Welfare Officer for further intervention and action.

4. Role and Responsibilities

4.1 Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- Notifying the school if their children cannot attend for any reason
- Working with the school and TUSLA to resolve any attendance problems
- Discussing planned absences with the school
- Refraining from taking holidays during school time
- Showing an interest in their children's school day.
- Reading the Home School Communication Diary and writing in same.
- Encouraging them to participate in school activities
- Praising and encouraging their children's achievements
- Instilling in their children a positive self-esteem and a positive sense of self-worth.

Unavoidable medical appointments/withdrawing a sick pupil from school

If a pupil needs to leave early or arrive late for an unavoidable medical appointment, a note should be put on Aladdin Connect beforehand from his/her parents or a phone call made to the school office.

If a pupil is sick during the school day, the secretary will firstly ring the parent and if uncontactable, will ring the emergency contact number. Ensure all numbers are up to date.

When collecting or dropping the pupil, the parent should report to school office and sign child out before collecting at the gate.

Collecting a pupil for a Family Emergency

The parent should ring the school on route and explain the situation. The class teacher can have the pupil ready to meet the parent.

4.2 The Board of Management:

- The Board of Management is committed to providing a positive school atmosphere which is conducive to promoting good school attendance. In this regard:
- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual pupil
- The school will promote development of good self-esteem and self-worth in pupils
- The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be utilised, if necessary

- The attendance rates of the pupils will be monitored by class teacher in the first instance and the class teacher will notify the Principal of any concerns regarding attendance of any pupil (see Appendix 1)
- Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve poor attendance.

4.3 Senior Leadership Team:

The School Principal and Deputy Principal will:

- Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer/TUSLA:
 - If a pupil is not attending school regularly
 - When a pupil has been absent for 20 days or more during the course of the school year.
 - If a pupil has been suspended/ expelled
 - Where a school principal has a concern in relation to the school attendance of a pupil and having exhausted in-school interventions an Educational Welfare Referral can be made to Tusla in relation to these individual pupils. (This referral is outside the normal reporting of attendance to Tusla). The parents will be informed of a decision to make this referral.
 - Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.

4.4 The Class Teacher:

The Class Teacher will:

- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences on Aladdin
- Contact parents in instances where absences are not explained in writing and ask for it in the home school diary or on Aladdin Connect.
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually
- Contact parents/guardians where attendance is at 15 days absences and offer any school support available.
- Inform the principal of concerns s/he may have regarding attendance of any pupil (over 15 days) see Appendix 1: Attendance Support Plan Record

5. 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.

A principal may only remove a pupil's name from the school register where they have been informed that the child has been enrolled in another school or when the Welfare Board notifies them that the child has been registered or is in receipt of out-of-school education.

6. Evaluation

The success of any Attendance Policy is measured through:

Maintenance and improved attendance levels as measured through Aladdin Attendance Records and statistical returns

Regulated pupils at school

Improvement on punctuality of pupils

Positive parental feedback and cooperation with policy in its entirety

Teacher action in terms of poor attenders

Principals action in terms of poor attenders

Success of implementation of attendance strategies in Statement of Attendance Strategy. Statement of Attendance Strategy is available in the school office and is available on request.

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 28/1/26.

Signed: 
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: 
(Principal)

Date: 29/1/26

Date: 29/1/26

Date of next review: January 2029

Appendix 1: 15 day and 20 day letter templates

15 Day absence Letter

Dear Parents,

Under the terms of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the school is obliged to notify TUSLA if a pupil is absent for 20 days or more (where a pupil is over 6 years and under 16 years), or where a pupil's absence gives rise to concern. It is the school's policy to inform parents by letter of pupils's absences, when these absences are 15 days or more.

While we understand that pupils may be absent due to illness or bereavement, we are just bringing the number of absent days to your attention. This letter is to inform you that our records show that _____ has been absent from school on _____ days.

