Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of School:  St. Attracta’s Community School.
Address:  Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo.
Roll Number:  91512Q

School’s Vision and Values in relation to Attendance

The mission of St. Attracta’s Community School is to educate our pupils in an atmosphere of mutual respect, integrity, sincerity, honesty and tolerance in partnership with the Board of Management, teachers, parents, ancillary staff and the wider community. Good attendance is promoted in our school by a culture of high expectations which encourage each pupil to take responsibility for his/her own learning and achieve full potential through regular attendance. The school has a separate Attendance Policy which sets out the ways in which pupils are encouraged to attend and actively participate in school life.

School’s Expectations around Attendance

Central to the school’s Attendance Policy is the maximisation of pupils’ attendance and participation. It is expected that pupils will attend regularly and that absences will occur only when necessary. Consistent attendance leads to continuity of knowledge which may enhance results, better career opportunities, better understanding of subject material and increased confidence and self-esteem.

Monitoring of Attendance

All pupils are registered on enrolment. Pupil attendance is recorded on the school’s electronic registration system, Vsware. Where relevant, parents/guardians may receive a text message when pupils are marked absent at roll call. Records of attendance are monitored by subject teachers and the year head who has the responsibility for intervening where patterns of absenteeism emerge and are not adequately explained. Particular notice is taken of ‘pupils at risk’ of truancy.

The School’s Approach to Attendance

The school's approach to promoting good attendance and participation among pupils is outlined in the School Attendance Policy and related school policies such as the Code of Positive Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, Pastoral Care Policy and Guidance Policy. The school provides a safe, warm and caring environment which promotes and maintains teaching and learning to the highest standards. A broad curriculum with a wide range of subjects to meet the needs and aptitudes of pupils. The school also provides a busy and varied extensive programme of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. The voluntary assistance of
teachers is central to these pursuits which benefit pupils in a variety of disciplines, promoting teamwork and self-confidence.

Weekly attendance figures are published by year group via the front office and circulated to senior management and year heads. This allows for targets to be set in terms of previous figures and in terms of national averages. This also allows for the identification of trends of absenteeism among certain year groups and at certain times of the year. Full attendance is recognised at the annual Awards Ceremony at the end of each academic year.

Where poor attendance is identified, the year head intervenes by contacting the parents/guardians concerned in an effort to redress the situation. Where this is unsuccessful, the school will refer the matter to TUSLA for the attention of the Educational Welfare Officer. All pupils (under 16 years of age) who have 20 or more absences are reported to TUSLA.

**School Roles in Relation to Attendance**

Pupil attendance is monitored by the subject teacher and year head. The year head intervenes where a poor attendance record becomes evident. Such intervention will involve speaking with the pupil and contacting the parents/guardians. Should unsatisfactory attendance persist, the school will inform TUSLA via the standard reporting form.

**Partnership Arrangements**

The school enjoys a positive relationship with parents/guardians, feeder primary schools, neighbouring post-primary schools, youth and community groups and other agencies. Parental involvement in various activities is encouraged and appreciated. Regular Information Evenings and Parent-Teacher Meetings are scheduled. The Transition Year and LCVP classes undertake Work Experience Modules which are supported annually by local businesses. Pupil achievements in various activities are recognised at the annual Awards Ceremony.

**How the Statement of Strategy will be Monitored**

The Statement of Strategy is monitored throughout the year by the Care Team. Attendance data is analysed and interventions put in place where necessary. Weekly attendance figures are provided to senior management and year heads.

**Review**

The Statement of Strategy will be periodically reviewed by the Board of Management.