

St Mary's NS, Saggart: Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	St Mary's NS
Address	Saggart
Roll Number	17055T
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	<p>In St Mary's NS we believe that children can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly. It is important too, that children arrive to and leave school on time. It is equally important that children should not be in school if they are unwell.</p> <p>St Mary's NS is a happy school. Children learn best when they are happy and relaxed. All school personnel are expected to show appropriate concern for each child's welfare and well-being.</p> <p><u>Aims of Statement of Strategy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.To raise awareness of the importance of regular school attendance. 2.To promote and to foster positive attitudes to learning. 3.To ensure compliance with the requirements of relevant legislation.
The school's high expectations around attendance	<p>Attendance is crucial to effective learning and the continuity of learning experiences. Therefore, the school places great emphasis on regular attendance in communications with parents and pupils. The Board of Management wishes to promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils' learning.</p> <p>We expect children to have full attendance at school unless they are ill or have medical appointments. We understand that there may also be urgent family reasons why a child cannot attend school, especially in the case of a bereavement.</p>
How attendance will be monitored	<p>The Roll is taken at 9:45 each morning.</p> <p>A 'Late Arrival' and 'Early Collection' book are kept in the lobby. If children arrive after 9:10 they are asked to 'sign in'. Children who are collected early have to be 'signed out' by their parents also.</p> <p>Attendance and absences are inputted into the Aladdin system by class teachers daily.</p> <p>Notes are requested from parents explaining why their child was absent from school. These notes are kept by the class teacher/submitted through Aladdin.</p> <p>A letter informing the parents how many days their children were absent, arrived to school late and were collected early(for that specific month) is given to each child at the end of each month. A text message is send to all parents encouraging them to check the letter.</p> <p>Parents have a chance to meet with/call either the class teacher or Deputy after they receive these letters. A letter is also sent at the end of each term to the children who have missed more than 15 days. These parents are asked to call/attend the school for a meeting with the Deputy Principal to discuss attendance.</p>

	<p>Pupils who have been absent from school on 20 occasions or more are reported to TUSLA and parents.</p>
<p>Summary of the main elements of the school's approach to attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target setting and targets • The whole-school approach • Promoting good attendance • Responding to poor attendance 	<p>The school will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We'll try to keep our attendance at at least the 2019/20 high level (93.7%) • In 2019/20 40 children missed more than 20 days of school. We would like to reduce this figure by 10%. • The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school. • The first assembly of the year will be used to encourage good attendance. • Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently. • Pupil attendance is recorded daily. • Parents or guardians are encouraged to communicate reasons for absences in writing/through Aladdin app. • Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored by the class teacher and the Deputy Principal. • School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -TUSLA -The Educational Welfare Officer -The Board of Management <p>Punctuality</p> <p>School begins to receive children from 8:50am and children are required to be in their classrooms not later than 9:10am. All pupils and teachers are required to be in school on time. The school will contact the parents/guardians in the event of pupils being consistently late. The Principal is obliged under The Act, to report children who are persistently late, to the Education Welfare Board.</p> <p>Guidance for Parents</p> <p>Section [(21) (9)] of the Act states that: 'A pupil's absence can only be authorised by the Principal when the child is involved in activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved'. The school principal cannot authorise a child's absence for holidays during school time. However, it is essential that parents inform the school of such arrangements.</p> <p>Reasons for pupils' absences must be communicated in writing, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. This should include the date/s of absence and reason for the absence. These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school.</p>
<p>School roles in relation to attendance</p>	<p>Each Class Teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages and commends good attendance. • Implements any whole school plan to promote good attendance. • Provides a busy and stimulating classroom where children feel valued. • Calls the roll on a daily basis, using Aladdin. • Collects any notes/medical certs regarding absence. • Notes any queries or concerns re. attendance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consults with parents where there are concerns around attendance or where parents have not provided explanations regarding absences. • Makes Deputy Principal aware of concerns with regard to the attendance of individual children. <p>Principal/Deputy Principal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes good attendance at school assemblies and meetings with parents. • Updates the Board of Management about attendance in the school • Keeps in regular contact with parents where attendance is a concern. • Follows up on any issues regarding attendance. • Makes the statistical returns to TUSLA. • Makes referrals to TUSLA when deemed necessary. • Advises parents of the importance of regular school attendance by means of reminders at the end of every month <p>Board of Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement this strategy under the guidance and authority of the school’s Board of Management. • The BOM works to provide and support a positive, welcoming environment by maintaining and resourcing the school to a high standard, which in turn promotes good attendance.
Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)	<p>Parents/Guardians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that children are in school every day, insofar as is possible. • It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that children are on time for school. • When children are absent from/late for school, parents should provide a note to the school with an explanation for it. <p>Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance. • Notifying the school if their children cannot attend for any reason. • Discussing planned absences with the school. • Refraining, if at all possible, from taking holidays during school time. • Showing an interest in their children’s school day and homework. • Encouraging their children to take part in school activities. • Praising and encouraging their children’s achievements. • Instilling in their children a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring (insofar as is possible) that their children's appointments (with dentists etc.) are arranged for times outside of school hours. • Notifying the school, in writing, if their children are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher. This applies particularly to children in Junior Classes. • Working with the school and education welfare services to resolve any attendance issues.
How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review of attendance records and patterns. • Review of attendance targets. • Success of implementation of attendance strategies. • Communication with class teachers. • Communication with parents. • Communication with BOM. • Communication with pupils.
Review process and date for review	The strategy will be reviewed by Staff and BOM annually.
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	26 th April 2021
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla	
Signature of BOM Chairperson	Miriam Marron (via Zoom)
Date	26 th April 2021