



An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

## Template for the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	Scoil Bhríde Primary School
Address	Killane, Edenderry, Co. Offaly
Roll Number	20267F
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	Scoil Bhríde Primary school's vision is to promote the full and harmonious development of all pupils: cognitive, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual. It aims to promote positive school experiences with high attendance levels. The school's vision is to ensure that all pupils experience success. Scoil Bhríde aims to work together with parents and guardians to foster positive attitudes to regular school attendance and learning.
The school's high expectations around attendance	Scoil Bhríde recognises that consistent attendance is a vital element in education. Targeting good attendance is part of our school action plan. Attendance is therefore an area of high priority for the school and we endeavour to support and foster good attendance patterns from a young age. The school will work closely with all partners to ensure that the attendance rate within the school will rise from 93.25% to 95% every year. The school ensures that school staff and families are informed and assisted in relation to attendance matters at our school.
How attendance will be monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Raise awareness of the importance of school attendance.</li><li>• Daily record of attendance on Aladdin system by each teacher.</li><li>• Record of late arrivals on Aladdin system.</li><li>• Parental sign-out form to record early removal from class stating reason.</li><li>• Teachers will discuss concerns re attendance at parent teacher meetings and will alert Principal and post-holder about concerns.</li><li>• Teachers will monitor children who may be at risk of poor attendance.</li><li>• Develop, subject to available resources, links between the school and the families of children who may be at risk of developing attendance problems.</li><li>• Principal/Post holder will inform the Board of Management about attendance at each meeting.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post holder with responsibility for attendance will inform parents, by letter, when absences of 15 days or over accrue.</li> <li>• Post holder with responsibility will inform parents &amp; TUSLA, by letter, when absences of 20 days accrue.</li> <li>• Post holder will send updated letters every month where necessary.</li> <li>• Principal/Post holder will complete on-line report forms with TUSLA and will complete annual attendance report.</li> <li>• Principal and post-holder will monitor children who regularly miss more than 10 days in a school year.</li> <li>• Notes explaining reasons for absence will be retained in the pupil's file.</li> <li>• Early removal from class forms will be monitored.</li> <li>• Ensure compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation.</li> </ul>
<p>Summary of the main elements of the school's approach to attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target setting and targets</li> <li>• The whole-school approach</li> <li>• Promoting good attendance</li> <li>• Responding to poor attendance</li> </ul>	<p>Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve attendance from 7% absenteeism to 5% in 2017/18.</li> <li>• To reduce the number of children who are absent for more than 20 days from 63 (3 year average) to 45.</li> </ul> <p>Whole-School Approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and Board of Management will collaborate to implement this policy. All teachers will take responsibility in improving excellent attendance and being vigilant for children who may be at risk of developing school attendance problems.</li> </ul> <p>Promoting Good Attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, will be flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child to facilitate each pupil to experience success and a good and happy school experience.</li> <li>• Scoil Bhríde Primary School will promote development of good self-esteem and self-worth in its pupils (According to Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy).</li> <li>• Support for pupils who have special educational needs in accordance with DES guidelines.</li> <li>• Attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance and the class teacher will notify the Principal of any concerns regarding the attendance of any pupil.</li> <li>• The school will use regular newsletters and web texts to promote attendance and punctuality.</li> </ul>

- The Principal/Post holder will assess each case individually and at this point a phone call to a parent/guardian may be deemed necessary.
- The class teacher will keep a daily record of attendance on Aladdin.
- The class teacher will encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- The class teacher will ensure that contact is made with parents/guardians in instances where absences are not explained. A standard note is to be used for this purpose.
- Attendance figures are monitored daily by the Principal/Post holder on Aladdin.
- The Principal/Post holder will also bring details of continued absences and patterns of absences to the attention of the class teachers as necessary.
- The Principal/Post holder will promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.
- Attendance will be featured as part of school assemblies/announcements etc.
- The Principal/Post holder will inform the TUSLA:
  - When a pupil has been missing for twenty or more days during the course of the school year.
  - When a pupil has been suspended from school more than once under the Code of Behaviour.
- Evidence of non-attendance is a factor in including pupils in the various activities; football, art, history club, model car club, movie club ...etc.
- Extra-curricular activities, such as hurling, Gaelic football, soccer and choir will be encouraged for all pupils, specifically those at risk of non-attendance.
- If language is an issue parents will receive notes with translations to their mother tongue.
- Providing opportunities for all pupils to have a voice in school via 'Active Schools', 'Green Schools', 'Student Council' and 'Friends for Life' committees.
- Continue to inform parents regularly at parent-teacher meetings and infant induction day about the importance of attendance.
- Talk to the children regularly about attendance during assemblies.
- Record attendance on school reports.
- Encourage parental involvement in the Parents' Association and in activities within the school.

