



St. Mochta's National School

Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	Saint Mochta's National School
Address	Porterstown Road, Clonsilla, Dublin 15, D15 Y316
Roll Number	18778s
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	Our school motto is "Everyone has opportunities to succeed. Everyone is treated with respect." The pupils, parents, staff, and Board of Management of St Mochta's NS promote inclusion, respect and dignity for each child and recognise that good school attendance is vital. It allows all children to receive the opportunity to reach their full potential.
The school's high expectations around attendance	<p>We promote and encourage regular attendance to conform to legislative requirements such as the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and to fulfil the conditions of Circular 0028/2013.</p> <p>We expect children to have full attendance at school unless they are ill. We understand that there may be other reasons why a child cannot attend school, such as urgent family reasons. However, the parents/guardians must provide an explanation to the school in one of the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Aladdin app - telephone - email - child's homework journal <p>The Aladdin app is the school's system for recording attendance.</p> <p>In St. Mochta's NS we want to commend children who have excellent attendance. Annual Attendance Awards are presented to children who were absent for two or less days throughout the school year. We want to acknowledge improvements in overall school attendance. Monthly figures are reported in Scéalta and progress is celebrated.</p>

<p>How attendance will be monitored</p>	<p>Pupil attendance is recorded daily by using Aladdin software. School begins each day at 8:50am and Roll is called by 9:50am. A pupil will be marked either present or absent at the time of the roll call and there will be no provision for adjusting the Roll Book, where a pupil subsequently does not complete the full school day or arrives after the roll call (in accordance with Circular 0028/2013). Children who attend after 9:50am will be marked absent with time of arrival.</p> <p>The school proactively reviews, identifies and acts upon attendance patterns and issues.</p> <p>Absences: When students have recorded ten or fifteen absences, an automatic text message is sent to inform the parents that St Mochta's is obliged to report all absences in excess of 20 days to Tusla Education Support Services (TESS).</p> <p>However, children must stay at home if feeling unwell, to show respect for the health of the school community. During exceptional times of high risk of infection (as advised by the HSE) eg Covid 19, we may pause the automatic text alert messages.</p> <p>Removal from Roll: The Class Teacher will liaise with the Deputy Principal if a pupil's name needs to be struck off the class Roll Book (Leabhar Rolla). According to Circular 0028/2013, this is necessary for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) as soon as the Teacher becomes aware that the pupil has left the school. b) on the first Monday following the absence of 20 consecutive school days. <p>The designated Assistant Principal submits the Student Absence Reports (SAR) for Period 2 (end-Dec) and Period 4 (end-June).</p> <p>If there is concern over a student's attendance, an Educational Welfare Referral will be made to Tusla Education Support Services (TESS). Parents are informed when referrals are made.</p> <p>An Annual Attendance Report (AAR) on the attendance levels at the end of each school year, is submitted to Tusla Education Support Services (TESS).</p>
<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 	<p><u>Target Setting and Targets:</u></p> <p>The following data was collected from a review of the attendance figures for the previous two school years.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting good attendance • Responding to poor attendance 	<p>The average attendance in 2021- 2022 school year was 89.9%. 303 (35%) students were absent for 20 days or more. The month with the lowest attendance was December with 83.9%.</p> <p>The average attendance in 2022-2023 school year was 92.8%. 162 (19%) students were absent for 20 days or more. The month with the lowest attendance was December with 86.5%.</p> <p>Targets:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>To increase last year’s average attendance from 92.8% to 94% in 2023-2024, 95% in 2024-2025 and 96% in 2025-2026.</i> 2. <i>To reduce the percentage of children who miss 20 or more days to 16% or 138 pupils in 2023-2024, 13% in 2024-2025 and 10% in 2025-2026.</i> 3. <i>To increase the attendance in December to 88% in 2023-2024, 89% in 2024-2025 and 90% in 2025-2026.</i> <p><u>Whole School Approach to Promote Good Attendance:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a safe, supportive and welcoming environment. This begins each morning with the staff on morning duty, actively meeting and greeting the pupils. • monitoring children at risk of low attendance and early intervention. Staff will be vigilant so that risks to good attendance such as disadvantage, bullying etc are identified early. We will inform the parents/guardians of incoming Junior Infant children about the attendance requirements at the induction information meeting. • endeavouring to identify, meet and support the needs of all students, including those who have additional educational needs, in accordance with the Department of Education and Skills Guidelines. We implement enrichment programmes to support student engagement e.g. anti-bullying, sport, art competitions, musicals, quizzes, themed weeks, Fun Friends, Intel Mini Scientists. We offer the students leadership opportunities eg Student Council, Green Schools Committee, Library Monitors. • reminding parents/guardians of the attendance requirements through Scéalta (school newsletter). Reminding children of the attendance requirements through school assemblies. • reporting annual records of attendance in students’ school reports. • preventing pupils leaving the school during school hours unless they are collected by a parent/guardian and signed out at reception.
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- informing parents that a **notification of unplanned absences** should be recorded by using the Aladdin app, by phone call/email to the school office, or by writing in the child's journal on return.
- **discouraging Parent(s)/Guardian(s) from taking holidays during school time.** The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are reminded that their child will miss schoolwork and that they have a legal duty to notify the principal about the reasons for their child's absence, Section 18 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. A Planned Absence Letter/Email will be required on the first day of absence.
- **publishing the calendar for the coming school year** annually in June and making it available on the school website. Next to the calendar online, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are reminded to try to plan family events around school closures, thus minimising the chances of non-attendance related to family holidays during the school term.
- **reporting monthly school attendance** percentages on Scéalta (school newsletter).
- **celebrating excellent attendance** in the school. At the end of the year, the principal presents certificates to those children who are absent for two or less days during the year.

