

Appendix A

Anseo – an actionable attendance tool for schools

The Multi-Dimensional-Multi Tiered System of Supports (MD-MTSS), known in the Irish context as Anseo, is an evidence-based approach to improving school attendance. The three-tiered model enables schools to identify patterns of absenteeism at the student, class and whole school level and to develop nuanced and timely responses to drivers of school absenteeism within each tier (Kearney and Graczyk, 2020).

Sixty-three schools have taken part in the first phase of the Anseo programme. Encouragingly, a number of these schools are already reporting improvements in attendance outcomes. Anseo schools have used attendance data to inform planning, interventions and practice, supporting a more strategic and targeted approach to attendance improvement. Anseo will be expanded to further schools in 2026 and beyond.

The examples below illustrate a range of initiatives that Anseo schools have implemented and evaluated, using funding, and which have demonstrated a positive impact on attendance. These examples outline possible approaches rather than prescribe specific actions, and schools retain flexibility to select responses that best meet the needs of their own school community.

Primary

- Social media campaigns to promote positive attendance messages
- Designing and printing attendance posters and certificates
- Purchase an Anseo mascot and related materials
- Printing and laminating homework passes
- Breakfast Clubs (e.g. “Toast Thursdays”)
- Junior Infant parent information sessions on the importance of attendance (e.g. coffee mornings)
- Attendance badges to promote positive attendance behaviours
- Junior classes parent evening events (e.g. bedtime story nights) focusing on attendance and healthy sleep routines.
- Seasonal attendance initiatives: (e.g. Advent Attendance Trees, Halloween Spooktacular Attendance initiative)
- Development of nurture rooms or Zen Dens
- Rewards for most improved classes (e.g. local trips, class tea parties with school leadership).
- Purchasing equipment to support soft starts to the school day
- Lunchtime club, including board games, arts and crafts and structured social activities

Post Primary

- Social media campaigns to promote positive attendance messages
- Student involvement in developing attendance presentations and materials
- Designing and printing attendance posters and certificates
- Attendance postcards designed and sent to parents/guardians
- Cinema or activity vouchers
- School outings for classes demonstrating improved attendance (e.g. bowling, cinema visits)
- School Raffle for students showing improved attendance, with appropriate rewards (e.g. school gear, bicycles, fitness trackers)
- Teacher professional development to support attendance (e.g. Check and Connect, Trauma Informed Practice, Friends for Life, Restorative practice)