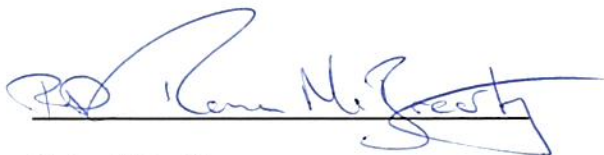


# **STATEMENT OF STRATEGY FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE 2023-2024**

## **Ardgillan College**


**Date for review: October 2024**



Colm Kilgallon

Chairperson

Board of Management



Date ratified by the Board of Management



An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

## Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

Name of school	Ardgillan College
Address	Castlelands, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin
Roll Number	76129H
The school's mission statement, vision and values in relation to attendance	<p>Ardgillan Community College promotes a happy and caring community where students are encouraged and supported to reach their full potential. Teamwork, respect and the pursuit of excellence form cornerstones of the college philosophy. The ethos of the college is based on respect, tolerance and understanding while appreciating the diversity of our changing world. The college aims to provide a broad education for all students and to nurture their individual abilities and talents.</p> <p>Ardgillan College's motto is 'Mol an Óige agus Tiocfaidh Sí' (Praise the young and they will flourish).</p> <p>Good attendance fosters self-confidence, promotes achievement and contributes to teamwork. It makes school a more positive learning experience and develops good habits for the future. It is the aim of all stakeholders at Ardgillan College that students have full attendance at school where possible.</p>

	<p>We also have the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That all of our students are happy while attending school.</li> <li>• That all students will have excellent attendance – (ideally 95%) - 160 days in the academic year.</li> <li>• That both students and parents of students with poor school attendance will feel supported by the school.</li> </ul>
The school's high expectations around attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The college endeavours to maximise attendance and participation. Students are expected to attend every day and to be absent only when it is unavoidable, in cases of genuine illness, family bereavement.</li> <li>• All absences will be explained by parents/guardians by logging student absences on VSWare.</li> <li>• Students are expected to be punctual in the mornings and for classes.</li> <li>• Students are asked to make medical/dental appointments outside of school time.</li> <li>• Students are rewarded for full attendance at our annual awards ceremony.</li> </ul>
How attendance will be monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A roll is taken by the Class Tutor every morning.</li> <li>• Attendance recorded on VSWare during Period 1.</li> <li>• Attendance taken on VSWare for each class period and Year Heads follow up if necessary.</li> <li>• Parents are able to log-in to VSWare and check their child's attendance as well as log expected absences.</li> <li>• There is a teacher waiting at the door for the full duration of period 1, taking names of students who arrive late in the morning.</li> <li>• For the rest of the day there is a record of students coming late to school in the main office. This is recorded on VSWare and followed up by Year Heads with phone calls home, meetings with parents etc. if</li> </ul>

	<p>necessary. Students must sign in with reception before proceeding to class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students remain in school during lunch which minimises absences in the afternoon.</li> <li>• Students who are absent or who leave school early must provide an explanatory note from parent/guardian via Vsware which is kept on file.</li> <li>• There is a record of students who leave early for any reason in the main office. They must also sign out in the main office before they leave the school. This is recorded on VSWare and followed up by Year Heads if it becomes a recurring problem.</li> <li>• Year Heads monitor attendance each day. It is college policy to write to parents where there is an absence of more than 3 days without a satisfactory explanation.</li> </ul>
<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><b>Target Setting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The college attendance rate for 2022/23 was 87%. This is below our target, however we made allowances for Covid-19 as we asked students to remain at home if they had any symptoms.</li> <li>• An attendance rate in 2023/24 of greater than 95% is targeted</li> </ul> <p><b>The whole-school approach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of good attendance is promoted throughout the school.</li> <li>• Teachers maintain accurate and live class rolls on VSware.</li> <li>• Teachers affirm the importance of attendance when the roll is being taken.</li> <li>• Teachers alert Year Heads and Management if they have concerns.</li> <li>• Care Team meetings regularly discuss attendance.</li> <li>• AP2 post holder is responsible for monitoring attendance and punctuality.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Late arrivals and early departures are recorded.</li> <li>• School reports to parents provide a record of attendance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Promoting good attendance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The college aims to provide a caring and happy environment where students feel safe and welcome.</li> <li>• Students receive merits and full attendance awards.</li> <li>• The college provides a very wide range of extra-curricular activities which encourage participation and attendance.</li> <li>• The provision of a modern, meaningful curriculum promotes attendance.</li> <li>• The college operates a student mentoring system and a comprehensive induction programme to encourage and support students transferring from primary school.</li> <li>• A good pastoral care system is in place.</li> <li>• The college has procedures in place to support students with special education needs.</li> <li>• Regular contact is made with parents in relation to attendance.</li> <li>• AP2 holder monitors attendance rates and promotes good attendance and checks in with Year Heads on poor attendance.</li> <li>• Participation in TUSLA Every School Day Counts Campaign</li> </ul> <p><b>Responding to poor attendance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early contact with parent involving text messages, phone calls, letters of concern and inviting parents into the college.</li> <li>• Early dialogue with the student.</li> <li>• If a student is late twice in a week, parents are contacted and poor timekeeping can also lead to detention.</li> <li>• Interventions such as attendance targets.</li> <li>• Pastoral care which can include one to one support.</li> <li>• SNA support for vulnerable students.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correspondence and meetings with EWO and Referral to TUSLA.</li> <li>• Re-engagement programmes are put into place to facilitate students who have been absent over a continuous period.</li> </ul>
School roles in relation to attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance is monitored by subject teachers, Class Tutors and Year Heads and AP2 post holder.</li> <li>• Absences are recorded digitally through parents/guardians logging into Vsware and recording them on the student's profile.</li> <li>• Referrals can be made to the Year Head when a pattern of poor attendance presents.</li> <li>• The Year Head liaises with students, parents, TUSLA and management to resolve attendance issues. Such interventions include speaking with the individual student, telephoning or writing to the parents, meetings and TUSLA reporting.</li> <li>• Links with primary schools and meetings with 6<sup>th</sup> Class teachers when poor attendance in Primary school can be flagged.</li> <li>• School secretary – recording of students arriving late/leaving early in the main office and entered on VSWare.</li> <li>• Year Heads – to impress upon students the importance of good school attendance, to monitor attendance and to follow up with home/agencies if and when necessary ie. flagged on VSWare.</li> <li>• School management – to acknowledge and reward excellent attendance at school assemblies and awards ceremonies.</li> </ul>
Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The college has a vibrant Parent Council.</li> <li>• A new Student Council is elected each year</li> <li>• The college maintains close links with the feeder primary schools and the Principal/Deputy Principals visit the schools a number of times each year.</li> <li>• The college has valuable links to the local community and regularly liaises with community organisations such as Jigsaw, Foróige, CAMHS, HSE, Balbriggan Family Centre, and Youthreach.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicating with our EWO and TUSLA as the need arises.</li> </ul>
How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strategy will be monitored on an ongoing basis throughout the school year by the Care Team.</li> <li>Attendance data will be analysed and shared with staff. The strategy will be reviewed and amended as needed.</li> <li>The statement will be monitored by staff and the Board of Management.</li> <li>Meetings between Year Heads and Tutors.</li> <li>Meetings with Student Council and Parent Council.</li> <li>Annual review of the strategy by the Board of Management looking at the statistics for the academic year and planning for the next academic year based on current figures.</li> </ul>
Review process and date for review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information and statistics on school attendance shared with Board of Management, Student Council and Parent Council.</li> <li>An annual review of this strategy and how it is working at the final Board of Management meeting of the year.</li> </ul>
Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management	
Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla	