

 **Statement of Strategy**

**for School Attendance**

**Bishop O’Brien National School Bartlemy**

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| Name of school | Bishop O’Brien National School |
| Address | Bartlemy, Fermoy, County Cork |
| Roll Number | 15701O |
| The school’s vision and values in relation to attendance | This Statement of Strategy aims to build a culture of high expectations among all staff and with every student and parent for the student’s learning participation and attendance. The Statement of Strategy aims to build each student’s sense of personal responsibility for their own learning and their responsibility to their peers and their teachers to be in school every day. The strategy complements the school ethos of nurturing the potential of every child in a caring environment where individual talents and difference are celebrated. This work is further enhanced where a high level of understanding, openness and co-operation between the pupils, parents/guardians and staff exists. The Board of Management envisages a supportive and welcoming school environment which places importance on indentifying the needs of the individual child and intervening at an early stage to support the child and family in achieving good school attendance. The Board of Management affirms the fundamental importance of good school attendance for the child’s over-all development. |
| The school’s high expectations around attendance | * The Board of Management sets high expectations around attendance and seeks to involve the parent community in this by encouraging parental involvement in school life.
* The school consistently reminds parents about the importance of good school attendance and punctuality through our regular newsletter *Eolas.*
* We consistently remind parents of the Board of Management’s duty to report to Tusla regarding attendance.
* We remind parents on a regular basis, the impact absences have on the child and the class as a whole when missed lessons have to be caught up on etc.
* Parents are consistently reminded that the Education Welfare Act 2000 Section 18, places a legal duty on parents to notify the school about the reasons for the child’s absence from school for part of the school day or a full school day or more than one school day. Guidance regarding notification of these absences will be put in writing and communicated to parents in the Code of Behaviour and in the September Eolas (Newsletter) annually.
* From 2018/19 school onwards statistics regarding the schools overall attendance patterns will be communicated to parents.
* Children with five days or less absences in a school year will be rewarded for good attendance.
* At annual Homework/Information meetings for parents, the principal will review the attendance policy and communicate attendance targets to parents.
* Attendance data will be discussed at the annual parent teacher meetings and will be included on the child’s end of year report.
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| How attendance will be monitored | Attendance data is gathered through the online rollbooks on Aladdin. This data is used to * Monitor overall attendance and punctuality levels
* To identify trends and patterns in attendance
* To identify specific times of the school year, week or day when attendance levels are lower
* To monitor attendance of vulnerable groups of individuals
* To track attendance for a specified period of time- including half-termly, year to date and yearly.
* Absence reasons are recorded on this system.
* Flag pupils who are at risk of poor attendance and to trigger early interventions at whole-school, class group or individual level.
* Identify individuals with poor attendance and intervene accordingly
* Monitor attendance targets
* Monitor effectiveness of the School Attendance Strategy
* Devise and Monitor the impact of any individualised attendance plans
* To inform school planning
* Inform the School Self-Evaluation Process
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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
 | The following is a summary of the school’s approach to attendance* Whole school attendance targets will be communicated with the parent body each September through the newsletter Eolas. This will include an annual attendance target and a termly attendance target. The previous year’s attendance data will be used as a baseline. Progress reports will be communicated to parents on a regular basis.
* Individual targets will be set as needed and will be done in consultation with parents and the child.
* School ethos, policies and practices work together to support good attendance
* Attendance will form a regular part of development planning and school-self evaluation.
* Management and staff work as a team with a consistent approach to attendance.
* Parents and students are part of an inclusive school community and will be provided opportunities to contribute to and take appropriate responsibility for attendance policy and strategy.
* Opportunities are provided as and if they arise, through which staff members as a team can focus on attendance, update their knowledge about effective practice and share expertise on managing attendance.
* School will be acknowledged and rewarded for good attendance at the end of the school year

**Absence due to illness*** The parent should provide the school with a note stating the child was absent due to illness. The note should state the nature of the illness and the date in which the absence began and ended. This note should be included in the homework journal for First to Sixth class and by letter for Infants classes. The class teacher should tick and initial the note and record the reasons for absence on Aladdin.

**Absence due to term-time holidays*** As per section 17 of Education Welfare Act 2000, parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child is at school on every day that the school is open, unless there is a genuine reason for him/her not to attend.
* As per 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. Therefore the school cannot legally give ‘permission’ for holiday absences during term time
* The school strongly discourages parents from taking students on holiday during term-time and this will be documented in the schools communication with parents each September via Eolas, the school newsletter.
* If a parent decides to take a child out of school for holidays, the principal in line with advice from Tusla, will request the parent to provide a letter to the school to say they are doing so and are aware of the implications.
* Where there are regular holiday absences, the school, as recommended by Tusla, will remind parents of the educational and potential legal impact of removing students from school for periods of time.

**The school response to absence will be as follows;*** All absences together with reasons for absence are recorded on Aladdin
* If a child has missed 15 school days, parents will be contacted by letter to advice of the school’s concern about the child’s attendance.
* If a child has missed 20 days or more and has not supplied sufficient reason- e.g. illness or bereavement in family, a meeting will be set up with parents, principal and class teacher to try and identify and remove any barriers to attendance.
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| School roles in relation to attendance | **Principal**: * Monitors attendance and reports attendance data to the whole school community.
* Sets whole school attendance target in collaboration with staff and Board of Management
* Contacts parents after 15 school days missed, via letter
* Together with class teacher liases with family of children at risk of poor attendance to help remove barriers to attendance
* Submits annual attendance report to Tusla and Board of Management

**Teachers:*** Fill out rolla daily by 10:30am. ( see page 28 Rules for National Schools)
* Tick and initial absence notes and record reasons on Aladdin
* If a child arrives at school later than 10:30am they will be marked as late on the Aladdin system and this counts as a days absence on the official Department of Education Roll book.
* Class-teachers, along with principal will meet with parents of children in danger of poor attendance to discuss a plan for improving attendance and removing any barriers to attendance
* Look for any patterns of absence- i.e. many Mondays/ Fridays etc and communicate any concerns to the principal at the earliest opportunity
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| Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups) | Statement of Strategy for attendance discussed with parents on an annual basis at homework/information meetings to enable parents to offer suggestions, amendments or comment.Class teachers will discuss attendance with their class and allow children to suggest ways in which to improve attendance. |
| How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored | The strategy will be reviewed on a yearly basis each September when new attendance targets are set for the school year. |
| Review process and date for review | Each September beginning September 2019 |
| Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management | 22nd October 2018 |
| Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla | 23rd October 2018 |