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| **Statement of Strategy for School Attendance** |
| **Name of School** | Grange Post Primary School |
| **Address** | Grange, Co. Sligo |
| **Roll Number**  | 72330D |
| **The school’s vision and values in relation to attendance** | Every school is required by law to have a policy. The law states that students should attend school every day. We need to have a policy so that we have a standardised response to non-attendance. We wish to fulfil the aims of our mission statement and our policy aims to reduce absenteeism and to motivate students to take an active part in their education. Parents, students and staff are expected to co-operate in the successful implementation of this strategy.  |
| **The schools high expectation around attendance** | Grange Post Primary School encourages and expects a good attendance of its students and every effort will be made to make school a happy and welcoming place for students teachers and parents. Consistent attendance leads to-continuity of knowledge to enhance results and attainments- better career opportunities - better understanding of material being taught in class - increased confidence and self-esteem |
| **How attendance will be monitored** | A register of all students who have been admitted to the school will be maintainedA roll call is taken in each class group first thing each morningEach teacher also takes their own role at the beginning of individual classesIf a student arrives late/leaves early they sign in The Late Book in the main officeThe Tutor/ Deputy Principal/ Principal contacts home if a pattern of absence is causing concern |
| **Summary of the main elements of the schools approach to attendance:****Target setting and targets****The whole school approach****Promoting good attendance****Responding to poor attendance** | Whole school strategies in Grange Post Primary School to promote attendance may include these and/or others … * A welcoming friendly environment to be created and maintained through our positive code of behavior.
* Early intervention: We inform parents that a high standard of punctuality and attendance are expected
* Homework Club: Every support is given to pupils who have difficulty with homework so that this does not lead to truancy.
* Uniform: We implement a strict uniform policy to avoid financial or social labelling.
* Rewards: It is an integral part of the code of behaviour to reward rather sanction students for attendance. Students receive merits for good attendance and full attendance is a category of our end of year reward ceremony.
* Equality of Participation: Children are not excluded from participating in activities because of inability to pay e.g. school tours
* Equality issues: Every effort is made to make the same opportunities available to all the children in the school regardless of ability, background or social setting.
* Reports: A report of the days which the child has been absent is given to parents in the end of year school report
* Curriculum: Understanding and support are given to children who have difficulty with or who are reluctant to engage in certain aspects of the curriculum
* Parents: We communicate the requirements of schools and of parents under the Education Welfare Act to parents when they have enrolled their children and it is clearly outlined in the school’s code of behaviour
* Learning Needs: We are conscious of catering for the learning needs of “at risk” pupils. The curriculum on offer is child centered and it stems from the life experiences of the child and the child’s environment?
* Staff development issues – Teaching staff in the school are encouraged to and supported in continuous development of their professional skills particularly in the area of differentiation and inclusion.
* Positive awards system for behaviour and attendance
* Tutor system to support students on a day to day basis
* Student of the month award to reward positive engagement with school
* End of year award ceremony
* Parents receive a daily text alert for absenteeism where no note has been supplied or no contact made.
* Early identification of “at risk” students through the pastoral care and tutor system
* Establishment of a “Pastoral care team” for the purpose of identifying and supporting “at risk” students
* Parent information evening stressing the importance of attendance with first years
* VSWare class log for Parent Teacher Meetings
* Warning issued to parents when a child has exceeded 16 days re actions to take place at 20.
* Letter sent to parents after 20 days absent and report filed with TUSLA as appropriate.
* Structured accountable system in place for students signing out of school early, to reduce students missing class time unnecessarily
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| **School roles in relation to atttendance** | **Roles and responsibilities****Students:** It is the responsibility of each student to:* Bring a note explaining the reason for absences for every absence.
* Attend school every day unless there is a valid reason not to.
* Be punctual for all classes.
* Sign the late book, and sign “in” and/or “out” if leaving the school during the day.
* Extra-curricular: students need to excuse themselves from classes missed.
* Students need to ensure the accuracy of notes i.e. dates, reasons etc.

**Parents:** * Grange PPS affirms that parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school going age attend school regularly and in a timely manner; bearing in mind that all students are obliged to complete three years of post- primary education and remain in fulltime education up to their sixteenth birthday.
* Grange PPS affirms that parents/guardians have a social responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly regardless of age or status and they should ensure that their children complete their education.
* Grange PPS affirms that parents/guardians have a statutory obligation to notify the school principal or his/her nominee, in the form of a written explanation or a doctor's certificate, explaining the reason for each absence and date of absence. (Welfare Act 2000)
* Parents must make arrangements to collect their son/daughter from school when leaving early as students cannot leave unless collected except in special circumstances.