One of the factors ensuring success in education is regular school attendance and habits of attendance are set in the early years of schooling. Hence it is a policy at Limerick Community Special School to encourage pupils to attend school every day. Parents can help to develop a positive attitude to school attendance by encouraging pupils to come to school every day and also by ensuring that all absences are explained in writing.

Our Attendance Policy is available at LimerickCSS.ie

We thank you for your cooperation in this.

Yours Sincerely,

Deirdre Bourke

Principal

Appendix 1: 15 day and 20 day letter templates

20 Day absence Letter (6-16 years)

Dear Parents,

Under the terms of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the school is obliged to notify TUSLA if a child is absent for 20 days or more, or where a child's absence gives rise to concern.

It is the school's policy to inform parents by letter of child's absences. You will have already received a letter when your child reached 15 days or more. While we understand that pupils may be absent due to illness or bereavement, we are legally obliged to report all absences of 20 days or more to TUSLA.

This letter is to inform you that our records show that _____ has been absent from school on _____ days.

One of the factors ensuring success in education is regular school attendance and habits of attendance are set in the early years of schooling. Hence it is a policy at Limerick Community Special School to encourage pupils to attend school every day. Parents can help to develop a positive attitude to school attendance by encouraging pupils to come to school every day and also by ensuring that all absences are explained in writing.

Our Attendance Policy is LimerickCSS.ie

We thank you for your cooperation in this.

Yours Sincerely,

Deirdre Bourke

Principal

20 Day absence Letter (under 6 or over 16 years)

Dear Parents,

It is the school's policy to inform parents by letter of your child's absences. You will have already received a letter when your child reached 15 days or more. While we understand that pupils may be absent due to illness or bereavement, we are legally obliged to report all absences of 20 days or more to TUSLA if your child is over 6 years and under 16 years old. As your child is _____ years old, no report has been made to TUSLA.

This letter is to inform you that our records show that _____ has been absent from school on _____ days.

One of the factors ensuring success in education is regular school attendance and habits of attendance are set in the early years of schooling. Hence it is a policy at Limerick Community Special School to encourage pupils to attend school every day. Parents can help to develop a positive attitude to school attendance by encouraging pupils to come to school every day and also by ensuring that all absences are explained in writing.

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We thank you for your cooperation in this.

Yours Sincerely,

Deirdre Bourke

Principal

Appendix 1:

Attendance Support Plan Record

Student Name:

Teacher:

Date of Birth:

Class:

Reason for Concern:	
Year of Enrolment:	
Date:	
Number of absences this School year	
Dates of contact with parents/families re 15 days absent	Outcome of Call:

Referred to Principal:	Date:		
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School Principal Record Sheet

15 day letter sent:	Yes/No	Date:	
20 day Letter sent:	Yes/No	Date:	
Meeting arranged:	Yes/No	Date:	
Contact EWO:	Yes/No	Date:	

Attendance Support Meeting

In attendance:	Date:
Actions Agreed:	
Follow Up (As Required) :	

Appendix 2: Attendance Procedure for Teachers

1. All teachers are to log attendance on Aladdin by 9:30am.
2. Transport delay are not within the child control and are not to be marked as late. However, parents are to be informed in home school diary of delay.
3. Absences are to be logged and type of Absence recorded please follow up with parents to if no explanation given on Aladdin
4. Lates are to be logged bar transport delays and length of late.
5. Teachers are required to track attendance levels.
6. If a child reaches 15 days absence in a school year a supportive phone call is to be made class teacher to parents to inform them of absence levels and any support the school can give.
7. Appendix1 is to be filled after this call and given to Principal after this phone call.
8. Principal will send home the 15 day letter.
9. Principal will continue follow on with Appendix 1 and track attendance.
10. If a child reaches 20 days absence in a school year this will be reported to TUSLA and a 20 day letter sent home. If a child is under 6 and over 16, no TUSLA report will be submitted but an amended 20 day letter will be sent home.
11. A meeting of family and Principal may occur to support an improvement in attendance as required.