



Template for the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	St. Joseph's NS
Address	Rathdonnell, Trentagh, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
Roll Number	18058H
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	It is the aim of all stakeholders at Rathdonnell NS that all pupils have full attendance at school. The school aims to be a safe, caring and stimulating place of education for all pupils.
The school's high expectations around attendance	The school expects that in so far as is possible that all pupils fully attend school. Children who are unwell are not expected to attend school. Children who maintain a perfect school attendance record during their time at Rathdonnell NS are commended in 6th class.
How attendance will be monitored	Attendance is monitored daily by the class teachers. The Roll is checked at 10:00 am each day. The daily attendance is recorded in the roll book (hard copy). The Leabhar Tinrimh is kept daily in digital format. Notes are requested from parents explaining why their child was absent from school. These notes are kept in the pupil's file. A letter informing parents that their child has been absent from school on 15 and then 20 occasions is sent by the Principal. Pupils who have been absent from school on 20 occasions are reported to TUSLA and parents. Parents are contacted by phone when pupils do not return to school as expected.
Summary of the main elements of the school's approach to attendance: <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"> The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school. Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently. Pupil attendance is recorded daily. Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for absences are unknown or have not been communicated. Pupil attendance and lateness is monitored by the class teacher and the Principal. School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to: TUSLA, The Education Welfare Officer and The Board of Management <p>Punctuality School is open from 9:00 a.m. and children are required to be in their classrooms not later than 9:20 a.m. All pupils and teachers are expected to be on time. The school will contact 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>

Guidance for Parents

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.

Reasons for pupils’ absences must be communicated in writing, by parents/guardians to the school and will be retained by the school. To facilitate this, such communications are in the homework diary, in the school absences section. If a child is absent, when the child returns to school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher which contains the child’s name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence. These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to school.

Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- Notifying the School if their children cannot attend for any reason.
- Working with the School and education welfare service to resolve any attendance problems.
- Making sure their children understand that parents support approve of school attendance;
- 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 their children’s homework.
- Encouraging them to participate 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.
- Informing the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school.
- Ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children’s appointments (with dentists etc), are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.
- Notifying, in writing, the school if their child/children, particularly children in junior classes, are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher.

Pupils

Pupils have the clear responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually. Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence.

Pupils are responsible for promptly passing on absence notes from parents to their class teacher.

Pupils are responsible for passing school correspondence to their parents, on the specified day.

A strategy for promoting good school attendance

The Board of Management is committed to providing a positive school atmosphere which is conducive to promoting good school attendance. In this regard:

- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and

	<p>relevant to the needs of the individual child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school will promote development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children. • Support for pupils, who have special educational needs, are in place in accordance with Department of Education & Science guidelines. • Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of the special needs of pupils. • The assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be utilised. • The attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance, and the class teacher will notify the Principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any child. • Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.
School roles in relation to attendance	<p>School Principal The School Principal will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations. • Inform the Education Welfare Officer: If a pupil is not attending school regularly, when a pupil has been absent for 20 or more days during the course of a school year, If a pupil has been suspended for a period of six or more days, when a pupil's name is removed from the school register, inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil. • Insofar as is practicable, promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff <p>Class Teacher The class teacher will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the school roll-book in accordance with procedure. • Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences. • Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually. • Inform the Principal of concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.
Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)	<p>Attendance Certificates awarded at end of year assemblies, with parents in attendance. Close liaison with secondary schools, transition files kept and schools informed if there are any issues relating to poor or inconsistent attendance.</p>
How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored	The Statement of Strategy will be monitored by the Board of Management.
Review process and date for review	The Statement of Strategy will be reviewed when necessary or within three years. (2019- 2020)
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	28 th September 2017
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla	29 th September 2017