



## School Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

In Our Lady's Grove Primary School, the Principal, the teachers, the SNAs, the parents and the staff value the individuality and diversity of our children and respect their right to access all areas of learning. Our school community recognises how all areas of the child's experience at school impacts on their engagement and attendance. This Statement of Strategy affirms our school's commitment to attendance as an important aspect of our ethos and our policy.

The aims of this Statement of Attendance Strategy are to:

- Ensure that our school is observing all its obligations in relation to attendance as set down in the Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- Encourage the children to attend school regularly and punctually
- Inform the school community of its role and responsibility as outlined in the Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- Build a culture of high expectation among the staff and with every child for the child's learning, participation and attendance
- Share the promotion of school attendance amongst all in the school community
- Ensure that there are robust strategies in place to promote attendance and punctuality
- Identify children who are at risk of developing poor attendance and punctuality
- Develop links between school and families at risk of poor attendance and punctuality
- Recognise every child's capacity to attend school, learn well and achieve good outcomes
- Build each child's sense of personal responsibility for their own learning, and their responsibility to their peers and their teachers to be at school every day
- Identify and remove all obstacles, in so far as is practicable that impede school attendance

## Strategies to Encourage Good Attendance

Our Lady's Grove ensures that the children learn in a safe, supportive and caring environment. The school ensures a welcoming environment where children experience positive interactions with the Principal, the teaching staff and the SNAs. Children with special needs are identified early and personalised support is put in place. New pupils and their parents receive extra support by school personnel as they settle into the new routine. Teacher expectations are high. Where a difficulty persists, school personnel meet with parents and strategy/strategies, pertinent to the needs of the individual child, is/are agreed and implemented.

The school ensures that:

- Children are officially supervised from 8.40am to 8.50am to encourage families to arrive on time for assembly
- Morning assemblies promote excellent attendance and punctuality
- Children must sign in at the front office from 9.00am
- The importance of school attendance is consistently promoted throughout the school
- Children are registered accurately and efficiently
- Attendance is recorded daily between 10.00 am and 10.15 am each morning
- Parents/Guardians are reminded of the 'twenty-day rule' if the child has been absent for ten days and again if the child reaches fifteen days of absence
- The class teacher monitors the attendance patterns of the children in his/her class and reports to the Principal emerging problems of poor attendance and punctuality
- Children must present to the teacher, upon returning to school following a brief absence, a 'sick note' explaining the absence. The 'sick note' is dated and signed by the parent/guardian and is retained by the teacher
- The Principal retains all class 'sick notes' at the end of the school year
- School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to Educational Welfare Services of Tusla – Child and Family Agency as required by the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and to the Board of Management
- Children receive a '**Zero Absence Award**' at the end of the school year

## Punctuality

The doors open at 8.40am under teacher supervision. The children assemble in the Halla ten minutes before our whole school assembly. Ten minutes in the Halla encourages the children to arrive on time so that they can sit and chat to classmates before the day begins. The main door closes at 9.00am and then the children must go through the front door to sign in at the

office. Children arriving after 9.10 am must present a note to the class teacher explaining why he/she is late. The Principal contacts the parents/guardians of children who are consistently signing in at the office to raise concerns if a pattern of lateness emerges.

## **Communication of the Attendance Strategy to Parents/Guardians**

It is our policy to encourage and maintain open communication between home and school and to encourage parents in their role as primary educators of their children. Through newsletters, information evenings and at P/T meetings, Parents are reminded of their legal duty to ensure that their child is attending school on every day that the school is open, unless there is a genuine reason for him/her not to attend (Section 17 of Education (Welfare) Act 2000). The children are consistently reminded about the importance good attendance and being on time for school during the morning assembly and in the classrooms.

### **Parents**

- Set high standards for the child in relation to attendance and punctuality
- Engage with the school if there is a problem about the child's attendance and support plans to address the problem
- Ensure that the child regularly attends and arrives at school on time
- Avoid taking your child out of class unless there is a serious reason
- The school discourages parents from taking children on holidays during term time
- The Principal cannot give permission for holiday absences during term time

### **Reporting and Referral to Educational Welfare Services of Tusla – Child and Family Agency**

When a child has missed 20 days at school, a report is submitted by the school to the Educational Welfare Services of Tusla – Child and Family Agency as required by the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. If the absenteeism persists, the school requests active intervention by Tusla.

**The Statement of Strategy for School Attendance** will be monitored by the Principal in collaboration with the In-School Management Team. The Principal will report periodically to the BOM through the Principal's Report.

**The Statement of Strategy for School Attendance** was reviewed in September 2017 and will be reviewed again in September 2018.

**The Statement of Strategy for School Attendance** was approved by the Board of Management on Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Signed: Wm. Nemes

Signed: Anne Kernan

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

(Principal)

Date: November 2017

Date: November 2017

Date of next review: November 2018