



An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

## Statement of Strategy for St. Dympna's N.S. School Attendance

Name of school	St. Dympna's N.S.
Address	Kildalkey Co. Meath
Roll Number	19813W
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	<p>At St Dympna's we believe that children can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly. It is important too, that children arrive and leave school on time. It is equally important that children should not be in school if they are unwell.</p> <p>St Dympna's is a happy school. Children learn best when they are happy and relaxed. All school personnel show concern about each child's welfare.</p> <p><u>Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school.</u> At St Dympna's we aim to create a positive environment where children feel safe and happy with a positive attitude to school. Regular attendance helps to create a stable learning environment for all.</p> <p><u>Aims:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To raise awareness of the importance of regular school attendance</li><li>• To promote and to foster positive attitudes to learning</li><li>• To ensure compliance with the requirements of relevant legislation</li></ul>
The school's high expectations around attendance	<p>As attendance is crucial to effective learning and the continuity of learning experiences the school places great emphasis on regular attendance in communications with parents. The Board of Management wishes to promote and encourage regular attendance as an essential factor in our pupils' learning.</p>
How attendance will be monitored	Each class maintains a role book of attendance.

Summary of the main elements of the school's approach to attendance:

- Target setting and targets
- The whole-school approach
- Promoting good attendance
- Responding to poor attendance

#### Targets

- Continued high level of attendance among 95% of the pupils.
- Improvement in attendance in the remaining 5%.

(Children with medical needs are sometimes absent due to their medical condition or to attend appointments with medical professionals)

Whole school strategies to promote attendance may include:

- We endeavour to create a safe welcoming environment in the classroom for our pupils, even in the eventuality of arriving late.
- We inform all parents upon enrolment and at the beginning of the school year of the importance of good attendance and procedures in relation to absences.
- Communication: The importance of being at school on time and notifying the school if their child is absent is highlighted each September and during the year in notes to parents/guardians.
- Parents are asked to share any worries their child might have in school.
- The school has developed a good working relationship with the Educational Welfare Officer and there is ongoing communication in relation to school attendance.

School and classroom climate play an important role in promoting positive attendance. St Dymphna's aims to give all pupils positive interactions throughout the school day as this promotes the adult/pupil relationship of mutual respect and trust. We have high expectations of our pupils. These positive interactions and expectations have been proven to have a strong influence on pupil engagement and attendance.

#### Attendance Strategies

St Dymphna's is a supportive, positive and welcoming school. We recognise the importance of identifying the individual needs of the individual child. We appreciate and understand diversity within the school community. These factors involve adopting appropriate strategies for individual children, early intervention to prevent absenteeism which involves the child, the school, parents

	<p>and guardians and community where applicable. Whole school attendance figures are presented at BOM meetings annually.</p> <p><u>Strategies in the event of non-attendance</u>  Section 17 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 states that ‘the parent of a child shall cause the child concerned to attend a recognised school on each school day’.  Section 21 of the Act obliges schools to inform the Educational Welfare Officer if a child is absent on more than 20 days in any school year, or if the child does not attend school on a regular basis.</p> <p>In such cases the EWO (following all reasonable efforts) 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.</p> <p>Reasons for absence are recorded and reported to the EWS five times during the school year through an online system. An annual report is submitted detailing the overall level of attendance at the school during the school year.</p> <p>The school discourages parents from taking their children on holidays during term time. Parents are requested to write 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>
<p>School roles in relation to attendance</p>	<p>Classroom teachers are responsible for maintaining a class roll book and informing the parents and principal of poor attendance concerns. Attendance is recorded daily in the Leabhar Tinrimh.</p> <p>All staff are responsible for creating a positive environment where children feel safe and happy with a positive attitude to school. Principal makes referrals to TUSLA when necessary following consultation with pupil, teachers and parents. Principal liaises with Educational Welfare Officer re concerns about individuals attendance.</p> <p><u>Promoting good school attendance.</u>  The school will discuss the importance of attendance regularly (Parent/Teacher meetings/regular attendance updates in newsletter/good attendance highlighted in assembly).</p>

	Where necessary St Dympna's School will provide support programmes such as mentoring provided by a supportive and significant adult to encourage school attendance.
Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents have a huge influence on their child's school attendance. Parents who are engaged with the school have a greater commitment to their child's education and attendance at school. Parents have an important role to play in setting high standards for their child around attendance.</li> <li>• Parents must inform the school of the reason for their child's absence. Parents may use notes, phone call or homework journal.</li> <li>• The principal will foster, promote and liaise with TUSLA, NEPS, NCSE, Social Services other schools to support pupil's attendance.</li> </ul>
How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored	Annual review of attendance figures. Review of attendance targets. Success of implementation of attendance strategies.
Review process and date for review	Strategy to be reviewed by Staff and Board of Management annually.
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla	