



## Statement of Strategy for School Attendance in Garbally College.

Name of school	St Joseph's College, Garbally,
Address	Garbally Park, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
Roll Number	62880J
The school's vision and values in relation to attendance	<p>Mission Statement</p> <p>Ours is a Catholic boys school which aims to provide a holistic education for our students, enabling them to acquire the life skills necessary to live fulfilled lives. The qualities of respect, justice and compassion, which are rooted in Gospel values, should permeate all school policies.</p> <p>We believe that promoting healthy relationships and a spirit of collaboration within the school itself and with the wider community, are the best means of ensuring a good school.</p> <p>We recognise that each pupil entrusted to us is unique and has different gifts as well as different needs. Garbally College, Ballinasloe does not discriminate against its students on grounds of religion, disability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, membership of any minority or other group or organisation or on any grounds whatsoever.</p> <p>Educational Philosophy</p> <p>Garbally is a voluntary Catholic School under the trusteeship of the diocese of Clonfert. Founded in 1892, it</p>

	<p>has long and proud tradition as a seminary and a boarding school.</p> <p>It now begins a new and exciting journey as dayboys' school for Ballinasloe and its hinterland. Our school ethos is based on the conviction that living the Gospel values of love, freedom and justice enables all members of the school community to reach that fullness of life that Jesus promised: "I have come that you may have life and have it to the full" (Jn 10.10).</p> <p>In partnership with families and the wider community we strive to create a learning community that actively encourages excellence in teaching and learning. We strive to create a positive, orderly and caring environment, which will nurture the talents of all in our school community. We encourage our students to become knowledgeable, well behaved and open-minded individuals who can face the world of work and further education with confidence and competence.</p> <p>We endeavour to ensure that each student passing through the College will be enabled to develop positive and responsible attitudes towards themselves and others.</p>
<p>The school's high expectations around attendance</p>	<p>The school's mission statement states that its aim is 'to provide a holistic education for our students, enabling them to acquire the life skills necessary to live fulfilled lives'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- through the promotion and nurturing of a friendly, caring environment and by encouraging all students to realise their potential, it is hoped that students will attend regularly.</li> <li>- by our progressive Code of Behaviour that outlines a set of programmes, practices and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in their personal development, education and attendance and issued to all parents/guardians and published in students' Journal and available on our web site.</li> <li>- by rewarding good attendance, it is hoped to encourage all students to attend school regularly.</li> <li>- by emphasising to students and parents the importance of education in a child's life, it is hoped to encourage regular attendance.</li> <li>- by emphasising to students and parents the link between poor attendance and early school leaving, it is hoped to encourage regular attendance. This may be achieved</li> </ul>

through Annual Registration Assemblies, Year Group Assemblies, Parent/Teacher Meetings, Newsletters, individual and general meetings.

-by our Senior Mentoring team's involvement in assisting 1<sup>st</sup> Year students transition to Garbally College leading to regular attendance.

-by the presence of a Students' Council, giving all students a voice in the day to day running of the school.

– through monitoring and effective recording of non-attendance, to identify students who are likely to have school attendance problems and to offer support to both parents and students through teachers, Year Heads, Guidance and Care teams, Deputy Principal, Principal and Educational Welfare Officer.

– through the provision of a 'student driven curriculum' with a wide range of subjects, sampling of Option Subjects in 1<sup>st</sup> Year and Transition Year, to cater for the diverse needs of all our students.

– as part of our commitment to be an inclusive school, to not only respect difference but to provide the support services necessary for students with special educational needs. It is hoped that such provision will enable all students to feel part of the school community, thus encouraging them to attend regularly.

– by provision of an extensive extra- curricular and co-curricular programme, to encourage students to participate and, thus, attend school regularly.

– to identify whether a lack of engagement with the school curriculum is contributing to problems of non-attendance and to consider initiatives which might address this such as review of subject choices, reduced timetable, consultation with Guidance department.

– to liaise with local and feeder primary schools to identify potential attendance problems and to receive information and advice which might help to develop strategies to improve attendance when the child(ren) is in Garbally College.

– to use all the support agencies of the school where appropriate, including guidance, pastoral care, chaplaincy, to help resolve problems of non-attendance.

– to reflect the caring ethos of the school by dealing with all cases of regular non-attendance in a fair and sensitive

