

Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of School: Patrician academy, Mallow, Co. Cork

Roll Number: 62330U

The School's Vision and Values in relation to Attendance

This strategy

- Reflects the school's ethos and mission statement which is committed to the pursuit of excellence, encouraging students to develop their full academic and intellectual potential and to enhancing each student's sense of dignity and self-worth.
- Recognises the need to develop a supportive, positive and welcoming school environment.
- Acknowledges the importance of identifying the needs of the individual student.
- Recognises the need to put in place the appropriate strategies and combination of strategies that will address identified needs and support and encourage the student to remain in school.
- Acknowledges the importance of intervening early, offering personalised support and engagement with families and their children, both at transition points and when children are at risk of disengaging from education.
- Recognises the importance of community interventions that maintain connectedness with the school, the student, the family and the community, addressing both personal (including parent-child conflicts) and practical issues (such as access to health and mental health care) around disengagement;
- Recognises that all areas of the student's experience at school impacts on their engagement and attendance.
- Values the culture of every student and seeks to ensure that every student will make the most of the learning opportunities provided by the school

The School's High Expectations around Attendance

- Teachers expect full attendance by all students.
- Parents are aware of and expected to support the school's policy on attendance.
- The school follows up with Parents/Guardians where attendance is unsatisfactory or patterns of attendance are of concern.

How Attendance will be Monitored

1. A student shall be entered on the School Register on the first day that he enters the school.
2. The school shall maintain a daily record of attendance or non-attendance for each student registered in the school. Class teachers will record attendance or non-attendance for every class. Names of absent students will be entered on VSWARE .
3. When a student fails to attend school, his Parents / Guardians must specify the reason for the absence and the period of absence in the student's School Journal. The reason for the absence shall be entered in the Attendance Records by the School Office staff.
4. Subject Teachers will record attendance or non-attendance for all of their classes in their Teacher's Diary and on VSWARE.
5. Students absent from class because of school related activities will be recorded as follows:
 - The teacher responsible for the organising of the activity will submit a list of students involved to the Principal / Deputy Principal who will post the list on the Administration Notice Board in the staff room.
 - Subject teacher who has student marks him absent and office staff enter the appropriate reason for absence.
 - Students who are absent due to resource teaching will be marked present/absent by the resource teacher.
6. Students who arrive to school late shall sign the Late Book at the School Office. Students who arrive persistently late will be sanctioned as follows:

3 lates (first instance)	-	Detention
3 lates (second instance)	-	Detention
2 lates	-	Detention
1 late	-	Detention

Failure to attend detention will incur two detentions.
Where a pattern of arriving late emerges, the Parents/Guardians of the student in question will be contacted with a view to resolving the problem.
7. Students who need to leave school early or leave school for a period of time during the school day must furnish a note in their School Journal from their Parents/Guardians stating the reason why and the time they wish to leave. They must sign out and sign in at the School Office in the Sign In/Sign Out Book.
8. Students are expected to attend school regularly and to be in full attendance throughout the school day. Medical, dental or other appointments should, where possible, be arranged outside of school hours and to minimise absence from school. Students should not be removed from school to go on family holidays.
9. The Deputy Principal and Year Heads review and monitor attendance weekly and report to the Principal. Staff are reminded to update VSWARE.

Summary of the Main Elements of the School's Approach to Attendance

The school recognises that a positive teacher-student relationships and a supportive teaching and learning environment is at the core of success in every aspect of school life and work, including attendance. The quality of the whole-school ethos and culture is the most important school influence on students' attendance and engagement in learning. The following are main elements of the school's approach to attendance: -

