

Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	St. Brigid's Girls' National School
Address	Park Drive, Cabinteely, Dublin 18 D18TN66
Roll Number	16353W
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	<p>We, in St. Brigid's GNS, recognise the important role that education plays in enacting our vision: the full development of the children in our school i.e. their cognitive, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual development. We wish that our children grow to be independent and benefit from life's opportunities.</p> <p>The mission of our school is captured in our motto: "Coiscéim ar choiscéim le chéile" and in this spirit we expect the cooperation of all within our community in encouraging and maintaining a high level of regular attendance by our children throughout the school year.</p>
The school's high expectations around attendance	<p>With this statement we aim to create a positive approach to the management of attendance in our school thereby maximising the participation of all our children in the curricular and extracurricular life of our school.</p>
How attendance will be monitored	<p>Recording Absences and Late Arrival - School Procedures</p> <p><i>Note: Our school uses the Aladdin Student Management System to record child daily attendance.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our school's opening hours are 08:40 to 13:20 (junior and senior infants) and 08:40 to 14:20 (first to sixth classes). • Our gates open at 08:40. Yard gates and doors of both the top and infant corridor are shut at 08:50 • Children proceed straight to their classrooms on arrival between 08:40 and 08:50. • Any child arriving after 08:50 must report to the office (via office entrance) and be signed in late. This is supervised by the principal/deputy principal, teacher or school secretary. • On very wet days, Gates B and C open at 08:25 and children proceed to the hall where they are supervised until 08:40 with the exception of Junior Infants who will go straight to their classrooms. Junior infants will join in this practice later in the school year. • Roll Call at our school takes place at 09:30 and is signalled by a bell. <p>This is in compliance with Rule 55 ('School Hours, School Meetings, Roll-Call') in the Rules for National Schools 1965 (Rules for National Schools under the Department of Education) 'Roll-call shall be completed not later than 40 minutes after the time fixed for the commencement of formal instruction at the school meeting'. Circular 0028/2013 and Circular 0033/2015 outline the Department of Education and Skills' requirements regarding attendance recording at primary level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aladdin is used for the roll call. Anyone who is absent at 09:30 is recorded as such by the class teacher. The office will use Aladdin to record as late any child who has come in after 08:50 and before 09:30.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If a child arrives after roll call, their absence will be amended to present by the class teacher. The “late” option is chosen and the number of minutes late from 08.50 is recorded. ● Parents/guardians must contact the teacher/school if their child needs to leave class early during the school day. Parents should refrain from collecting children early from school unless it is for good reason. ● Children who are collected early must be signed out in their classroom using the Aladdin system. The child will also be signed out at the office and signed in again on their return if applicable. The return of the child will also be recorded on the Aladdin system by the class teacher. This will enable the number of instructional minutes missed to be recorded. ● If a child is in the yard when a parent comes to collect her early from school, the parent signs her out at the office and receives an exeat form. On presentation of the exeat to the teacher on yard duty, the child can then leave the yard with their parent. The exeat forms are given by the yard duty teacher to the relevant class teacher who then updates the Aladdin system. <p>Procedures for Notification of Child Absence/Lateness by Parent/Guardian to the School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our school uses a same day response system to notify parents that their child has been marked absent. Parents/guardians must notify the teacher/school on the first day of their child’s absence. This direction complies with Section 18 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 which states that when a child is absent from school during part of a school day or for a school day or for more than a school day, there is a legal duty on parents to notify the principal about the reasons for the child’s absence. <p>Monitoring Absences and Lateness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Class teachers will monitor patterns of attendance and punctuality, and will bring concerns to the attention of parents/guardians at an early stage if necessary ● If punctuality or attendance continues to be an issue then teachers should bring the issue to the attention of the principal/deputy principal. ● In cases of concern about school attendance the Education Welfare Officer/TUSLA will be contacted.
<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>It is our aim to maintain annual attendance at its current high average of 95%</p> <p>To encourage the fullest attendance of all we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● recognise every child’s capacity to attend school, learn well and achieve good outcomes ● strive to create a supportive, positive and welcoming school environment ● meet diverse needs through a differentiated, relevant curriculum and through differentiated instructional practices which cater to different learning styles ● commit to the highest standards of teaching and hold high expectations for all our children ● value diversity, we value the culture of each child in our school ● build each student’s sense of personal responsibility for their own learning, and their responsibility to their peers and their teachers to be at school every day

- promote student voice via committees for Green School and Student Council and via classroom practises such as collective drawing up of class rules
- commit to early intervention which offers personalised support and engagement with families and their children at transition points and when children are at risk of disengaging from education
- use a continuum of support to identify the needs of the individual child and put in place empirically supported strategies to address those needs in a team-based approach which includes assessment of behaviour and monitoring of progress - we involve TUSLA and the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) as needed
- focus on positive mental health via SPHE programme, Friendly Friday, Mental Health Week
- use restorative practices as we respond to conflict and rule infringements
- use buddy events between classes to foster cohesion and community
- employ movement breaks and brain breaks throughout the day
- provide a comprehensive array of after-school activities
- monitor the impacts on attendance of our curricular policies on homework, literacy, numeracy and SPHE
- monitor the impacts on attendance of our policies on Anti-Bullying, Code of Good Behaviour
- examine our break and lunch-time arrangements, including yard provision, and how they might impact school attendance
- work in partnership with parents by effective communication practices and by cooperation with our BOM and PA
- inform parents of the impacts of poor attendance on child and class and engage with parents to set high expectations for their children
- publish the school calendar in advance of the school year to notify parents/guardians of our school closures
- raise awareness of attendance- meetings of BOM and Parents' Association, Parent/Teacher meetings; positive affirmation at assemblies; school reports; Education Passport; awareness of Tusla's leaflet (Don't Let Your Child Miss Out);
- work with our secondary schools to support transition of our children

In addition, we will monitor those children who exhibit school avoidance or stress on arrival at school and liaise with their parents/guardians as required.

