**Statement of Strategy for School Attendance**

**S.N. Muire**

Rationale

This statement was prepared in consultation with staff, parents and Board of Management in order to highlight strategies and measures in place in S.N. Muire to foster an appreciation of learning among pupils and encourage regular attendance at school.

Rewarding of students with good attendance.

Targeting good attendance is part of our school action plan. Students with good attendance may be rewarded in the following ways;

* Presenting certificates to pupils who have full attendance at end of year.
* Presenting certificates to pupils who have almost full attendance at end of year and have produced notes of absence for time missed.

Strategies for improving attendance.

The following strategies will be employed to improve attendance.

* The school will use regular newsletters to promote attendance and punctuality.
* The class teacher will encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
* The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable will be flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
* S.N. Muire will promote development of good self-esteem and self-worth in its pupils (see Code of Behaviour, Anti Bullying Policy and SPHE).
* Support for pupils who have special educational needs in accordance with DES guidelines.
* The class teacher will ensure that contact is made with parents / guardians in instances where absences are not explained. A standard note is used for this purpose (see Appendix 1).
* Attendance figures are monitored daily by the secretary.
* Secretary will bring details of continued absences and patterns of absences to attention of class teachers and Principal if necessary.
* Principal will inform TUSLA

## When a pupil has missed 20 or more days during course of year.

1. When pupil is suspended from school more than once under Code of Behaviour.

Identification of students at risk of developing school attendance problems.

The following strategies may be employed to identify students at risk of developing attendance problems.

* On transfer to S.N. Muire, attendance records will be sought from previous school.
* Class teachers will inform Principal of any concerns she / he may have regarding attendance of a pupil.
* Meet with parents of children with many unexplained absences.
* Develop / monitor attendance plan for pupils who have difficulty attending school on a regular basis.
* Contact with agencies who are involved with pupils.

Establishment of closer contact between home and school.

Closer home /school relations will be fostered through;

* Attendance at meetings (Parent Association, Parent / Teacher)
* Merit Awards
* Attendance at school events (Sports Day, Mass, Concerts, Grandparents Day, School Ceilí)
* Regular newsletters, texts to parents.
* Availability of teachers / Principal on yard at assembly time every morning.

Procedure for Notification of Student absences to the school.

* Parents should advise the school about absence in writing on the first day the child returns to school by note or journal.
* Students who do not arrive at school before 10.00 a.m. will be marked absent.
* If students need to leave school before end of day, a note should be sent to class teacher to indicate this (journal).
* Parent / Guardian must sign out student in Sign – Out book available in Secretary’s office before student leaves school.

Fostering Contacts

Contact with the following bodies will be fostered and developed in order to promote good attendance;

* TUSLA
* Other schools in parish
* NEPS

Encouraging full participation of students in school life

Insofar as is practicable, opportunities will be provided to encourage the full participation of students in school life;

* Attendance incentive scheme
* Concerts, Choir, Green Flag Environmental projects, Healthy School.
* Swimming, Gaelic / Rugby coaching.

Identification of aspects and strategies

The Board of Management, staff and whole school community will be mindful of;

* The identification of aspects of the operation and management of the school and the teaching of the curriculum that may contribute to problems in school attendance.
* Identification of strategies for the removal of those aspects wherever possible.
* Identification of strategies that will encourage more regular attendance.
* Engaging with school /parents if there is a problem with child’s attendance and implementing support plans to address the problem.
* The need to review this strategy into the future to accommodate the changing needs of the school.

End of Year

Each teacher will review attendance pattern of the class. Attendance of each pupil will form part of end of year report.

Success Criteria

* Improved attendance levels are measured through Leabhar Rolla and statistical returns.
* Positive parental feedback.

Review

This policy review is due annually.

Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Principal \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_