



STATEMENT OF STRATEGY FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE NEWPORT COLLEGE

Policy Area	Schools
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Document Drafted by	Newport College
Date previous version Adopted by TETB	27 th March, 2018
Reviewed/Amendment	<p>Reviewed at BOM Meeting 18.09.18</p> <p>Amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A meeting with or phone call to parents of students missing 15 days or more will be initiated by the HSCL coordinator. • Unexplained absence dates will be notified to parents with school reports.
Date Review/Amendment Adopted	16 th October, 2018
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Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	Newport College
Address	Black Road, Newport, Co. Tipperary
Roll Number	72450N
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	The Board of Management and staff of Newport College are committed to providing a positive school atmosphere which is conducive to promoting good school attendance
The school's high expectations around attendance	<p>The vast majority of students of Newport College are punctual and are excellent attenders.</p> <p>The management and staff hope to promote co-operation among students, parents/guardians and staff in maintaining the current level of attendance and punctuality throughout the school year whilst endeavouring to increase it.</p>
How attendance will be monitored	<p>Procedures for recording attendance are as follows:</p> <p>Roll Call @ 8.50</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The school attendance of individual students is recorded at 8.50 by the subject teacher at that time · Each subject teacher has responsibility for recording attendance in their classes · The deputy principal records explained and unexplained absences. · The HSCL coordinator and SCP project worker monitor attendance and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Inform parents in writing after 5 and 10-day absences ➢ Notify the Assistant Principal of concerns regarding the attendance of any child and/or when the child reaches 20 days absence. · Class attendance is recorded daily on VSWare and/or in Teachers' Diaries · Attendance is reviewed weekly by the Deputy Principal, HSCL coordinator and SCP project worker.

	<p>Reporting to the EWS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Assistant Principal reports to the EWS as required by Túsla and also completes an Annual Attendance Report • The Deputy Principal reviews annual school attendance statistics and compares them with previous years to identify patterns of poor attendance. This information feeds into the DEIS Improvement Action Plan
<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>Targets for School Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review and update the school Attendance Policy. • To raise awareness of attendance among management, staff, students and parents. • To raise awareness of the vital role parents play in their child's school attendance. • To enhance the school's capacity to manage attendance data by utilising a computerised system (VSWare) • To put in place strategies to ensure the early detection and correction of patterns of poor attendance. • To develop suitable intervention strategies to support individual students with poor attendance and their parents. • To further develop working partnerships between the school and other relevant agencies and services. <p>DEIS targets from 2016 plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Decrease % of students missing more than 20 days from an average of 15% to 12% over 3 years</i> 2. <i>Increase overall attendance each year (see HSCL/SCP notes/NEWB data)</i> 3. <i>Maintain accuracy and efficiency of roll call data.</i>

Whole School Approach

- The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for the promotion and monitoring of attendance in the school.
- Management and staff work as a team with consistent approach to attendance.
- Parents and students have opportunities to contribute to and take appropriate responsibility for attendance policy and strategy.

Strategies for promoting good school attendance

1. Raising Awareness of Attendance

The school recognises the importance of raising awareness about the importance of attendance.

- The Principal addresses the importance of good attendance at the initial meeting for new parents.
- Attendance is discussed at Board of Management, Staff, Parent Association and Student Council meetings and parent-teacher meetings.
- Updates on attendance are provided by HSCL and SCP
- Class tutors provide positive affirmation of full attendance each month, with the HSCL coordinator informing parents of this
- Monthly Attendance rewards are given.
- Bronze, silver and gold certificates of attendance are presented for 3, 6 and 9 months attendance respectively.
- Records of attendance are provided on pupil end of year reports
- Parents receive an update of their child's attendance in each school report.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Attendance initiative is in place – students who miss more than 20 days in previous or current year are invited to attend bi-monthly meetings with SCP and HSCL, <p>2. Involving Parents in Setting High Expectations for Attendance</p> <p>The school recognises that parental involvement is of paramount importance to students’ well-being and success in school generally and in particular their attendance at school. Parental involvement is fostered by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Regular communication between parents and the school · Parental involvement in school life eg. attendance at concerts, school events and parent teacher meetings. · An active Parent Association which all parents are encouraged to join · Opportunities for parents to review proposed policies <p>In addition to this;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The calendar for the coming year is published annually in June and a copy is posted to all parents with the end of year reports. Parents are encouraged to plan holidays and family events around school closures. · The school highlights to parents how missed days can have a negative effect on the student’s achievement and thus cause stress. <p>3. Providing Support Programmes to Enhance Attendance</p> <p>The school endeavours to provide support programmes to promote attendance;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Enrichment and sporting activities are provided. Enrichment and sporting activities are both co-curricular (eg. Ukulele lessons, school choir and basketball coaching) and extra-curricular (gaelic football, handball and the Active Flag programme).
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- Pupils are given opportunities to participate in decision making and to assume leadership roles in the school eg. the Student Council, The Active School Committee and Green Schools Committee.

- Individual and group programmes to support pupils in their social, emotional and personal development are delivered, where appropriate eg. Alert and Friends for Life programmes

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4. Rewarding Good Attendance

A special incentive system is in place to celebrate and reward good attendance

- Monthly rewards take place

- Attendance stickers given to all students to recognise full attendance that month.

- Homework passes, or other rewards may be given by class tutors to recognise full attendance that month.

- Full attenders are rewarded at the end of each term.

- A full attendance certificate along with a special reward is presented to those who have full attendance for the school year.

5. Building Linkages with other Schools, Youth Organisations and Local Organisations

The school fosters links with other schools in the area, youth organisations and any local organisations whose work could encourage participation and attendance;

- Working with local primary schools to identify pupils transitioning to our school who may need additional supports

- Working with other post-primary schools to support attendance in transition from one post-primary to our post-primary school.

Responding to Poor Attendance.

1. Monitoring attendance

- The attendance rates of individual pupils will be monitored by the HSCL coordinator and SCP project worker in consultation with the class tutor in the first instance.
- Parents will be informed by letter when their child has been absent for 5 days.
- Parents will be informed in writing by the school when their child has been absent for 10 days.
- A meeting with or phone call to parents of students missing 15 days or more will be initiated by the HSCL coordinator.
- Emerging patterns of poor attendance are monitored by the Deputy Principal, HSCL coordinator and SCP project worker weekly and annually to identify class-groups or sub-groups of students in need of support.
- Unexplained absence dates will be notified to parents with school reports

2. Tailoring whole-school approaches to group or individual needs

The school identifies and supports students who may need additional support including pupils with special educational needs, students with health needs, students who have experienced bullying, students experiencing emotional or behavioural difficulties.

- Internal communication procedures are in place to inform teachers of pupils who may need additional support.
- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, is flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- The school promotes development of good self-concept and self-worth in the children.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Support for pupils who have special educational needs are in place in accordance with Department of Education & Skills guidelines. <p>3. Engaging in early dialogue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · School staff make every effort to engage in early dialogue with parents and students on attendance both informally and formally eg. highlighting attendance patterns during Parent Teacher meetings. · Parents are informed in writing by the school when their child has been absent for 5 and then 10 days. · Parents are invited to meet with the Principal to formally discuss concerns about pupil absences and to put in place strategies to improve pupil attendance. · Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practical, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance. · The school will, insofar as is practical, respond to underlying reasons for non-attendance eg. sickness, bullying, inappropriate curriculum. <p>4. Using school-led multi-agency support process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The school consults with the National Educational Psychological Service (N.E.P.S.) and relevant external personnel who have a particular expertise to support students, families and the school with poor attendance. · The school works with social and child support services including Tusla – Child and Family Agency and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as well as child welfare organisations such as Barnardos and North Tipperary Parent Support group · The school fosters strong links with local and community organisations that provide support to young people and their families in the area including Limerick Youth Services, Pieta House. <p>5. Referral to Tusla’s Educational Welfare Service</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The school complies fully with reporting procedures to TUSLA and liaises with the education welfare officer when necessary. Details of reporting procedures are set out in the school Attendance Policy.
<p>School roles in relation to attendance</p>	<p><i>The Board of Management will</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Play an active role in reviewing and developing the Statement of Strategy. · Ensure that all the measures required to promote and support attendance, in line with the School Attendance Guidelines, are in place and set out in the Statement of Strategy. · Approve the Statement of Strategy and submit it to Tusla's Education Welfare Service <p><i>The School Principal will</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Lead and guide the work on the Statement of Strategy. · Promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff. · Ensure that the school register of pupils is maintained in accordance with regulations. · Manage the incentive system to reward good attendance. · Make every effort to ensure that school identifies and supports students who may need additional support eg. pupils with Special Needs. · Engage in early dialogue with parents and students on attendance, both informally and formally, eg. by highlighting attendance patterns during Parent Teacher meetings. · Inform parents in writing when their child has been absent for 5 and 10 days. · Make every effort to implement support strategies for pupils with poor attendance in conjunction with class teachers, support staff and other agencies.

- Consult with the National Educational Psychological Service (N.E.P.S.) and relevant external personnel who have a particular expertise to support students with poor attendance, when appropriate.
- Consult welfare organisations such as Barnardos, when appropriate.
- Comply with reporting procedures to TUSLA and liaise with the education welfare officer when necessary
- Inform parents of a decision to contact the Education Welfare Officer of concerns regarding a pupil's attendance and/or when a pupil has missed 20 days.
- Inform the Board of Management at each meeting of the attendance statistics for the previous month/s.
- Provide a summary to the Board of Management of the quarterly returns and end of year return made to Tusla.
- Ensure that staff and the Parent Association are informed on attendance issues and initiatives.
- Foster links with other schools in the area, youth organisations and any local organisations whose work could encourage participation and attendance.

The Deputy Principal will

- Work closely with the School Principal to co-ordinate and prepare the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance.
- Ensure that accurate and comprehensive attendance records are maintained.
- Monitors the Daily Attendance Roll and termly and annual attendance statistics.
- Meet with parents to formally discuss concerns about pupil absences and to put in place strategies to improve pupil attendance, when a child has been absent for 15 days.
- Compile absences for entry into the Tusla's computerised returns.

- Work closely with the Principal in monitoring attendance and in devising ongoing strategies to promote good attendance.
- Monitor the compilation of the monthly attendance record in pupil homework journals.
- Investigate and promote strategies to minimise the transmission of common illnesses within the school.
- Investigate and distribute guidance for parents and staff on school absences arising from common illnesses.

Class Teachers will

- Bring their professional expertise and insight to bear on the preparation of the Statement of Strategy.
- Maintain accurate class attendance records and record late arrivals and early departures.
- Keep a record of explained and unexplained absences.
- Encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- Engage in early dialogue with parents and students on attendance, both informally and formally, eg. by highlighting attendance issues during Parent Teacher meetings.
- Inform the Principal of concerns they may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.
- Make every effort to implement support strategies for pupils with poor attendance in conjunction with the school principal, deputy principal and other support staff.

Parents will

- Ensure regular and punctual school attendance.
- Make sure their children understand that parents support and approve of school attendance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Ensure, insofar as is possible, that children’s appointments (dentist etc.), are arranged for times outside of school hours · Notify the school if their children cannot attend for any reason. · Inform the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school. · Show an interest in their children’s school day and their children’s homework. · Encourage children to participate in school activities. · Praise and encourage their children’s achievements. · Instil in their children a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth. · Contact the school immediately if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters. · Work with the school and Education Welfare service to resolve any attendance problems. <p><i>Pupils will</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Attend school regularly and punctually. · Inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence. · Show absence notes from parents to their class teacher promptly. · Pass school correspondence to their parents on the specified day.
Partnership arrangements.	<p>This strategy was developed and approved by the management of Newport College.</p> <p>The strategy was researched and co-ordinated by the Deputy Principal in co-operation with the school Principal.</p> <p>Staff, pupils and parents/guardians were consulted in the process of devising the Strategy for Attendance.</p>

<p>How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Attendance figures will be analysed at the end of each term/ annually and compared with attendance of previous school years · The number of pupils referred to the Education Welfare Officer will be monitored and compared to previous years. · Attendance for individual pupils with poor attendance, will be monitored and compared to previous years. · The number of absences due to pupil illness will be reviewed. · The average number of absences per pupil will be compared to previous years. · The School Attendance Policy will be reviewed and updated.
<p>Review process and date for review</p>	<p>The policy will be reviewed annually at the May meeting of the Board of Management alongside the school Attendance Policy.</p>
<p>Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management</p>	
<p>Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla</p>	