



## Scoil na mBráithre, Dungarvan

An Edmund Rice School

### Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	Scoil na mBráithre
Address	Mitchell Street, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford
Roll Number	64880T
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	<p>We aim, in accordance with the school's mission statement, to create a welcoming, supportive environment so students can feel safe and content in school. The school will endeavour to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of school attendance is promoted and rewarded throughout the school.</li> <li>• Students are registered accurately and efficiently</li> <li>• Student attendance is recorded daily and during each class period</li> <li>• Parents or guardians are contacted, by e-mail/telephone call, when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated.</li> <li>• Student attendance and lateness is monitored</li> <li>• School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Education Welfare Board.</li> <li>2. The Education Welfare Officer.</li> <li>3. The Board of Management.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
The school's high expectations around attendance	<p>The following goals/objectives are required so as to meet the school's high expectation around attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year Heads, Tutors and Class Teachers to encourage good attendance</li> <li>• Accurate records of students' whereabouts at all times during school hours to be maintained.</li> <li>• Students to learn to take responsibility for their own punctuality and attendance.</li> <li>• Parents to be informed about the vital role they play in their child's school attendance</li> <li>• Minimum rate of absenteeism.</li> <li>• The early detection and correction of patterns of poor attendance.</li> </ul>
How attendance will be monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All teachers record attendance for each of their classes on VSware daily</li> <li>• If a student has to leave school during the course of the day, parent/guardian must submit an explanation to the school via the VSware attendance app.</li> <li>• Students leaving the building during the school day must be collected and signed out at the main reception area by a parent/guardian or designated adult.</li> <li>• If the student is unwell, permission to ring home, using the office phone, is sought from the Year Head and the above stated sign out procedure is followed.</li> <li>• Any student returning to school during the school day must sign themselves back in at the school reception.</li> <li>• Where students are absent from school for school related extra-curricular activities, this is entered on the system as a school activity. The teacher who oversees the activity prepares a list of the names and, prior to departure he/she will fill these students in as school activity on VSware.</li> </ul>

<p>Summary of the main elements of the school's approach to attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target setting and targets</li> <li>• The whole-school approach</li> <li>• Promoting good attendance</li> <li>• Responding to poor attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good attendance is promoted in the school by a culture of high expectations, encouraging each student to take responsibility for his own learning and achieve his full potential through regular presence in class.</li> <li>• Throughout the curriculum, students are made aware of the incremental nature of learning and the negative implications for them of irregular attendance. This is also promoted through the school's Pastoral Care / Guidance Programme/S.P.H.E Programme.</li> <li>• Attendance and punctuality reports are available to each Year Head electronically in real time which allows for early intervention and further discussion at regular Year Head meetings. This allows for targeted intervention by the Year Head and/or Guidance Counsellor, Student Support Team.</li> <li>• School reports to Parents/Guardians include a detailed breakdown of attendance for the period in question.</li> <li>• The school Awards acknowledge excellent attendance and punctuality</li> <li>• Reduced or tailored timetable is considered for exceptional cases/school refusers.</li> <li>• A sense of belonging and connectedness in school is developed through participation in school life and/or extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>
<p>School roles in relation to attendance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Year Head investigates and monitors students at risk which are discussed at Student Support Team meetings.</li> <li>• Year Heads monitor absenteeism and communicate with parents/guardians in relation to their son's attendance.</li> <li>• Year Heads send an e-mail/letter at 10 and 15 days of absenteeism to acknowledge that students are nearing the threshold of 20 days for Tusla.</li> <li>• Identify on a case by case basis, those with 10 days unexplained absence and, where it is necessary or appropriate, devise individually tailored strategies including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Year Head meeting with parents/guardians</li> <li>➢ Referral to Guidance Department/Student Support Team</li> <li>➢ Year Head will liaise with Deputy Principal with regard to all issues relating to attendance.</li> <li>➢ Reduced or tailored timetable</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)</p>	<p><b>Principal:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that adequate systems are in place to record attendances and absences of students.</li> <li>• To monitor attendance records regularly</li> <li>• To make reports to the Education Welfare Officer as required by the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.</li> <li>• Referral to TUSLA -TUSLA Child and Family Agency is informed if; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ A child is expelled.</li> <li>➢ A child is suspended for 6 days or more</li> <li>➢ A child has missed more than 20 days (two times per year)</li> <li>➢ TUSLA is furnished with the total attendances in the school year through the annual report</li> <li>➢ Parents/Guardians will be informed if a report is made to TUSLA</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To inform parents/guardians and students of procedures for the notification of absences withdrawal of students from the School.</li> <li>• To remind students and parents/guardians of the importance of regular attendance and the negative impact of frequent absences on student progress.</li> <li>• Facilitate mixed ability classes in so far as possible throughout the curriculum.</li> </ul> <p><b>Deputy Principal:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work in cooperation with the Principal, Year Heads, Class Teachers, Class Tutors, administration staff and to implement the School Policy</li> </ul>

- To liaise with the Year Head and Student Support Team to address the difficulties surrounding a particular student's attendance.
- To meet, along with the Year Head, the students who had unauthorised absence from class
- To inform new teachers of their obligations with regard to recording attendance.

**Year Head:**

- To monitor regularly the attendance records on VSware system for the given year.
- To liaise with the teachers and Pastoral Care team to address the difficulties surrounding a particular student's attendance.
- To meet those students for whom attendance or punctuality is a problem in order to discuss the issue.
- To contact parents/guardians where unauthorised absences occur or are suspected and/ or when patterns of absences are developing and to liaise with the Deputy Principal.
- To remind the students during the assemblies of the Year Group of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.

**Class Teacher:**

- To record the attendance of all students in every class daily. When substituting under the S&S scheme or when providing cover for personal leave, the teacher will complete roll for that class using the VSware system which provides essential information regarding attendance in the event of an evacuation of the school.
- To impress on students the importance of regular attendance and insist on punctuality.
- Set example by their own punctuality.
- Acknowledge students, welcome them back and support them upon their return to school.
- Teachers need to be made fully aware of their responsibilities regarding the recording of attendance and follow up on any concerns regarding attendance. They need to carry out an initial investigation and refer to the Year Head if the student does not have a satisfactory explanation for absence from the class.

**Parent/Guardian:**

- To support the school's Attendance Strategy in compliance with their legal responsibilities. (Education Welfare Act 2000)
- To ensure regular and punctual attendance of students and avoid unnecessary absences. Where possible, to arrange appointments outside of school time and avoid arranging holidays during school term.
- To provide an explanation for the student's absence through the VSware app on the first day of return to school.
- To inform the school in advance of any planned absences from school.
- To provide to the school reliable contact telephone numbers and alternative 'emergency' numbers.
- To adhere to the procedures set out in this Strategy for the withdrawal of students from school during the school day.
- To acknowledge and, where necessary, reply to communications from the school in relation to attendance issues
- Any student who needs to leave school early must be granted permission by a parent/guardian.

**Student:**

- To be in class on time
- To attend school unless unwell.

How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored	<p>Year Head meetings regularly address attendance issues and seek solutions to same in conjunction with the Student Support Team.</p> <p>The success of this Attendance Strategy is measured through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved attendance levels as measured through statistical returns</li> <li>• Positive parental feedback</li> <li>• Teacher feedback</li> </ul>
Review process and date for review	TBC
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	TBC
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla	TBC