- The school community is aware of the importance of attendance for a student's learning and school success, and of the school's high expectations for attendance.
- Good attendance is celebrated and rewarded at the Annual Students' Awards.
- Records of attendance are included in students' school reports.
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum to endeavour to cater for the needs of all students.
- The School Homework Policy aims to support students to stay in school and achieve to their potential. Parents / Guardians are contacted at an early stage when students encounter difficulties with homework.
- The school operates a Pastoral Care Programme through the Year Head / Year Tutor System. The focus is on monitoring the academic and personal development needs of students. Supporting and helping students to stay in school is a central aspect of this system. The Pastoral Care Team meets weekly to support the Pastoral Programme in the school.
- The school provides a Mentor Programme for First Years to support the transition from Primary to Post-Primary School and to foster and encourage good attendance.
- The School Guidance Counsellor is available to advise and counsel students. Focus on career paths and advice on careers and personal development issues can motivate students to attend school.
- The Special Educational Needs Department provides learning support and resource teaching for students and thus supports students to stay in school and make progress.
- Timetabling arrangements support where feasible provision of extra supports for students who require learning support / resource teaching.
- The school organises Study Skills Seminars for students in Junior and Senior Cycle thus helping them to organise and plan their study in a meaningful way.
- All students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities so that students' personal development and social needs are catered for. Where possible students must get their homework when absent due to extra-curricular activities.

- The School provides after school study facilities for students.
- Staff, Students and Parents / Guardians are aware of the school's Attendance Policy and related procedures aimed at improving students' attendance and discouraging non-attendance.
- The school engages with Tusla, The Child and Family Protection Agency, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Cloyne Diocesan Youth Services, NEPS and other relevant agencies to support students to remain in school and to achieve their potential.

School Roles in relation to Attendance

Teachers

- Record attendance or non-attendance for all their classes on VSWARE and in their Teacher's Diary.
- Check reason for absence in student's School Journal.
- Liaise with Year Head / Deputy Principal when a student fails to produce a reason for absence in the School Journal.

Students

- Show their School Journal to all teachers when they return to school so that the reason for their absence may be noted.
- Sign in at the office when late.
- Sign in and sign out when it is necessary to leave the school premises during the day.
- Report to the Year Head following an absence or period of absence, so that the note in their school diary can be recorded formally.

Parents/Guardians

- Ensure that students attend school regularly.
- Write a note explaining any absence and detailing the period of the absence in the student's School Journal.
- Inform the school if the student is going to have a long absence for some reason.
- Inform the school if a student is going to be absent on the day of the absence and keep the school informed if the student is going to be absent for a period of time.

Principal

- Oversees the implementation of the policy.
- Maintains a Register of all students.
- Maintains an Attendance Record.
- Consults with staff.
- Receives reports from the Year Heads and the Deputy Principal.
- Meets parents when required.
- Liaises with the Educational Welfare Officer.
- Informs, by notice in writing, the Educational Welfare Officer, where –
 - a) a student is suspended for a period of not less than 6 days.
 - b) the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent

from school during a school year is not less than 20.

c) a student is, in the opinion of the Principal not attending school regularly.

- Submits, not less than 6 weeks after the end of the school year, a report to the Educational Welfare Officer and the Parents' Association on the levels of attendance at the school during the school year.

Deputy Principal

- Liaises with the Educational Welfare Officer.
- Liaise with the Year Heads and Teachers
- Consults with staff.
- Contacts and meets parents.
- Interviews students.
- Reports to Principal.

Year Head

- Monitors non-attendance records.
- Ensures that complete records are maintained.
- Collates information on individual students.
- Reports to Principal and Deputy Principal.

Partnership Arrangements

The school:

- Works closely with local primary schools to support student attendance in the transition from primary to post-primary school
- Fosters links with other schools in the area to work together to encourage positive behaviour and attendance
- Consults with and works with youth organisations and other relevant voluntary and community service providers to support school attendance
- Promotes discussion about attendance at meetings with the Parent Association, at the student council's meetings and at parent-teacher meetings.

How the Statement of Strategy will be Monitored

- Attendance and non-attendance will be monitored regularly by the Year Heads/Deputy Principal and Principal. Relevant reports on attendance trends will be generated through VSWARE.
- The Principal and Deputy Principal will consult regularly with and receive reports from the Year Heads.
- Attendance and non-attendance will be discussed at staff meetings.

Review Process and Date for Review

- The policy will be reviewed once a year.
- The Review Group shall consist of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads and two representatives from staff.
- The Students' Council and the Parents' Association will be consulted.

Date Statement was approved by the Board of Management

Date the Statement of Strategy was submitted to Tusla:

May 31st 2017