	manner.
How attendance will be monitored	<p>Use of VsWare to record attendance for each class per day.</p> <p>Close monitoring of absence and lateness.</p> <p>Parents advised to inform the school re absence before 8.50 each morning.</p> <p>Parents/guardians receive a text if their son is absent from school or class.</p> <p>Parents/guardian advised to use Students' Journal to record reasons for absence and submit to the Office.</p> <p>Teachers are asked to monitor and report patterns of absences/lateness to Year Heads and Deputy Principal.</p> <p>Parents/guardians are contacted phone/text/letter where students are presenting late on a regular.</p> <p>Persistent lateness can warrant a sanction in accordance with our Code of Behaviour.</p> <p>Regular meeting and reporting to the local Educational Welfare Officer.</p> <p>Contact with parents/guardians where persistent absence is noted.</p> <p>Parents/guardians invited to meet Year Heads/Pastoral Care team/Deputy Principal to discuss student's non-attendance.</p> <p>Home visits.</p>
<p>Summary of the main elements of the school's approach to attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Target setting and targets</li> <li>● The whole-school approach</li> <li>● Promoting good attendance</li> <li>● Responding to poor attendance</li> </ul>	<p>Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to see school attendance as important and conducive to personal and educational development.</p> <p>All staff promote, monitor and report on student attendance. Regular Year Head, Learning Support and Pastoral Care teams.</p> <p>Mentors – 1<sup>st</sup> Year/Senior Students links</p> <p>Students' Council.</p> <p>Breakfast Club and Homework Clubs.</p> <p>A wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities.</p> <p>Retreats, Educational trips, Team Competitions</p> <p>Wellbeing Week</p> <p>Monitoring of attendance.</p> <p>Weekly Year Head meeting with the Principal and Deputy Principal.</p> <p>Weekly Pastoral Care meetings.</p> <p>Weekly Learning Support team. Application to NEPS where applicable.</p> <p>Attendance Trackers.</p> <p>Contact with Parents/Guardians re absence/lateness</p>

	<p>through Texting Phone calls Invitation to Parents/guardians to meet with Year Heads/ Care Team members/ Guidance Counsellor/ Educational Welfare Officer/Deputy Principal/Principal. Regular meeting between the Deputy Principal and the local Educational Officer. Letters to Parents/guardians in accordance with the requirements of the Education Welfare Act (2000) Referral/s to Tusla were necessary. Regular meeting between the Principal, Deputy Principal and all the support agencies to address and resolve problems on non attendance</p>
School roles in relation to attendance	<p>Patron The Board of Management is accountable to the patron and must keep them informed of its decisions and proposals (Section 15(d) of Education (Welfare) Act 2000). In order to comply with its responsibilities, the Board should submit its Statement of Strategy to the patron.</p> <p>Board of Management The Board of Management has the overall responsibility for the preparation of the school's Statement of Strategy. As well as its oversight role in this work, the Board should play an active part in the work of reviewing and developing the Statement of Strategy. It is the responsibility of the Board to ensure that all of the measures required to promote and support attendance, in line with the School Attendance Guidelines, are in place and set out in the Statement of Strategy.</p> <p>School Principal Provides leadership for the creation of a school ethos and climate that is supportive of high levels of engagement and attendance; Leads on the review and implementation of the school's Attendance Strategy; Puts arrangements in place for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the school's Attendance Strategy; Provides opportunities for staff to engage actively with the development and monitoring of the school's Attendance Strategy; Initiates links with other schools and relevant bodies on school attendance issues; Notifies Tusla's Educational Welfare Services and the relevant EWO of particular problems in relation to attendance and ensures support for the work of the EWO with students who have chronic attendance difficulties;</p>

	<p>Furnishes pertinent attendance documentation to officers of relevant government departments.</p> <p>Teachers  Provide a classroom climate and classroom management that support participation and engagement, especially with students who may be at risk of poor attendance;  Actively use the school’s Attendance Strategy to promote attendance;  Set high expectations for punctuality and attendance in their classrooms;  Agree punctuality and attendance standards with students as part of classroom rules;  Set example by their own punctuality;  Ensure attendance data are recorded accurately and reviewed in line with school procedures;  Alert relevant staff if there are concerns about student absences;  Support the attendance plan for students who have difficulty in attending school on a regular basis;  Support students on return when they have missed periods of schooling.</p> <p>Parents  Set high standards for their child in relation to attendance and punctuality;  Engage with the school if there is a problem about their child’s attendance and support plans to address the problem;  Ensure that their child regularly attends and arrives at school on time;  Avoid taking their child out of class unless there is a serious reason;  Avoid taking their child on holidays during term time.</p> <p>Educational Welfare Officer  Can advise BOM/Principal/Deputy Principal about their responsibilities under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and support the school in implementing the school’s Statement of Strategy for School Attendance and monitoring students’ attendances.</p>
Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)	<p>Parents’ Association  Students’ Council  Primary School Links – 6<sup>th</sup> class 1<sup>st</sup> Year Transition Strategy  Youth Support Groups – Youth Work Ireland and the Junction Project. (In house programmes and Referrals)  Member of the Child and Family Support Network – Ballinasloe. (opens referral pathways to appropriate services in the local area)</p>
How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored	<p>The Board of Management and the principal will make arrangements to check how the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance is being implemented on an ongoing basis and how well it is working.</p>

	<p>By giving:  opportunities to staff to share experience about how the strategy is working and to review progress towards attendance targets;  The Board of Management regular updates on attendance with reference to the school's attendance targets;  Formal end-of-year review of the Statement of Strategy as part of preparation of the Board of Management's annual report on attendance (as per Section 21(6)(a)(b) of Education (Welfare) Act 2000) to Tusla's Educational Welfare Services and the Parent Association.</p>
Review process and date for review	September 2019
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla	