



## Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	Ballinteer Educate Together National School
Address	Upper Churchtown Rd, Dublin 14
Roll Number	20400E
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	Ballinteer Educate Together'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. In light of the fact that absenteeism is often a complex matter, the Board of Management, from the beginning, 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 Ballinteer Educate Together National School recognizes the clear and direct relationship between high and regular school attendance and pupil progress. The Board also recognizes that high and regular attendance engenders a positive attitude to school and learning.

<p>How attendance will be monitored</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school attendance of individual pupils is recorded on the Aladdin school admin software, on a daily basis prior to 9.15am. 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.</li> <li>• Monthly attendance, as recorded on the Aladdin school admin system, is verified, printed and filed in the Leabhar Tinrimh.</li> <li>• The annual attendance of each individual pupil is recorded on the Aladdin system, together with information provided in enrolment forms (Pupil's Name, Date of Birth, Address, PPSN and Parents' Names).</li> <li>• Children arriving to school after the morning reception period (8.15 – 8.35am) should be signed in by a parent/ guardian in the office sign-in book. Late arrivals will be recorded by the class teacher on the Aladdin system. Unaccompanied children will be asked to sign the sign-in book. Parents/ guardians/ after-school carers collecting children late from school (after 2pm) will also be asked to sign the sign-out book.</li> <li>• Where a child arrives at school after 9.15am, he/she is marked absent for the day. The time of his/her arrival at school is noted by the class teacher on the Aladdin system. Where the school is notified in writing of a medical/ dental appointment in advance of a child's late arrival at school, he/she is marked present. The time of the child's arrival at school after his/her appointment is noted on the Aladdin system.</li> <li>• Attendance patterns, including total absences for individual students and class groups, are monitored by the Principal using the Aladdin software.</li> <li>• All pupil absence must be explained by the parents/guardians by email or written note. This explanation is then inputted into the Aladdin software by the secretary or class teacher.</li> <li>• When such an explanation is not forthcoming, the class teacher will seek clarification from the parents/guardians.</li> <li>• Notes and emails explaining absence are dated and kept in a central location (administration office).</li> </ul>
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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 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 was analysed and used to establish a baseline for attendance in the school.
- 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 .5% in Year 1, 2017-2018 (no more than 6.5% of school days lost through absence), 1% in Year 2 2018-2019 (6%) and 1.5% in Year 3 2019- 2020 (5.5%)
- To reduce the number of students absent for 20 days or more over the school year by 2% on an annual basis; reducing to 13.1% in Year 1, 11.1% in Year 2 and 9.1% in Year 3.
- To reduce the number of absences due to term time holidays by 4% on an annual basis; reducing from 25.5% (2015/2016) to 13.5% in Year 3 (2019/ 2020). For this purpose, holidays will be taken to describe all absences marked as 'other' on the Aladdin system
- To record the reasons for absences in the notes section of attendance on the Aladdin school admin system

#### **The whole-school approach**

- The importance of good school attendance will be highlighted to parents at class meetings at the start of the school year, at parent/teacher meetings and in discussion at meetings with the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).
- Regular updates on the school's attendance will be included in the school newsletter and school website.
- The school's Attendance Policy will be available on the school website.
- Good attendance will be affirmed through the use of an 'attendance barometer' in the school reception area and in bi-monthly newsletters.
- 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 will request that the parent read and sign an absence form, outlining the length of their child's absence for reason of a holiday and acknowledging that they are aware of the educational implications of doing so.
- Where there are regular holiday absences, the school will remind parents by email of the educational and potential legal impact of removing students from school for periods of time.
- Teachers will not prepare school work for children to take on holiday.

#### **Promoting good attendance**

The school promotes good attendance by:

- creating a safe and welcoming environment
- ensuring children are happy

School roles in relation to attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff have an input into the implementation of the Strategy for Attendance and school Attendance Policy.</li> <li>• Class teachers record individual patterns of attendance.</li> <li>• The Deputy Principal/school admin staff has responsibility for maintaining the Leabhar Tinrimh and making returns to Túsla, the Child and Family Agency.</li> <li>• The Principal will prepare a report on attendance for the Board of Management on a term basis or as the need arises. An end of year report, all pupil names withheld, will also be made available to the parents.</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>
Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensuring regular and punctual school attendance</li> <li>- working with the School and with Túsla, the Child and Family Agency to resolve any attendance problems</li> <li>- making sure their children understand that parents support good school attendance</li> <li>- discussing planned absences with the school</li> <li>- refraining from taking holidays during school time</li> <li>- showing an interest in their children's school day and their children's homework.</li> <li>- encouraging them to participate in school activities</li> <li>- praising and encouraging their children's achievements.</li> <li>- instilling in their children a positive self-concept and a positive sense of self-worth</li> <li>- informing the school in writing of the reasons for absence from school</li> <li>- ensuring, insofar as is possible, that children's appointments (with dentists etc), are arranged for times outside of school hours</li> <li>- contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Statement of Strategy will be disseminated to all parents through email and will also be available on the school website.</li> <li>• Updates about progress in attendance and punctuality will be included in bi-monthly newsletters to parents.</li> <li>• The principal will be responsible for the review, monitoring and implementation of the school's Attendance Strategy.</li> <li>• The school principal and teachers will work to create a school ethos and climate that is supportive of high levels of engagement and attendance.</li> <li>• Teachers will ensure that attendance data is recorded accurately and alert the principal if there are concerns about student absences.</li> <li>• Parents will set high standards for their child in relation to attendance and punctuality and will ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives at school on time.</li> <li>• Parents will avoid taking their child out of class unless there is a serious reason and will avoid taking their child on holidays during term time.</li> <li>• The ongoing implementation of the Statement of Strategy and progress towards attendance targets will be reviewed by the staff on a termly basis during staff meetings.</li> <li>• The principal will provide an update on attendance levels at each Board of Management meeting, with relation to the school's attendance targets.</li> <li>• The Board of Management will provide a formal end-of-year review of the Statement of Strategy as part of the preparation of the Board of Management's annual report on attendance to Túsula's Educational Welfare Services and the Parent Teacher Association.</li> </ul>
Review process and date for review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This strategy will be reviewed 2021.</li> </ul>
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 2017</li> </ul>
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Túsula	