



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Bennettsbridge N.S. Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	Bennettsbridge N.S.
Address	Bennettsbridge, Co. Kilkenny, R95R280
Roll Number	16406R
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	<p>The Board of Management of Bennettsbridge National School recognises the clear and direct relationship between regular school attendance and positive pupil progress. It recognises that developing positive attendance habits is an important life skill, critical for future success in education and beyond.</p> <p>Bennettsbridge N.S.'s strategy on attendance complements the school ethos of creating a safe, educationally stimulating environment where the Christian values of respect, tolerance and understanding are promoted.</p>
The school's high expectations around attendance	<p>Bennettsbridge N.S. expects that children will strive to have full attendance at school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking into consideration Section 21(9) of the Education Welfare Act 2000, only absences relating to activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved can be authorised by the Principal. • The school recognises that illness, bereavement etc. may impact attendance and acknowledges that some absences are unavoidable. In such cases the school's Aladdin facility allows parents and guardians to notify the school immediately. • Punctuality is expected. Tardiness impacts on teaching and learning • Late arrivals, early leavers are strongly discouraged. • Bennettsbridge N.S. strongly discourages parents from taking children from school for 'holiday' purposes.
How attendance will be monitored	<p><u>School</u></p> <p>As outlined in DES Circular 0033/2015,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'The roll should be called at the same time each day, normally within the first hour after the commencement of the school's 5 hour 40 minute day.'</i> <p>The roll is taken by <u>10:00am</u> each morning by class teachers and recorded on Aladdin. Children arriving after this time will be marked absent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each class teacher will monitor the attendance of their own class and notify the principal of any concerns or patterns of absenteeism. Overall school attendance is frequently monitored by the school's Aladdin administrators.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school furnishes a bi-annual report to TUSLA when a child has missed 20 or more days in a school year • The school furnishes an annual attendance report to TUSLA in which it reports; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The total number of students who were absent for 20 or more school days 2. The total number of days lost through student absences in the entire school year 3. The total number of students who were suspended during the school year 4. The total number of students who were expelled during the school year. • Referrals regarding poor attendance are made to TUSLA's Educational Welfare Officer • Under Section 20 of the Education Welfare Act, 2000, when a child transfers to Bennettsbridge N.S., confirmation of transfer will be communicated to the child's previous school via POD • Parents can view their child's attendance on Aladdin • Parents are notified when their child has missed 10 school days • Parents are informed in their child's end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year. • Pupils whose non-attendance is a concern are informed of the school's concerns during parent teacher meetings and / or throughout the school year.
<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>Target setting and targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bennettsbridge N.S. strives for full attendance unless a legitimate reason prevails. • Late Arrivals and Early Leavers are discouraged • Taking children from school for holiday purposes is discouraged • Any concerns about a child's attendance are brought to the attention of parents. <p>The Whole-School Approach The responsibility for good attendance is shared across all stakeholders.</p> <p>Board of Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the responsibility of the B.O.M. to ensure a welcoming and safe learning environment for each and every pupil. • To ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place for promoting and monitoring attendance and for dealing with poor attendance. <p>Principal: It is the responsibility of the principal;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that adequate systems are in place to record and monitor attendance.

- To furnish all mandatory reports to TUSLA
- To ensure both parents and pupils are reminded regularly of the importance of regular and consistent attendance.
- To communicate with parents, pupils and relevant outside agencies when deemed necessary.
- To report to the Board of Management when necessary.
- To carry out the role of day to day management of the school, ensuring a safe, welcoming and stimulating environment with quality teaching and learning.
- To identify and help alleviate problems that may lead to poor attendance.

Teachers:

Each teacher has the responsibility to;

- Record daily attendance
- Record late arrival and early leaving explanation notes received from parents
- Set a positive example to children with their own punctuality and attendance.
- Create a warm, welcoming and stimulating learning environment for the children in their care.
- In as far as is practicable, investigate and record the reasons for absence of children from their class.
- Communicate concerns to principal/parent should they arise.
- To acknowledge students, welcome them back and provide appropriate support following absence.

Parents:

It is the responsibility of parents;

- To support the school's Attendance Strategy in compliance with their legal responsibilities (Education Welfare Act 2000)
- To ensure regular and punctual attendance and to avoid unnecessary absences
- Avoid late arrivals to and early leavers from school
- To arrange appointments outside of school times where possible
- To provide an explanation for the student's absence on the first day of return to school.
- To communicate with the school during prolonged absences for medical reasons
- To inform the school in advance of any planned absences
- To acknowledge and, where necessary, to reply to communications from the school in relation to attendance issues

Pupils:

- Pupils have a responsibility to play their part in attending school regularly and punctually
- To take responsibility for their learning following an absence

in relation to missed work.

The school promotes good attendance by:

- Creating a safe and welcoming environment endeavouring to ensure that each child is happy coming to school
- Promoting positive, respectful relationships between teachers and students and students and their peers
- Having high expectations of students' attendance.
- Publishing the calendar for the coming school year annually in June and posting it on the school website. It is hoped that this approach will enable parents/guardians to plan family events around school closures, thus minimising the chances of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term.
- The school's policies and procedures in relation to attendance are explained at the Junior Infant Induction meeting and published in the annual school's prospectus
- Regular reminders of the importance of regular attendance and monthly attendance figures are published in school bulletins throughout the year

Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:

- Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.
- Working with the school and TUSLA to resolve any attendance problems.
- Making sure their children understand that parents support good school attendance.
Discussing planned absences with the school.
- Refraining from taking holidays during school time.
- Informing the school via Aladdin of the reasons for absence from school, late arrival or early leaving
- Ensuring, in so far as is possible, that children's appointments (dentists, speech & language etc.) are arranged for times outside of school hours.
- Contacting the school immediately if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.

Responding to poor attendance

- Being vigilant so that risks to good attendance are identified early for individual children.
- Intervening early with personalised support and engagement with families and their children.
- Increased support and intervention for children during periods of emotionally based school avoidance
- Monitoring progress or lack of and noting when the threshold is met for a referral to TUSLA's Educational Welfare Services.

<p>School roles in relation to attendance</p>	<p>It is the responsibility of the Principal and class teachers to implement this policy under the guidance of the school's Board of Management.</p> <p>The Principal will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations. • Furnish TUSLA with all mandatory reports • Inform parents of a decision to contact TUSLA of concerns regarding a pupil. <p>The class teacher will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record Daily Attendance • Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually. • Provide appropriate support following an absence • Inform the Principal of concerns he/she may have regarding the attendance of any pupils.
<p>Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 22 (2)(c) of the Education Welfare Act, 2000, requires that schools make every effort to engage with parents when attendance problems emerge and work collaboratively with them to try to understand the in school and/or out-of-school factors influencing attendance. • Bennettsbridge N.S. strives to promote good communication between home and school, school and other schools. This will ensure support for the child's progression and development in school, at home and will help to facilitate transition from school to school, primary to secondary and so on
<p>How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored</p>	<p>The success of this Attendance strategy will be measured through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aladdin records and statistical returns. • Happy, confident, well-adjusted children. • Positive parental feedback and support. • Teacher monitoring of class attendance.
<p>Review process and date for review</p>	<p>This strategy will be communicated to and reviewed by staff at the beginning of each school year. It will be reviewed every two years or as warranted by the Board of Management.</p>
<p>Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management</p>	<p>This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 28th Nov 2023. It was communicated to the Parents' Association and published to the school website in December 2023.</p>
<p>Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla</p>	<p>This statement of strategy was submitted to TUSLA in December 2023.</p>

Patrick Dalton
28-11-2023