



Corridor Echoes

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Attendance

Regular school attendance is important to provide our children and young people with a solid foundation for life. When our children miss school, they miss out – on learning, social development and valuable time with their friends and teachers.

Children and young people in communities across Ireland are missing a concerning number of school days each year due to casual non-attendance – a day (or two, or three) missed here and there. These days add up quickly. As a result of casual non-attendance there is a real risk that many of our children and young people will not achieve their full potential from education.

In fact, **1 in 5 students in primary and post-primary schools are missing a month or more of their school year.** When a child or young person *can* go to school, they **should** go to school. Every school day is a new day and a new opportunity for everyone to actively encourage school attendance.

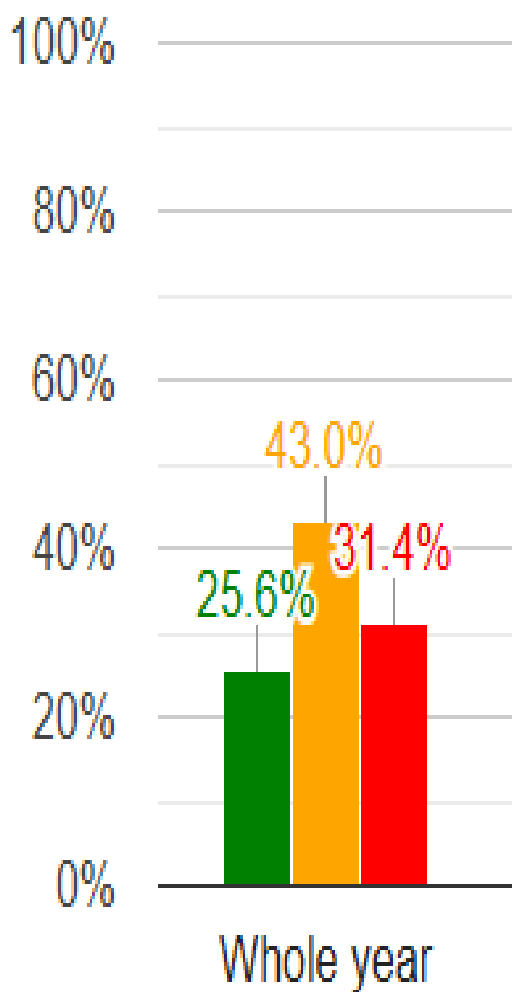
Attendance Drive

Next week, from the 29/09/25 to 03/10/25 we will be running an attendance drive across the school in order to promote good attendance and also raise awareness around the impact of poor attendance.

Classes are participating in poster competitions and there will be a prize for the class with the best attendance each day next week. At the end of the week we will look at the attendance for each class for the entire week and the group with the highest percentage will have a no uniform day the following week. What are we asking parents to do? Please send your child to school every day they are well enough to be here.

Everyday counts!

- Missing one day of school per week results in over one month of school missed per year, or 181 hours of learning!
- One day missed per fortnight is the same as 3.5 weeks of school or 99 hours of learning!



Left: Attendance Statistics for the 2024/25 school year in Sty. Mary's BNS

- ⇒ 25.6% of our pupils (54 children) were in Tier 1 (green column) which means they attended for at least 95% of the time. **At least 80% of pupils should be in this category.**
- ⇒ 43% of our pupils (91 children) were in Tier 2 (orange column) which means they attended less than 95% but more than 90% of the time. This means that **43% of our pupils are at risk of chronic absenteeism.** Our percentage should be less than 15%.
- ⇒ 31.4% of our pupils (67 children) were in Tier 3 (red column) which means they attended school less than 90% of the time. This puts this group of pupils in the Chronic Absenteeism category. This percentage should be no more than 5% in our school. Therefore we have 6 times more pupils falling into the chronic absenteeism category.

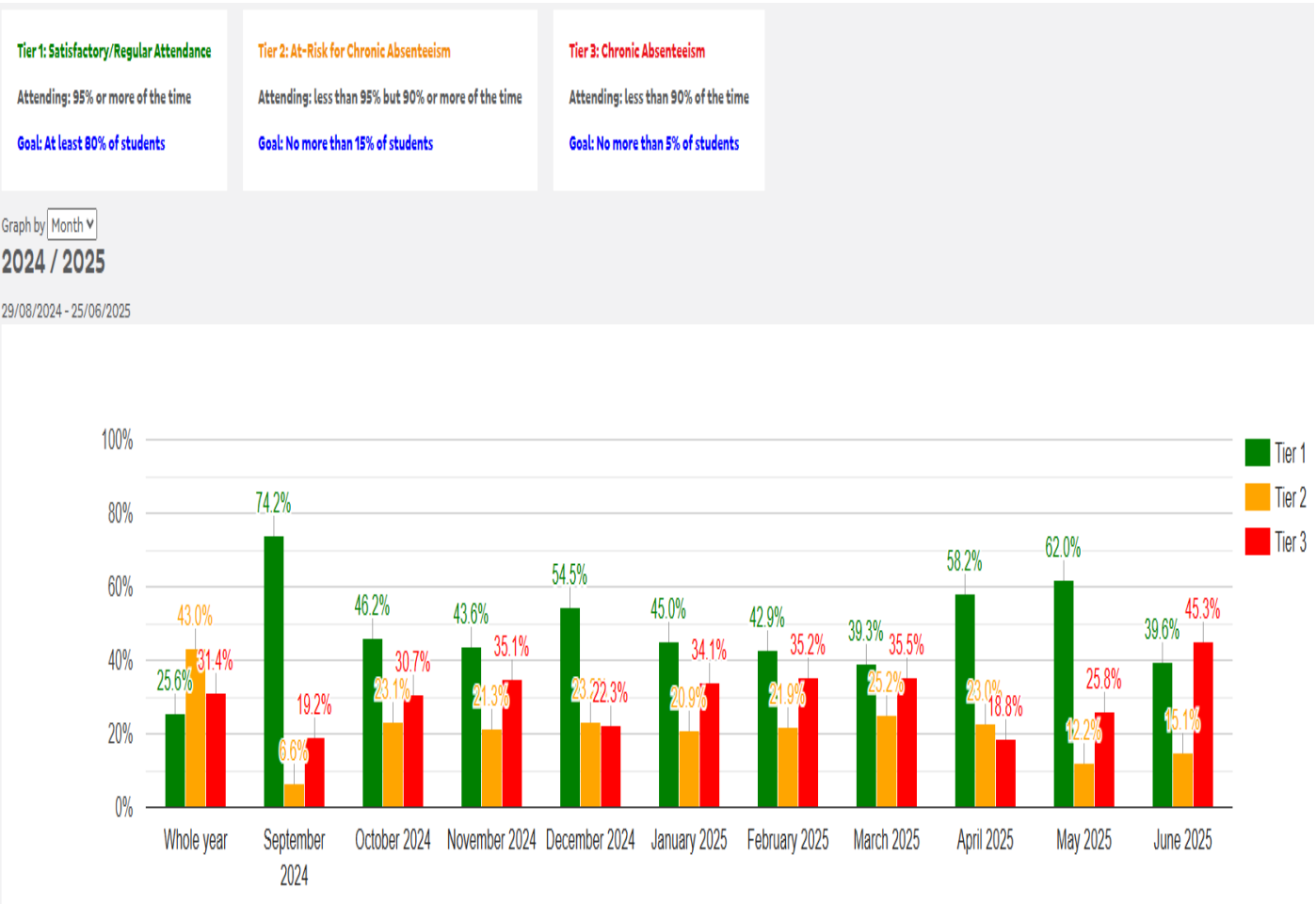
When to send your child to school

- Parent/guardian is sick or hospitalised
- Child refuses to go to school
- Cold symptoms e.g., runny nose
- Head lice that have been treated
- Strains, sprains and pains
- Chronic disease or illness (speak with school about condition and make a plan)

Importance of good attendance

Good attendance in school is known to help students to:

- develop knowledge, skills and talents
- become more confident
- make and maintain friendships
- increase career prospects.



In the above chart you can see our attendance data from last year (2024/25). Ideally, we should see 95% of our pupils in the green column for the whole year (see left hand side of graph). The above data was discussed with pupils in middle and senior classes. Many pupils highlighted the month of June as it was one of the months with the lowest attendance. Holidays were noted as the main reason. We would like to draw parents attention to our school calendar where we are closed for a full week in June. For families hoping to go away in June this year we'd encourage them to consider using the week off in June as opposed to a week the school is open.

When you look at the above bar chart, it is evident that there was a high level of absenteeism with almost 75% of our pupils falling into the *chronic absenteeism* category (red column) or the *being at risk of chronic absenteeism* category (orange column).

What do we want to achieve?

We want to get to a point where at least 80% of our pupils are in Tier 1 which would mean their attendance is satisfactory. Currently, we only have 25.6% of pupils in this category. We are aiming to increase the number of pupils in Tier 1 (green column) from 25.6% to at least 30% by the end of the year.

How will we do this?

We have an attendance team in school; we incentivise good attendance through poster competitions, attendance drives, attendance lotto each week; we share the impact of absenteeism on pupil outcomes with parents and pupils; we have an Attendance Policy and Statement of Strategy on School Attendance etc. But ultimately, these targets can only be achieved with the help of parents.

WHAT HELPS IF YOU ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY GETTING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL

- Nip it in bud early.
- Be tough and don't give up.
- Reach out for help. Talk to the school.
- Every child is different: Find out the cause.
- Some children want to leave school early but don't give them an option. Stick it out!
- Know how many days your child has missed.

Illness

If your child is feeling unwell and you are unsure whether or not to send them to school, please visit the [HSE website](#) where they have specific advice for parents around when it is OK to send your child to school and when they should remain at home. Remember, a child missing just 2 days of school per month will end up missing 20 days or a month of school each year. Where this happens each year the child will end up missing one full year of school by the time they finish in 6th class.

Remember, it's OK to send your child to school if they have a runny nose, a minor cough or a mild sore throat.

EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS TIPS FOR PARENTS BY PARENTS

- Don't give in! Follow through.
- Be organised! Get everything ready from the night before. Have their coats and bags at the door, their lunch made and their clothes on the banisters.
- Treat it like a military operation in the morning!
- Don't give them a choice to stay at home.
- Give yourself 15 minutes before the kids get up.
- No TV, iPad or phones allowed in the morning.
- Keep talking about the importance of school.
- Early to bed the night before school, especially after holidays.
- Come back to school after doctor/ dentist appointments.
- Know how many days your child has missed in school.