

Strategy Statement on Attendance
Ashbourne Community School
11th April 2011

Introduction:

What is the Statement of Strategy?

It is a statement of mission promoting attendance and participation by all students in the full life of the school.

It features the policies and practices of the school that promote an appreciation of learning and good attendance.

This document contains our current strategies to improve attendance and foster an appreciation of learning among students. It also sets out our plan to develop and improve our structures dealing with attendance.

Rationale:

Legislative context:

Education Welfare Act 2000 s22(1)... that schools prepare and submit to the Board a statement of the strategies and measures it proposes to adopt for the purposes of fostering an appreciation of learning among students attending that school and encouraging regular attendance at school on the part of such students....

'If students do not feel missed then there is a problem. They are tourists in the classroom not citizens of the classroom.' (Prof. Dolf Van Veen., in NEWB Conference 2008, School Attendance and Participation: What Works and Why? Report)

Aims:

To comply with legislation

To communicate our high expectations for good attendance

To develop ways of rewarding good attendance

To improve our procedures and data collection regarding attendance so that students at risk are identified quickly.

Link to mission statement:

1. Our school is a place where we foster such values as respect, inclusion and care as evident in our school policy and practice.
2. Ashbourne Community School is a partnership of students, staff, parents, Board of Management and our local community. We value the on-going input of all these partners in the life of the school.
3. We pursue academic excellence while recognising the diversity of our student body. Through a relevant curriculum, designed to meet the needs of all, we endeavour to help all students realise their potential.

4. Through positive staff and student relationships and a broad extra curricular programme, we aim to develop in each student a confident, healthy self-image and a sense of responsibility.
5. We recognise that each student's personal and spiritual growth is important.

The school has clear written policies and procedures that promote an appreciation of learning and good attendance

- Attendance (within the Code of Behaviour)
- Code of Behaviour
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Anti-Bullying
- Homework
- SPHE
- Special Needs
- Whole School Guidance
- Subject Plans

A whole school approach has been adopted in the development and communication of these policies and procedures.

A survey of Year Head and Deputy Principal Views yielded the following information about current provision:

What is already working well?	Evidence
Liaise with homes of at risk students →	DP (Junior school)/Year Hd & Tutor system
Promote extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. →	School teams/ school trips...
Promote good behaviour →	COB/Focus of the Week/ discipline Structure/ Positive Discipline
Simplify procedures for attendance and participation →	E Portal/ Text messaging/New COB/ Absence notes from parents/ Lates detention

Needs analysis:

What is not yet working well?	Evidence
Reward good attendance →	No system in place.
Identify developing attendance problems →	No system in place/ no clear roles & responsibilities in this area/ Has the system for punctuality been evaluated for effectiveness?
Network with other schools, local clubs, youth organisations and primary schools →	No system in place.

This information provides us with the information to develop 4 Action Plans:

ACTION PLAN 1

PRIORITY: Rewarding good Attendance				
What to we want to achieve? A reward system for good attendance				
TARGET:				
What needs to be done? (TASKS)	When? (TIMEFRAME)	Who? (REMITTS)	What resources? (RESOURCES)	Desired Outcomes? (SUCCESS CRITERIA)
Assemble relevant data on a target year group/ class/ individuals Decide what we mean by good attendance Develop a plan to reward good attendance			Using EPortal*	
AGREED MONITORING PROCEDURES :		AGREED EVALUATION PROCEDURES :		
We will record all decisions on the above tasks. We will adhere to our stated aims		We need to decide on the indicators of good practice in this area. We will meet our aims in this area		

ACTION PLAN 2

PRIORITY: Identifying Attendance Problems				
What to we want to achieve? Develop a formal system for identifying attendance problems				
TARGET:				
What needs to be done? (TASKS)	When? (TIMEFRAME)	Who? (REMITTS)	What resources? (RESOURCES)	Desired Outcomes? (SUCCESS CRITERIA)
<p>Assemble relevant data from the target year group/class/ Individuals/ whole school</p> <p>What pattern has developed over time?</p> <p>Establish clear roles and responsibilities. Establish clarity about who should act and when.</p> <p>Who will analyse the data school wide/ year group/ individual student?</p> <p>Evaluate the effectiveness of the current system for punctuality</p>			Using EPortal*	

<p>AGREED MONITORING PROCEDURES :</p> <p>We will record all decisions on the above tasks.</p>	<p>AGREED EVALUATION PROCEDURES :</p> <p>We need to decide on the indicators of good practice in this area.</p>
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ACTION PLAN 3

PRIORITY: Improve Community Networking and encourage full participation				
What to we want to achieve? Ways to improve community networking and recording the ways we encourage full participation				
TARGET:				
What needs to be done? (TASKS)	When? (TIMEFRAME)	Who? (REMITTS)	What resources? (RESOURCES)	Desired Outcomes? (SUCCESS CRITERIA)
<p>What level of contact currently exists with the community/ with local primary schools?</p> <p>List the ways we ensure fair access to all programmes and activities and how we prevent issues of gender bias, social background and academic attainment from inhibiting access</p>				

<p>AGREED MONITORING PROCEDURES :</p> <p>We will record all the above findings.</p>	<p>AGREED EVALUATION PROCEDURES :</p> <p>How will we evaluate the effectiveness of this statement?</p> <p>We need to decide on the indicators of good practice in this area.</p>
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ACTION PLAN 4

PRIORITY: Produce a written policy on Attendance and Punctuality				
What to we want to achieve? A Written policy on Attendance				
TARGET:				
What needs to be done? (TASKS)	When? (TIMEFRAME)	Who? (REMITTS)	What resources? (RESOURCES)	Desired Outcomes? (SUCCESS CRITERIA)
<p>Record current procedures and strategies on attendance and punctuality. Is there a need to devise positive strategies to promote attendance?</p> <p>Incorporate the development work set out above.</p> <p>Liaise with staff, students and parents on an attendance policy.</p> <p>Incorporate</p>			<p>Current strategies employed</p> <p>The above action plans</p>	

related policies. Produce a written policy on attendance				
AGREED MONITORING PROCEDURES : We will record all decisions on the tasks above.		AGREED EVALUATION PROCEDURES : Incorporate the views of all partners in a whole school approach.		

Next Steps:

1. Present this document to all partners.
2. Work through each of the 4 action plans
3. Record all strategies currently employed
4. Produce a policy on attendance

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management of Ashbourne Community School at its meeting on 9th June, 2011. (Ref. Meeting Nr. 179).

Date: _____

*Chairperson
 Board of Management
 Ashbourne Community School*