

2023/24

Statement of Strategy for School Attendance



Beaufort College

For review Sept 2024

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Beaufort College Mission Statement

Beaufort College is committed to quality education. It seeks to enrich students' lives and empower them for life's challenges. This is done in a caring atmosphere of good order and discipline and in partnership with parents.

Knowledge begins with a Question

Developing the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance

The best gift that a child can receive is the opportunity to fulfil his or her potential. Each day should be a day of wonder and of learning for every child.

Education, too, plays an important part in ensuring that children grow to independence and that they can benefit from life's opportunities. In Ireland education is a right that is prescribed and protected in Article 42 of Bunreacht na hÉireann. To parents falls the decision on how best to educate their child and for most parents their choice is to have their child educated within the formal school system.

With regard to education, The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out a number of statements including a state's role to 'take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates'. (TUSLA, 2015)

Understanding School Attendance

Research indicates that several factors influence attendance including school factors, personal attitudes among students and socio-economic & family factors. A closer look at school factors highlights the need for strong student-teacher relationships, high teacher expectations, high quality teaching and learning, a positive school culture encompassing school & classroom climate and a responsive curriculum organised on a mixed ability rather than a streamed basis.

Whole School Approach to Promoting Attendance

Beaufort College promotes excellent student attendance through:

- Assigning attendance coordination as a core responsibility for a member of the Assistant Principal 1 Team.
- Investment in ICT solutions (ANSEO) to aid accurate recording and monitoring of attendance data.
- Developing strong partnership with parents (HSCL programme) and students (Student Council)
- Implementing an intervention-based code of behaviour.
- Offering a responsive, differentiated curriculum.
- Regular engagement in staff CPD.
- Developing, affecting & reviewing robust policies in areas such as anti-bullying, literacy, numeracy and homework.

- Positive behaviour strategies such as termly positive assemblies where full/excellent/good attendance is recognised and rewarded.

Pastoral care supports to promote school attendance in Beaufort College include:

- Participation in the Home School Community Liaison programme (HSCL)
- Participation in the School Completion Programme (SCP)
- Care Team
- Student Support Team (Faoi Bhláth)
- Guidance Department
- Attendance Team
- Breakfast Club
- School Meals
- Homework Club
- School Transport

Promoting good school attendance

Beaufort College seeks to employ a wide variety of strategies to promote good school attendance such as:

- Raising attendance awareness among all education partners
- Setting and communicating clear, high expectations to all education partners
- Investing in school organisation and pastoral support programmes to enhance attendance reward systems
- Building community support for attendance through links with other schools and community groups

Our expectations around attendance

- All students attend school each school day, for the full day, unless there is a valid reason.
- Students are punctual in attending school and class.
- Student absence is communicated to Beaufort College using the pink section of the school journal (an email to the year head or Office of Beaufort College beaufortcollege@imetb.ie is accepted).
- Students adhere to the “arriving late” and “leaving early” procedures outlined below.
- Students understand why good attendance and punctuality are important through active engagement with the lessons delivered each term on this topic.
- Beaufort College maintains both as an organisation and individually as professionals, accurate records of student daily and class attendance.
- School staff model excellent attendance and punctuality to students in Beaufort College.
- Parents/Guardians understand and support Beaufort College’s emphasis on good attendance and are encouraged to discuss any difficulties around non-attendance and/or lateness so that support and possible solutions may be investigated.

Attendance Support for All

Parent/Student access to ePortal

Parents and students are provided with an ePortal log-in. Full attendance data by day and by class period is available to parents and students allowing monitoring and review of attendance and absences.

Monitoring attendance

- Roll call is recorded daily through the ANSEO student scan-in system. **Every** student is required to scan-in on arrival to school every day; arrivals after 8.42 AM are recorded as late. Students who lose their attendance card or who do not have it in school must report to Reception for manual scan-in and card re-ordering, where applicable.
- **Students who do not follow the scan-in procedures are automatically marked absent.** All absences are reported to TUSLA in line with DES requirements.
- All Teachers mark registration on ePortal for each class period; any student arriving late to class is recorded as L (late) rather than P (present).
- Parents are required to explain all student absence with a note in the student journal (pink section); explained student absences are recorded on Facility as “authorised”.
- Beaufort College is obliged to return attendance data on a bi-yearly basis. Authorised absences along with unauthorised absences and absences resulting from suspension are included in this data.