Responding to Poor Attendance

- Each **class teacher will monitor** the attendance in their classes. Class teachers will consult with the Deputy Principal/Principal where there are concerns around absences.
- **A problem-solving framework/attendance plan** will be drawn up to address issues for individual children as necessary.
- When an individual child has **exceeded 20 days** absent by a large amount, the parents/guardians will be asked to discuss the matter with the Deputy Principal/ Principal.
- Where there are a **few members of the same family**, the parents will be asked to come and discuss how to improve the attendance with the Deputy Principal/Principal.
- The assistance of the **Education Welfare Officer** will be utilised. In accordance with Section 21 of the Act, the school informs the Educational Welfare Officer if a child is absent on more than 20 days in any school year, or if a child does not attend school on a regular basis.
- If the school is concerned about a student's attendance, an **Educational Welfare Referral** can be made to Tusla Education Support Service (TESS).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The children with much improved attendance will be recognised at the end of the year for improved attendance. This is to recognise a child who has improved his/her record from the previous year by achieving 19 or less days absent.
School roles in relation to attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leabhar Rolla: Class Teachers keep a daily record of pupils' attendance, request explanations for absences and record reasons for absences on Aladdin. Leabhar Tinrimh Laethúil: The Daily Attendance Record is updated on Aladdin automatically. It is monitored by the Deputy Principal. It is printed and signed by the principal at the end of each month. Absence Concerns: Teachers to consult with Deputy Principal/ Principal where there are concerns around absences. School Returns: School report all students who have been absent 20 days or more by submitting Student Absence Reports (SAR) twice each year. Designated Assistant Principal will submit the SAR for Period 2 (end-Dec) and Period 4 (end- June) to Tusla Education Support Service (TESS). Annual Attendance Report (AAR): Designated Assistant Principal will submit an Annual Attendance Report (AAR) at the end of the academic year which reports the total number of days lost through absence, to Tusla Education Support Service (TESS). Educational Welfare Referrals: The School Principal will make an Educational Welfare Referral to Tusla Education Support Services (TESS), where there is a concern in relation to the School attendance of a pupil and has exhausted in-school interventions. Reduced School Day Notifications: The School Principal/Deputy Principal will complete a formal RSD Notification, for any student to whom this applies to Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) via the Tusla Portal. Expulsions and suspension: The School attempts to minimise reduced timetables, suspension and expulsions. The School Principal/ Deputy Principal will inform Tusla Education Support Service (TESS), where: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There is an intention to expel a pupil and also will notify TESS when the expulsion has been confirmed. A student has been suspended for a period of six consecutive days. A student has reached a cumulative total of 20 school days absent.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents/guardians, students and staff have a collaborative role in improving attendance. This includes discussion about attendance at the Student Council and the Parents Association meetings. They

	<p>can help identify issues leading to poor attendance and select strategies to promote good attendance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are informed about the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance at the Junior Infant Induction Meeting. The Statement will be available on the school's website. • Educational Welfare Officer, of the Child and Family Agency - TUSLA • Primary Care Services • Transfer of students to and from other schools is done through POD. • When pupils transition to secondary school, their Personal Education Passport is forwarded from St. Mochta's NS.
How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed annually by the Board of Management • Teachers' vigilance • Assistant Principal with responsibility for Attendance will monitor progress through the Student Absence Reports.
Review process and date for review	September 2026
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	Approved: 28 th November 2023
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla	Submitted: December 2023