TUSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Educational Welfare Services, Child and Family Agency

School Attendance Strategy/ Student absences

To: Principals of Primary and Post Primary Schools
Boards of Management of Primary and Post Primary Schools

October 2016

Dear Principal & Chairperson,

As the newly appointed Director of Educational Welfare Services (EWS) with Tusla I would like to introduce myself and pass my best wishes to you and everybody in your school community for the 2016/2017 school year.

I take this opportunity to bring to your attention information regarding School Attendance Reporting and the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance that all schools are required to submit to Tusla by September 2017.

All schools should have received a copy of the booklet **Developing the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance**: **Guidelines for Schools**. This booklet is designed to guide schools as they develop their statement of strategy. Further copies of the guideline booklet and a template which may be helpful for writing up the strategy can be accessed at www.tusla.ie/services/educational-welfare-services. Should you have any queries in relation to the development of the strategy for your school please contact Joy Bliekendaal at 1890 363 666 for further advice and assistance.

Enclosed also please find the standard **Student Absence Report 2016-2017** documentation to assist you in meeting your obligations to report student absences as per the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.

The current Student Absence Report facilitates schools' statutory reporting obligations and equally supports an important data-gathering function.

As with 2015-16 school attendance reporting will involve two separate elements:

- **Student Absence Reports:** These will enable continued accurate reporting by schools in accordance with Section 21 (4) of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. As outlined in 2015-16, periods 1 and 3 are optional while reporting periods 2 and 4 are mandatory. All documentation is available online at the EWS location on www.tusla.ie.
- Schools should continue to keep a record, for the purposes of school absence reports, of all absences of more than 20 consecutive days, where a child may have been removed from the school roll but not the school register. The cumulative total of absences should be reported to the Educational Welfare Services.
- A **referral process** to aid with referrals to EWS was introduced in 2014-15. The referral form and details of the process are available to download from www.tusla.ie. All requests for service from schools to the Educational Welfare Services must be via this referral form. We note from a review of the end of year returns that some pupils whose absenteeism could have warranted a referral have not been referred to EWS. In the coming weeks you may be contacted by the local EWO with a view to following up on such referrals.

I would be obliged if you could pass a copy of this letter to the Chairperson of your Board of Management and thank you again for your continued support of the work of Tusla, Educational Welfare Services.

Yours sincerely,

Noel Kelly

Noel Kelly
Director of Educational Welfare Services

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Seirbhísí Leasa Oideachais,
An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach

Suirbhé maidir le Freastal/ Neamhláithreacht Scoile i measc Daltaí

Chuig: Príomhoidí na mBunscoileanna agus na nIarbhunscoileanna
Boird Bhainistíochta na mBunscoileanna agus na nIarbhunscoileanna

Deireadh Fómhair 2016

A Phríomhoide agus a Chathaoirligh, a chairde,

Mar Stiúrthóir nuacheaptha ar na Seirbhísí Leasa Oideachais (SLO) le Tusla ba mhaith liom mé féin a chur in aithne daoibh agus gach rath a ghuí oraibh go léir don scoilbhliain 2016/2017.

Táim chun an deis seo a thapú agus d'aird a dhíriú ar an eolas seo thíos a bhaineann le tuairiscí a chur ar fáil maidir le tinreamh scoile agus an Ráiteas Straitéiseach le haghaidh Tinreamh Scoile do gach scoil a bhfuil sé de cheangal orthu a leithéid a sholáthar do Tusla faoi Mheán Fómhair 2017.

Seoladh cóip den leabhrán **Developing the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance**: **Guidelines for Schools** chuig gach scoil. Is éard is cuspóir don leabhrán úd treoir a thabhairt do scoileanna faoin gcaoi lena ráiteas straitéise a fhorbairt agus feidhmiú mar a bheadh teimpléad don straitéis sin. Is féidir teacht ar chóip den leabhrán ag www.tusla.ie/services/educational-welfare-services. Má tá aon cheist agat faoi fhorbairt na straitéise don scoil agaibhse, téigh i dteagmháil le Joy Bliekendaal agus fáilte ag 1890 363 666 le haghaidh tuilleadh comhairle agus cúnaimh.

Faoi iamh leis seo tá an cháipéisíocht don **Tuairisc maidir le Neamhláithreacht Daltaí 2016-2017** chun cuidiú leat dualgais na scoile a chomhlíonadh ó thaobh tuairisciú ar neamhláithreacht daltaí de réir an Achta Oideachais (Leas), 2000.

Is féidir le scoileanna a ndualgais a chomhlíonadh maidir leis seo agus cuidíonn sé linne freisin san fheidhm thábhachtach atá againn sonraí a bhailiú sa réimse seo.

Mar ab amhlaidh sa tuairisciú ar thinreamh 2015-16 tá dhá ghné ar leith ag baint leis an bpróiseas seo:

- **Tuairiscí Asláithreachta Daltaí:** Leis na tuairiscí seo beidh scoileanna in ann tuairisc bheacht a thabhairt de réir Alt 21 (4) den Acht Oideachais (Leas), 2000. Mar a luadh in 2015-16, tá an tuairisciú do thréimhsí 1 agus 3 roghnach, agus tá an tuairisciú do thréimhsí 2 agus 4 éigeantach. Tá an cháipéisíocht chuí go léir ar fáil ar líne ag rannóg SLO ar shuíomh gréasáin www.tusla.ie.
- Ba chóir do scoileanna taifead a choinneáil, ar mhaithe le tuairiscí neamhláithreachta daltaí a sholáthar, ar gach neamhláithreacht a sháraíonn 20 lá as a chéile, i gcás go bhféadfadh gur baineadh leanbh ó rolla na scoile ach ní ó chlár na scoile. Ní foláir an t-iomlán carnach a chur in iúl do na Seirbhísí Leasa Oideachais.
- Tugadh **Próiseas Atreorúcháin** chuig SLO isteach sa scoilbhliain 2014-15. San fhoirm atreorúcháin seo tá sonraí faoin bpróiseas atá ann agus is féidir an fhoirm a íoslódáil ón suíomh gréasáin www.tusla.ie. Is gá gach iarratas ó scoileanna le haghaidh seirbhísí, a chuirtear faoi bhráid na Seirbhísí Leasa Oideachais, a dhéanamh leis an bhfoirm atreorúcháin seo. Tháinig sé chun solais in athbhreithniú a rinneamar ar na tuairisceáin a cuireadh isteach ag deireadh na bliana go raibh neamhláithreachtaí áirithe i measc roinnt daltaí nár mhiste iad a chur faoi bhráid SLO ach atreorú a dhéanamh chugainn. Sna seachtainí amach romhainn d'fhéadfadh SLO a bheith i dteagmháil libh ag féachaint le roinnt de na hatreorúcháin sin a phlé libh.

Ba mhór agam é dá dtabharfá cóip den litir seo do Chathaoirleach an Bhoird Bhainistíochta agus gabhaim buíochas leat as an tacaíocht a chuireann tú ar fáil ar bhonn leanúnach d'obair Sheirbhísí Leasa Oideachais Tusla.

Is mise le meas,

Noel Kelly

Noel Kelly
Stiúrthóir na Seirbhísí Leasa Oideachais

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