Attendance/Punctuality Awareness Alert

- Any student who does not scan into the ANSEO system on arrival to school is recorded as **Absent** and their parent/guardian will receive an attendance awareness alert at 9.30 AM.
- Similarly, if a student scans into the ANSEO system after 8.42 AM they are recorded as **Late** and the parent/guardian will receive a text message alerting them to this.

Parent/Guardian(s) who are unaware of the reason for the absence/late must contact the Year Head and school office without delay.

Leaving early Procedures

- Parents/Guardians are required to write an explanatory note in the student learning journal stating the reason for the absence; the student presents the note to one of the Deputy Principal’s or to the Principal (before 8.42 AM) for authorisation; student goes to reception for collection by parent/guardian at the appointed time and scan out.

Illness

- Any student feeling unwell during the day must present to one of the Deputy Principal’s or to the Principal for a signed permission slip which is presented in

reception. Reception will contact home requesting that the student is collected. All students feeling unwell may leave the school campus in the company of a parent/guardian or nominated adult **only**.

Attending Appointments (see leaving early procedures)

- Junior students must be collected from reception by a Parent/Guardian or nominated adult to attend an appointment.
- Senior students may leave the school campus for appointments unaccompanied with Parent/Guardian permission.

Arriving Late Procedures

- Students arriving late to school are required to scan in at the ANSEO station in reception.
- Students receive a LATE stamp on the relevant day in their school journal which must be presented on admission to their next class, punctuality is monitored daily by the Year Head.
- If a student does not have their attendance card in school, they must present to reception for manual scan in. **Students who do not scan in are automatically recorded as absent by the system.**

Lost attendance cards

- Lost attendance cards must be notified immediately to the tutor/year head who will request a replacement card on receipt of the replacement card payment (via WAY2PAY). The student must present to reception for manual scan every day until the new card is received.

Attendance Lesson

- A whole school attendance lesson as devised by the Attendance Team is delivered to all students at the beginning of each term. It outlines the importance of attendance & punctuality.
- A parent/guardian version is communicated through HSCL.

Staff CPD - ePortal for checking attendance

Whole Staff CPD is undertaken to support staff in monitoring student attendance.

- ePortal
- ANSEO

Celebration of Full/Excellent/Good Attendance (100%, 97% or greater, 95% respectively)

Individual students across each year group have full/excellent/good attendance recognised and rewarded at year-group Positive Assembly's (See appendix 1).

Attendance Support for Some/Few

Beaufort College uses a multifaceted approach to improving school attendance for those students who are identified as requiring support. This approach includes:

- Using internal school processes to provide individualised supports as previously outlined.
- Using school-led multi-agency support process e.g. the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), the National Behavioural Support Service (NBSS) and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE).
- Using the Education Welfare Officer-led process - referral to Tusla's educational welfare service (EWS).

0-5 Day Absent (unexplained)

- Students who record 5 days of unexplained absences will be contacted by a member of the Year Group pastoral care team as a wellbeing check. TUSLA attendance advice will issue by text.
- Parent/Guardians are reminded of their obligation to inform the school if their children will be absent from school on a school day and the reason for the absence under the Education Welfare Act 2000. The explanation should be communicated through a note in the pink section of the student journal.

10-14 Days Absent (explained & unexplained)

- Parent/Guardian receive a **10-Day Attendance Alert letter** (see Appendix 2), complete with an infographic explaining Why Attendance Matters (see appendix 3).

15-19 Days Absent (explained & unexplained)

- Parent/Guardian receive the **15-Day Attendance Alert letter** by **ordinary post** (see Appendix 4).
- The Assistant Principal 1 with responsibility for attendance in consultation with the relevant Year Head, SCP, HSCL and the Attendance Team will commence completion of the Education Welfare Services (EWS) Pre-Referral checklist as a precursor to referring a student to the EWS.

20 - 29 Days Absent (explained & unexplained)

- Parent/Guardian receive the **20-Day Attendance Alert letter** by **ordinary post** (see Appendix 5).
- Student may be referred to the EWS.
- The Education Welfare Officer on behalf of the EWS may hold an early intervention attendance clinic for Parent/Guardian and students to resolve the attendance issues collaboratively.

30 or more Days Absent (explained & unexplained)

- Students together with their parent/guardian are invited to attend an attendance clinic with key in-school support staff.