**Principal’s Responsibility*** The Principal must organize a register of all students who are present in the school at the start of each school year.
* The Principal must make arrangements to forward the details of all students on the school register on the 30th of September, to the department data base (esinet) as part of the October Returns.
* Grange PPS affirms that a student, who has not reached the age of 16 years or who has not completed three years of post-primary education, cannot be removed from the register, except
	+ For inter-school transfer, whereby all details regarding attendance and educational progress of the student must be issued to the new school.
	+ Where a student is removed from the school under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Section 20(4)
* Grange PPS affirms that the Principal shall, after admitting a student from another second level school notify the Principal of said school that he/she has registered said student.
* Grange PPS affirms that the Principal must maintain a record of attendance and non-attendance on each school day or part thereof of each student registered at the school, which specifies the fact of attendance or failure to attend and the reasons for such failure.
* Grange PPS affirms that the Principal must notify the Educational Welfare Board as follows:
	+ Where a student is suspended for a period of not less than 6 days.
	+ Where the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent (for whatever reason) during a school year exceeds 20 days.
* Where, for whatever reason, a student’s name is removed from the register in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Section 20(4) and under Section 3.2 above.
* Where in the opinion of the Principal, a student is not attending school regularly and the reasons for such non-attendance.  In addition, such information should be available to the Board of Management, as appropriate.
* Grange PPS affirms that the Principal may at his/her discretion, delegate duties regarding school attendance to other professionals working in the school.
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| **Partenership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups)** | **Parents**:* Consistent stream of information on attainment, attendance, behaviour and pastoral care issues are maintained with parents via VS ware and direct contact
* Strong links with Parents Association to maintain strong links with parents
* Parental involvement to support school policies are strongly encouraged e.g. parent members on healthy eating team, parent members on health and safety team etc.
* Policy development and review includes input from parents via the Parents Association as part of the collaborative process
* We include a variety of Parent Information Evenings over the school year e.g. 1st Year Information parents evening, Transition Year/ LCVP information, CAO evening etc. to enhance the role of parents in the child’s education
* Direct links between Parents Association the BOM and the student council are facilitated on an ongoing basis
* A newsletter will be produced twice a year (at Christmas and Summer) to showcase and celebrate school events and achievements and to promote school goals
* There is a defined system in place to meet with parents where an issue has emerged in relation to a child’s attendance, attainment or progression as part of the schools Code of Behaviour.

**Students:**As described above students are central partners in this process on an on-going basis.* Student opinion and attitudes are included for policy development and school planning via the student council.

**Other schools*** Constant links with the primary schools eg. Annual Dodge ball tournament where all feeder primary schools brought together for an afternoon and a perpetual trophy is presented to one school each year.
* Annual visits by principal to all feeder primary schools
* Annual visit by teachers and former students to present information on enrolment to 6th class students
* Specific links with SEN team and primary school teachers where special needs are evident
* Invitations issued to primary schools to attend school shows and activities in the course of the year
* Direct consistent links fostered between our school and the primary school closest to us on an ongoing basis, particularly through TY Modules and Programmes
* Where students are transferring to or from other schools we liaise directly with those schools to gain or provide information to aid student attendance
* Where students are transitioning out to alternative schools eg. Youth reach or special schools we put in place a transition programme to ease the process

**Other Organisations:*** We have direct links with the local youth agencies and encourage our students to become involved in their programmes and activities e.g. Foroige, CRIB Sligo
* Our student council are facilitated in linking in with Students Councils from other schools and national council and the National Youth Association annually
* We link in with support organisations i.e. Downs Syndrome Society, Autism Support Service, NEPS, Dyslexic Association to support our students with Special Educational Needs
* We maintain constant positive links with our local Gardaí and regularly bring in the Garda Youth Liaison Officer for talks on various issues eg internet safety and firework dangers
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| **How the statement of strategy will be monitored*** **How will we determine the success of this statement?**
* **Who is responsible for evaluating its success and when will this evaluation take place.**
* **Who will coordinate and monitor the implementation of the strategies in this statement?**
 | Each participant outlined above (Principal/ Deputy Principal, Tutors, Class Teachers, Parents, Student) has responsibility to carry out their assigned roles as described.The Deputy Principal has responsibility to co-ordinate and monitor the Attendance Strategy and present data as outlined below to the management team to facilitate annual purposes.The school may request advice from the NEWB officer or from the NEPS psychologist if deemed appropriate The Strategy will be evaluated annually by the Management Team (Principal/ Deputy Principal/ Assistant Principals), to establish its success in achieving the following indicators of the success: * Increase in attendance levels. Assess by checking attendacne rolls, registers etc
* Positive feedback from teachers, parents, pupils. Assess via survey
* Improvement in individual cases where issues had been present. Assess via liaison with class tutors.
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| **Review process and date for review** | Next review of Policy due: May 2017 |
| **Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the board of Managemnet**  |  |
| **Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla** |  |