	<p>Responding to Poor Attendance: The following strategies may be employed to identify students at risk of developing school attendance problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On transfer to Scoil Bhríde attendance records will be sought from previous schools on pupil attendance.</li> <li>• Class teachers will inform the Principal/Post holder of any concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.</li> <li>• Contact between school and parent/guardian to express concern re attendance, late arrival or early removal e.g. phone call, letter, discuss at parent teacher meeting.</li> <li>• Specific meeting in school with parent/guardian to identify problems and agree interventions.</li> <li>• Concerns and agreements communicated in writing to parent/guardian.</li> <li>• Implementation of any appropriate in-school measures (e.g. 'contact person' in school, support in class etc.).</li> <li>• Use of appropriate interventions with pupil (e.g. attendance charts/ attendance report, incentives, rewards etc.).</li> <li>• Other school interventions (e.g. Pastoral care teams).</li> <li>• Principal/Post holder will work closely with various agencies who are involved with such students.</li> <li>• Contact TUSLA to assist with issues, where necessary.</li> </ul>
<p>School roles in relation to attendance</p>	<p>The Board of Management, teachers and whole school community will be mindful at all times of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The identification of aspects of the operation and management of the school and of the teaching of the school curriculum that may contribute to problems relating to school attendance on the part of certain students.</li> <li>• The identification of strategies for the removal of those aspects in so far as they are not necessary or expedient for the proper and effective running of the school having regard, in particular, to the educational needs of students.</li> <li>• The identification of strategies that will encourage more regular attendance at school on the part of such students.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to review this strategy into the future to accommodate the changing needs of the school and of its population.</li> </ul>
<p>Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth organisations)</p>	<p>Closer home/school relations will be fostered through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance at meetings (Parent/Teacher, etc.).</li> <li>• Parent Courses.</li> <li>• Attendance at Special Occasions.</li> <li>• Attendance at Sports Day.</li> <li>• Attendance at school events (e.g., Concerts, Masses, etc.).</li> <li>• Involvement in Paired Reading, Maths for Fun, etc.</li> <li>• Regular newsletters to families.</li> <li>• Open-door policy in Principal's office for daily communication.</li> </ul> <p>Parents can promote attendance by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.</li> <li>• Notifying the school if their children cannot attend for any reason.</li> <li>• Working with the school and education welfare service to resolve any attendance problems.</li> <li>• Discussing planned absences with the school.</li> <li>• Refraining from taking holidays during school time</li> <li>• Informing the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school.</li> <li>• Contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters.</li> </ul> <p>Students can promote attendance by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participating in school activities, such as Cumann na mBunscol, soccer, cross country, etc.</li> <li>• Taking an active role in the 'Green Schools' committee.</li> <li>• Taking an active role in the 'Active Schools' committee.</li> <li>• Taking an active role in the 'Garden' committee</li> <li>• Participating in the newly established 'Student Council'.</li> <li>• Having responsibility in the 'Friends for Life' Programme.</li> <li>• Taking an active role in the 'Incredible Years' Programme.</li> <li>• Attending after school activities such as music lessons.</li> <li>• Participating in the school choir.</li> </ul>

	<p>Contact with the following bodies will be fostered and developed in order to promote the good attendance of students in our school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TUSLA.</li> <li>• Other schools in the vicinity.</li> <li>• NEPS.</li> <li>• Local GAA clubs, soccer clubs, etc.</li> <li>• Community Gardaí.</li> <li>• Local interest groups such as the Barnardos, Vincent de Paul.</li> <li>• ACORN Project.</li> </ul> <p>Local Organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Management has fostered links with local GAA club and actively promotes pupil involvement.</li> <li>• Pupils are encouraged to participate in local organisations outside school.</li> <li>• Providing rewards of achievement in pupil's chosen activity.</li> <li>• School encourages pupils to bring in any awards.</li> </ul>
<p>How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored</p>	<p>Scoil Bhríde will monitor the strategy by discussing attendance at meetings during Croke Park hours with all staff. Principal and Post Holder will discuss children at risk and possible solutions.</p> <p>The success of any Attendance Policy is measured through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved attendance levels as measured through Aladdin database and Leabhar rolla records.</li> <li>• Happy, confident, well-adjusted children.</li> <li>• Positive parental feedback.</li> <li>• Teacher vigilance.</li> <li>• A satisfactory level of accountability for all absences.</li> </ul>
<p>Review process and date for review</p>	<p>The strategy will be reviewed annually in the first term of the school year.</p>
<p>Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management</p>	<p>This strategy was discussed and ratified at a Board of Management meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2017.</p>
<p>Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to TUSLA</p>	

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 10 October 2017  
Niall O' Leary (Chairperson BOM)

Date of next review: October 2018