Appendix 1 – Excellent Attendance Certificate (sample)



Appendix 2 – 10-Day Attendance Alert

Appendix 2 – 10-Day Attendance Alert



Beaufort College

Coláiste Beaufort
Trim Road, Navan, Co Meath
T: 046 9028915
W: www.beaufortcollege.ie
E: beaufortcollege@lmetb.ie
: @beaufortcollege

10-DAY ATTENDANCE ALERT

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Beaufort College's attendance records indicate that your child has now missed ten or more days of school. This means that they have missed a minimum of 84 classes.

Daily attendance in school is the single biggest influence on your child's academic achievement. Attendance also plays an important role in helping your child to feel part of their school community and in developing strong friendships. Parents/Guardians show children that they value education by supporting them in attending school each day.

Authorised absences (illness, special circumstances, dental or medical appointments) must be communicated to the school office/Year Head by means of a note in the journal or emailing the Year Head/school office.

Please note that unauthorised absences including unexplained absences, holidays and lateness may have a significant impact on your child's academic progress. Beaufort College does not endorse holidays during term time.

After twenty days' absence, the school is obliged to notify the Educational Welfare Service.

This reminder is one of a series of attendance awareness initiatives, it refers to both explained and unexplained absences. If you would like to discuss your child's attendance, please feel free to contact me through the school phone number.


Yours sincerely,



Mr. Ken Flynn

WHY ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Being in school means.....

	Part of a community		Working on academic achievement
	Learning new skills		Making friends & having fun
	Home/school partnership		Creating healthy habits for life
	Building up qualifications		Building confidence & self esteem

Get set with good habits for life!!

At Beaufort College we consider excellent attendance to be over 97%.

	0-5 Days Absent	97% attendance or greater Excellent Keep it Up
	6-10 Days Absent	94% - 97% attendance Good Attendance
	11-15 Days Absent	91% - 94% attendance Improvement Required
	16-20 Days Absent	88% - 91% attendance Urgent Action Required
	20+ Days Absent	Less than 88% attendance Chronic Absence

 **Notify the school by using the journal or emailing the office/Year Head**

 **Unauthorised/unexplained absences will affect your child's academic progress**

Appendix 4 – 15-Day Attendance Alert



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 : @beaufortcollege

15-DAY ATTENDANCE ALERT

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This is to let you know that your child has now missed **15 or more days of school**. This means that they have missed a minimum of **126 classes**.

The pace and speed of learning at second level means that not only is your child missing out on learning, but they are then in a position of trying to “catch up” on topics that are complex and require explanation in the classroom environment.

Daily attendance in school is the single biggest influence on your child’s academic achievement. Attendance also plays an important role in helping your child to feel part of their school community and in developing strong friendships. Parents/Guardians show children that they value education by supporting them in attending school each day.

Authorised absences (illness, special circumstances, dental or medical appointments) must be communicated to the school office/Year Head by means of a note in the journal or emailing the Year Head or school office. Please note that unauthorised absences including unexplained absences, holidays and lateness may have a significant impact on your child’s academic progress. Beaufort College does not endorse holidays during term time.

Beaufort College is obliged to notify absences over 20 days to the Educational Welfare Service. Please contact the school to discuss the attendance supports that are available.

- Home School Community Liaison Officer Ms. A Moran (086) 0235401
- School Completion Officer Ms. J D’Arcy (046) 9028915

This reminder is one of a series of attendance awareness initiatives, it refers to all absences, both explained and unexplained.

Yours sincerely,




Mr. Ken Flynn

Appendix 5 – 20-Day Attendance Alert



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 : @beaufortcollege

20-DAY ATTENDANCE ALERT

Dear Parent/Guardian,

You child has now missed **20 or more days of school**. This means that they have missed a minimum of **168 classes**.

Research shows that missing 10 percent of the school year, or about 17 days negatively affects a student's academic performance. That's just two days a month and is called chronic absence.

Previous communications explained that the pace and speed of learning at second level means that not only is your child missing out on learning, but they are then in a position of trying to “catch up” on topics that are complex and require explanation in the classroom environment.

Daily attendance in school is the single biggest influence on your child's academic achievement. Attendance also plays an important role in helping your child to feel part of their school community and in developing strong friendships. Parents/Guardians show children that they value education by supporting them in attending school each day.

Beaufort College is obliged to notify absences over 20 days to the Educational Welfare Service. Please contact the school to discuss the attendance supports that are available.

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Yours sincerely,



Mr. Ken Flynn