

Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Scoil Naomh Bríd

Áth an Churraigh

Under the Patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Ferns

Phone/Fax: 0402 36669

Email: annacurrans@gmail.com

Website: www.annacurrans.com

Roll No. 17304 O

The school's vision and values in relation to attendance:

St. Brigid's N.S. endeavours to create a safe, welcoming environment for our pupils and their parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are consulted in drafting and reviewing policies with the aim of promoting a high-level of co-operation among the school community. 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.

The school promotes good attendance by:

- creating a safe and welcoming environment
- ensuring children are happy
- displaying kindness, compassion and understanding
- being vigilant so that risks to good attendance such as disadvantage, bullying etc. are identified early
- rewarding good attendance with certificates.

The school's high expectations around attendance:

Traditionally, school attendance is strong. However, the staff remains vigilant so that 'risk' students are identified early. Risk students can be categorised as those who miss more than 5 days in a 20-day period without an accompanying note of explanation from parents/guardians. Appropriate contact takes place between the school and parents/guardians either via a letter or a note in the homework diary when this occurs. A meeting between parents and the Principal may be set up if deemed necessary. Absences of more than 20 days are automatically referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

All staff have an input into the implementation of the policy. Class teachers record individual patterns of attendance. The Deputy Principal has responsibility for maintaining the Leabhair Tinreamh and making returns to Tusla.

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.

The calendar for the coming school year is published annually in June and a reminder is published in September. It is hoped that this approach will enable parents/guardians to plan family events around school closures, thus minimising the chances of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term.

The question of equality of access is addressed through the school's policy on Equal Opportunity and Gender Equity.

How attendance will be monitored:

Daily: The roll call is taken at 10 am each morning. If a pupil does not attend on a day when the school is open for instruction, his/her non-attendance will be recorded on Aladdin.

Quarterly: Rolls are totalled and reasons for absence are recorded and reported to the EWB. Any concerns are reported to the Principal.

End of Year: The Rolls are totalled and an Annual Attendance Report is submitted to Túsla detailing the overall level of attendance at the school during that school year. Attendance is included on the pupil's end of year School Report to provide parents with feedback on the number of absences throughout the school year. Certificates are awarded at End of Year School Assembly to pupils who have full attendance during the school year.

Stages:

If for any reason a child is absent, on their return to school they are provided with an absence slip by their teacher. This must be completed by parents and returned to the school office. Parents attach medical notes etc. if available. These are recorded on the office computer for future reference.

If for any reason a child misses 15 days, parents are informed by the school office and asked to provide additional information if required.

Section 21 of the Act obliges schools to inform the Education Welfare Officer if a child is absent on more than 20 days in any school year, or if a child does not attend school on a regular basis.

Informing Parents: We make every effort to engage with parents in relation to attendance. The school circulates the Túsla information booklet *Don't Let Your Child Miss Out* to the Parents of New Enrolments in June with the Enrolment Pack. Parents/guardians are made aware of the requirements of the NEWB particularly the by-law relating to absences of more than 20 days per school year. Parents are notified in writing when their child's absences total 15 days. This information is also disseminated by regular school circulars. Parents are also notified in writing on the end of year Report of the total number of absences during the school year. Pupils whose non-attendance is a concern are invited to meet with the Principal during Parent/Teacher Meetings and are informed of the school's concerns.

Punctuality:

Children who arrive late for school must be escorted to the school office by a parent - the parent is required to sign the 'Late Attendance Register'.

Children who must leave school early are required to

- a) Provide a note of explanation to the class teacher – this note is passed to the school office
- b) At time of departure, meet parents in the school office where parents must sign the 'Early Departures Register'. No child is permitted to leave the school without written Parental consent.

Summary of the main elements of the school's approach to attendance:

We have very high attendance in our school. Our monthly attendance is always between 97% - 99%. The community seem to be aware of the importance of school attendance and parents view the school in a positive way. Parents and Staff work together to maintain good attendance levels. There are no *patterns* of non-attendance. Any children who have a high absence record in a particular year/term provide the school office with notes to explain absence. These are generally for medical reasons.

We do not have concerns in relation to pupil punctuality.

School's role in relation to attendance:

We are currently achieving very high levels of attendance. We do not need to set *additional* targets in relation to this. However we will continue to monitor attendance and punctuality strictly by the procedures already mentioned.

Partnership arrangements:
We work with many organisations/people to provide a pupil-friendly environment full of enrichment activities such as art and music and sporting activities (e.g. children take part in weekly GAA and Rugby activities, provided by outside organisations)
How the statement of strategy will be monitored:
We will continue with our current methods of monitoring attendance. We will make staff, parents and pupils aware of our Strategy for School Attendance and the role they must play in its successful implementation.
Review process and date for review:
We will review our strategy on an annual basis, (taking into account monthly/yearly attendance figures and individual pupil absences) and make any necessary amendments.
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management
Pending – (to follow)
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Túsla
02/10/17