

**Statement of Strategy for School Attendance**

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| Name of school | Scoil Chomáin Naofa  |
| Address | Roundfort , Hollymount, Co. Mayo.  |
| Roll Number | 17082W |
| The school’s vision and values in relation to attendance | Scoil Chomáin Naofa’s vision and values in relation to attendance complement the school ethos of nurturing potential in a caring environment where the welfare of children is paramount. The Board of Management views each child in the context of his/her family and a holistic approach to improving attendance will be followed. |
| The school’s high expectations around attendance | The Board of Management of Scoil Chomáin Naofa recognizes the importance of consistent school attendance and pupil progress. The Board also acknowledges that this consistent attendance creates a positive attitude to school and learning. |
| How attendance will be monitored | * The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded in the roll book and the school’s number book on a daily basis prior to 9.40am. If a pupil does not attend on a day when the school is open for instruction, his/her non-attendance will be recorded by the class teacher.
* Monthly attendance, is recorded on excel document provided by the Department of Education, which is verified, printed and filed in the Leabhar Tinrimh.
* The annual attendance of each individual pupil is recorded on the roll book. It is also recorded in each child’s report card.
* Children arriving to school after the morning period (8.50am to 9.40 am) be signed in by a parent/ guardian in the office sign-in book.
* Attendance patterns, including total absences for individual students and class groups, are monitored by the vice principal and principal. Once a child reaches 15 days absent, a letter is sent home to parents to notify them that when their child reaches 20 days, Tulsa will be contacted.
* All pupil absence must be explained by the parents/guardians by written note.
* When such an explanation is not forthcoming, the class teacher will seek clarification from the parents/guardians.
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| 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
 | **Target setting and targets*** Attendance data for the school years 2016-2017 was analysed and used to establish a baseline for attendance in the school which stood at 94%.
* The Child and Family Agency Annual Attendance Report 2013-2014 was consulted to compare the school’s attendance data to national averages.
* Following this analysis, and consultation with all stakeholders, the following attendance targets were set:
* To improve attendance in the school by .25% in Year 1, 2017-2018 , 0.5% in Year 2 2018-2019 and 0.75% in Year 3 2019- 2020
* To reduce the number of students absent for 20 days or more over the school year by 1% on an annual basis.
* To keep record the reasons for absences in roll book for the current year.

**The whole-school approach*** The importance of good school attendance will be highlighted at parent/teacher meetings.
* The benefits of good attendance will be highlighted on the school website.
* Regular updates on the school’s attendance will be acknowledged in our school assemblies.
* The school’s Attendance Policy will be available on the school website.
* Parents are strongly discouraged from taking students on holidays during term time. If a parent decides to take a child out of school for holidays, the Principal must be informed.

**Promoting good attendance**The school promotes good attendance by: * creating a safe and welcoming environment
* ensuring children are happy
* displaying kindness, compassion and understanding
* collaborating in the planning and implementation of the primary school curriculum, so as to provide a stimulating learning environment for all pupils
* being vigilant so that risks to good attendance such as disadvantage, bullying etc. are identified early
* Inviting parents/guardians of new entrants to engage in an induction process, through which the school’s policies and procedures in relation to attendance are explained (enrolment evening).
* 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)

Student motivation and engagement is promoted by:* the provision of enrichment activities throughout the school week ( brain breaks, swimming lessons, visiting tutors, literacy and numeracy hours, whole school events and celebrations such as Active school Week, Book Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge)
* the provision of extra-curricular activities in the arts and sport
* the use of IT throughout the school day
* the promotion of student responsibility through class jobs and leadership roles in the yard
* the scheduling of school concerts, sports days and school trips and events during term times identified as having higher rates of absence

Parental involvement in all aspects of school life is promoted by:* ongoing engagement with the PTA
* Organisation of parental involvement in class trips, swimming, and football training.
* inviting parents to visit the school to support school activities
* effectively engaging parents in the review of school policies
* communicating with parents about school life through website and text updates.
* the organisation of parent evenings

**Responding to poor attendance*** When a pupil has accumulated 15 absences in any one school year, a standard letter informing the pupil’s Parents/Guardians is sent automatically. This letter states the school’s obligation to inform Túsla, the Child and Family Agency of all pupils who accumulate an aggregate of 20 school days in any one school year.
* Parents/guardians are made aware of the requirements of Túsla, the Child and Family Agency, particularly the by-law relating to absences of more than 20 days per school year in enrolment evening, on the school website and at PTM’s.
* Class teachers discuss individual pupil’s attendance and punctuality during Parent/ Teacher meetings and parents are informed where a pattern of non-attendance is a cause for concern.
* Parents/ guardians are informed in writing by the Principal where a pupil’s cumulative absences are a cause for concern (15 days).
* Parents whose children continue to have poor attendance (20+ days), will be referred to Túsla. Parents will be informed where a referral is made and will be contacted by a Túsla attendance officer/ social worker in due course.
* Parents are notified in writing on the end of year report of the total number of absences during the school year.
* On the school roll system percentages of school attendance on a monthly basis are recorded.
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| School roles in relation to attendance | * All staff have an input into the implementation of the Strategy for Attendance and School Attendance Policy.
* Class teachers record individual patterns of attendance.
* The Deputy Principal staff has responsibility for maintaining the Leabhar Tinrimh and making returns to Túsla, the Child and Family Agency.
* It is the responsibility of the Principal and staff to implement the Attendance strategy and school Attendance Policy under the guidance of the school’s Board of Management
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| Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups) | * Parents play a key role in the development of the Strategy for School Attendance and have a particular role in setting high standards around attendance and punctuality, and in engaging with the school if there is a problem about their child’s attendance.
* Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by:
* ensuring regular and punctual school attendance
* working with the School and with Túsla, the Child and Family Agency to resolve any attendance problems
* making sure their children understand that parents support good school attendance
* discussing planned absences with the school
* showing an interest in their children’s school day and their children’s homework.
* encouraging them to participate in school activities
* praising and encouraging their children’s achievements.
* instilling in their children a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth
* informing the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school
* ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children’s appointments (with dentists etc), are arranged for times outside of school hours
* contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters
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| How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored | * The Statement of Strategy will be available on the school website for parents and guardians to view.
* The principal and staff will be responsible for the review, monitoring and implementation of the school’s Attendance Strategy.
* The school principal and teachers will work to create a school ethos and climate that is supportive of high levels of engagement and attendance.
* Teachers will ensure that attendance data is recorded accurately and alert the principal / Vice Principal if there are concerns about student absences.
* The ongoing implementation of the Statement of Strategy and progress towards attendance targets will be reviewed by the staff on a yearly basis.
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| Review process and date for review | * September 2018
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| Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management | * September 2017
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| Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Túsla | * September 2017
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