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Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	St. Cómán's Wood Primary School
Address	Convent Rd., Roscommon
Roll Number	20498B
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our school aims to provide an environment that will encourage all children to attend punctually and regularly with the aim of achieving full attendance each year whenever possible. We endeavour to provide a safe, caring place where all children will be helped to reach their full potential.
The school's high expectations around attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We expect all staff to contribute to making our school a place that all children enjoy attending. We expect parents to ensure their child's full attendance wherever possible and to this end we encourage parents to take holidays outside the school term. We expect pupils to attend every day when possible. Children who are unwell are not expected to attend school. Children who maintain a perfect school attendance record each year are recognised at events at the end of the year.
How attendance will be monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance is monitored daily and recorded on Databiz system by class teacher. Notes are requested from parents explaining why their child was absent from school. These notes are kept in the pupil's file and retained yearly if necessary. Postholder checks main system regularly. Class teacher contacts parent if child reaches 10 days with unexplained absences. When a child reaches 15 absences a letter signed by Principal is sent to parents noting concerns of school in relation to attendance. Pupils who have been absent from school on 20 occasions are reported to TUSLA.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If trend continues a meeting with parent, NEWB attendance officer, postholder and principal is called and efforts are made to resolve difficulties. ▪ Teachers are made aware of any difficulties child is having in school and will help to ensure that school life is happy and rewarding for the child which will make child feel a valued member of the school community and encourage full attendance.
<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 ● Promoting good attendance ● Responding to poor attendance 	<p>The school will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The importance of school attendance is promoted throughout the school. ▪ Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently. ▪ Pupil attendance is recorded daily. ▪ Parents of children in 4th, 5th and 6th classes will be notified automatically by Databiz system when child is marked absent. This is in response to request from Parents' Association. Target - End of 2019 ▪ Parents or guardians are contacted when reasons for long absences are unknown or have not been communicated. ▪ School attendance statistics are reported as appropriate to the relevant authority. ▪ If a child is absent, when the child returns to school s/he should give/send a written note to the class teacher which contains the child's name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence. These notes will form a record which may be inspected by the Education Welfare Officer on a visit to the school. ▪ Parents of incoming Junior Infants are informed of the importance of full attendance and are asked to refrain, if at all possible, from taking holidays during school time ▪ Regular meetings between postholder and the Education Welfare Officer take place in the school during which at risk children are identified and the EWO often meets these parents to discuss concerns, first in the school and then in her own office if needed. ▪ The attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance, and the class teacher will notify the Principal or postholder of any concerns regarding the attendance of any child. ▪ Pupils with a poor attendance record will, insofar as is practicable, be supported in an effort to improve their attendance.
<p>School roles in relation to attendance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Principal, Deputy, and postholder have overall responsibility for school attendance. ▪ The Board of Management provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item at meetings on a regular basis.

- The Staff and Management of our school are committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance.
- Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded every morning.
- The class teacher, SNAs or any other staff are responsible for notifying Principal/postholder as soon as concerns arise.
- Teachers will support students on return when they have missed periods of schooling
- We will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circulars and The Education Welfare Act 2000.
- Principal and postholder will monitor and review Strategy regularly.
- We will initiate links with other schools and relevant bodies on school attendance issues when necessary.
- We will notify TUSLA's Educational Welfare Services and the relevant EWO of particular problems in relation to attendance and ensure support for the work of the EWO with students who have attendance difficulties.
- We will furnish pertinent attendance documentation to officers of relevant government departments.

Parents / Guardians

- Parents are obliged to explain their child's absences either by note or by phone call. We are looking at installing an unmanned telephone line which will allow parents to leave a message explaining absence. Target - End of 2018
- When the child returns to school after an absence, parents/guardians should give/send a written note to the class teacher which contains the child's name, the dates of absence and the reason for the absence.
- Parents are required to confirm illness / medical related absences with medical certs/appointment cards
- Teachers will record as unexplained on Databiz if an absence is not explained
- The principal cannot authorise a child's absence for holidays during school time.

Parents/guardians can promote good school attendance by

- ensuring regular and punctual school attendance
- showing an interest in their children's school day and their children's homework
- praising and encouraging their children's achievements
- discussing planned absences with the school
- refraining, if at all possible, from taking term-time holidays

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ contacting the school immediately, if they have concerns about absence or other related school matters ▪ working with the school and education welfare service to resolve any attendance problems ▪ notifying, in writing, the school if their child/children, are to be collected by someone not known to the teacher <p><u>Child Supports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We run an after school service from 2pm-3pm to facilitate one pickup time for parents who have children in both Junior and Senior classes. ▪ We also run after school activities including a homework club from 3pm-5pm Monday -Thursday(2nd-6th) to facilitate working parents. Some activities are available to 1st class children. Children with attendance issues are given the opportunity to attend for nominal fees. <p><u>Links with other Schools</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We have strong links with post-primary schools in our town and we work closely with these schools especially in the context of transition.
How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It will be monitored directly by the principal, deputy principal and postholder. ▪ Through regular monitoring of Databiz, liaising with class teachers and working with parents we aim to improve our attendance figures
Review process and date for review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will review regularly and as new initiatives are set up.
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	September 2018
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla	September 2018