Responding to Poor Attendance

- Parents are informed by automatic notices via the Aladdin system when a child has missed 15 days of school. The notice alerts parents to the rate of absence and advises that contact will be made by the school with the parent to discuss how best to support the child's attendance. The notice also informs the parents of the school's obligation to inform Tusla at 20 days of absence.
- When a child's rate of absence has reached 15 days, the class teacher must now document actions using the [Tusla Pre-Referral Checklist](#).
- Parents are informed by letter when a child has missed 20 days or more. Tusla will be informed of this absence at the termly report or end of year report. This notification is not discretionary.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A referral will be made to the Educational Welfare Officer if deemed necessary, at any stage during the school year. ● If a child has been absent due to genuine illness, parents will be advised that the school has noted this and will inform Tusla of the illness. ● Where deemed necessary the principal will refer cases of ongoing and chronic absences and poor punctuality to the Educational Welfare Officer/TUSLA ● In such cases the Education Welfare Officer (following all reasonable efforts by TUSLA to consult with the child’s parents and with the principal of the school) may serve a ‘School Attendance Notice’ on any parent who he/she concludes is failing or neglecting to cause the child to attend the school. A successful case taken against the parent/guardian may result in a monetary fine and/or imprisonment. ● In response to absences over 20 days a support plan may be formulated with the possible involvement of the special needs coordinator and external agencies if required. ● We will assist with the re-engagement with school of any child who has missed significant amounts of time. ● In cases where a child has attended a hospital school or has been in receipt of home tuition we will liaise with tutors to ensure the best possible re-engagement with school. <p>As part of a support plan to improve attendance we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● use a problem solving framework as in the NEPS Continuum of Support ● involve the special education team as required ● collaborate with parents/guardians to try to understand in-school/out-of-school factors that may be affecting attendance ● listen to the child’s concerns and respond sensitively to them, recognising the central part the child herself plays in finding solutions to her own attendance problems. This communication will be influenced by the age and understanding of the child ● liaise with NEPS and Tusla where necessary ● set realistic targets for attendance ● provide more child-friendly activities on the timetable during times of risk ● employ a differentiated curriculum as required ● identify extra-curricular activities which may encourage motivation and attendance ● link with community organisations and external agencies for support ● where improvements have been recorded, we will send a letter or email to parents acknowledging the improvements
<p>School roles in relation to attendance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The principal, deputy principal, teachers and other school staff, in consultation with parents, and the Board of Management, are responsible for the implementation of this strategy. It will be the responsibility of the principal teacher/deputy principal to monitor overall school attendance levels in the school. ● Assistant principals and class teachers are responsible for monitoring individual child’s attendance and for identifying and reporting ongoing concerns for ‘at risk’ children. ● Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child who is attending a recognised school is at school on every day that the school is open, unless there is a genuine reason for her not to attend (Section 17 of Education (Welfare) Act 2000). Only absences relating to activities organised by the school or in which

	<p>the school is involved can be authorised by the principal (Section 21(9) of Education (Welfare) Act 2000). Therefore, the school cannot give permission for holiday absences during term time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Therefore parents/guardians are strongly discouraged from taking children out of school for holidays during the school term. All such absences will be noted and teachers will not assign school work for such children whilst on holidays. If a parent decides to take a child out of school for holidays, the principal will request the parent to provide a notice to the school to say they are doing so and are aware of the implications. Where there are regular holiday absences, the school will remind parents of the educational and potential legal impact of removing students from school for periods of time.
<p>Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)</p>	<p>Other Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children transferring to our school from another school: Under Section 20 of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), our school must notify the principal of the child’s previous school that the child is now registered in this school. (Confirmation of Enrolment Letter) • Children transferring from our school to another school: The principal of the receiving school is required to notify our school that an incoming child is a registered child in the new school. A copy of the child’s latest school report (detailing academic progress, school attendance etc) may be sent to the new school by request with the permission of parents. • Children transferring from our school to secondary school: Upon receipt of written verification of enrolment and a written request for school reports for named children, the principal/deputy principal will ensure that all relevant school reports regarding attendance, behaviour and academic records of children are forwarded to secondary schools in the format of the NCCA Education Passport as necessary. <p>Parents/Guardians</p> <p>Closer home/school relations will be promoted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parent/teacher meetings • attendance at school events (e.g., Concerts, Graduations etc.). • oversight of homework tasks • regular school communication with home • cooperation between school and Parents’ Association <p>Parents can promote attendance by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring regular and punctual school attendance • cooperating with school attendance procedures and protocols as described in this statement • contacting the school immediately, if there are any concerns about absence or other related school matters. <p>Children</p> <p>Our children can promote their attendance by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participating in Student Committees in our school • engaging with school representative activities such as Cumann na mBunscol • actively engaging with the SPHE programme <p>Promotion of school attendance can be enabled by links with our local community</p>
<p>How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored</p>	<p>It is our expectation that the full implementation of this strategy will result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continued high rates of attendance in our school • awareness among parents and guardians of their obligations with regards to punctuality and attendance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● awareness among all staff with regards to their responsibilities arising from this policy ● awareness among our parents, guardians and pupils of the impact of high rates of attendance ● confidence among parents and staff in managing situations of poor attendance and lateness ● proper recording procedures of attendance <p>Regular discussion at staff meetings of this strategy will serve to monitor its effectiveness.</p>
Review process and date for review	The strategy will be reviewed annually in the first term of the school year.
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	29th January 2024
Date of submission to Tusla	9th February 2024
Date of Acknowledgement by Tusla	