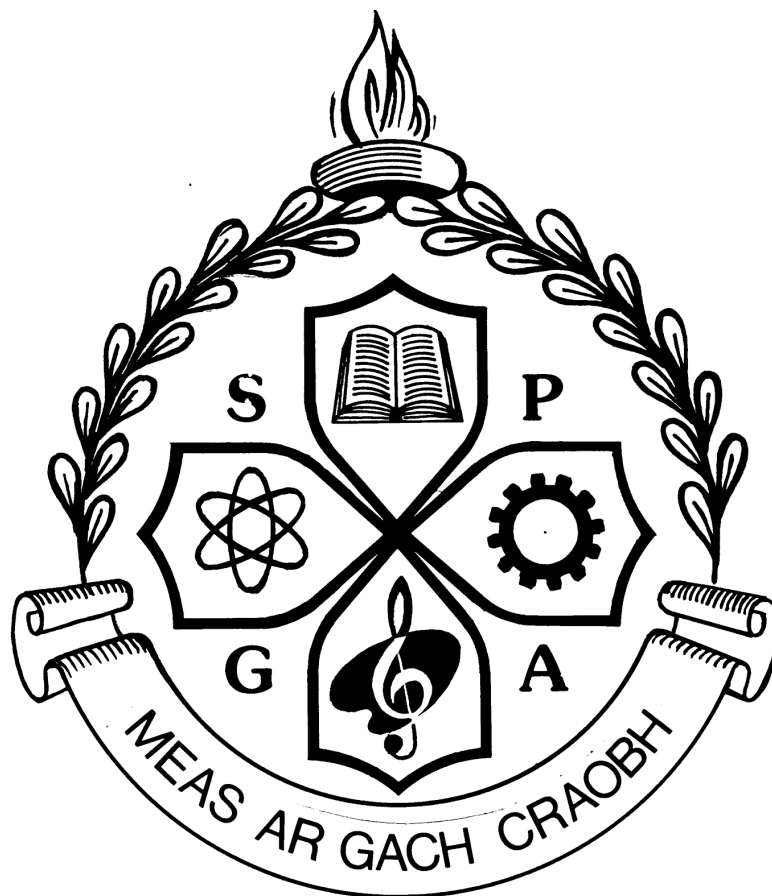


ATTENDANCE POLICY



School Student Attendance Policy

- 1. Title of Policy** Attendance Policy

- 2. Scope**
Board of Management
Teachers
Students
Parents

- 3. Relationship to School's Mission/Vision/ Aims**
 - To facilitate the creative, intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural development of our students
 - To develop in students good patterns of attendance and punctuality and to extend these good patterns into students' lives outside of school

- 4. Rationale:**
 - To facilitate continuity and progression in the learning process
 - To ensure that students benefit fully from opportunities that this school offers them
 - To ensure all parents/guardians, students and teachers are aware of their responsibilities to ensure high levels of attendance
 - To ensure the school fulfils its legal obligations as laid down by the Education (Welfare) Act and other relevant acts.
 - To provide a context for establishing good practice in matters relating to raising standards and ensuring regular school attendance as laid down by the Education (Welfare) Act and the school's Mission Statement.

- 5. Goals:**

- That students learn to take responsibility for their own punctuality and attendance
- That parents appreciate the vital role they play in their child's school attendance
- That success in school is experienced by the continuous and consistent classroom instructional experience
- That the student develops self-discipline and good work habits
- That there would be a 5% improvement on 05/06 attendance figures

6. Policy Content:

- Good attendance and punctuality is an integral part of the learning process
- Punctuality is a crucial personal characteristic valued by the school and employers alike
- Good record of attendance and punctuality is a crucial element for a student to succeed in the school environment.
- Good attendance is a whole school matter and as such is of primary concern to teaching staff, parents and pupils, support staff, agencies such as the Educational Welfare Office, School Completion Programme and learning support staff
- Good attendance ensures that individuals take full advantage of all the offered educational opportunities
- Good attendance encourages a student to establish regular and maintained peer group friendships
- Non-attendance leads to a disruption of the learning process
- Unauthorised absence from school will be dealt with through the Code of Behaviour

7. Roles and Responsibilities:

School

- To keep accurate records of attendance and punctuality
- To ensure class lists are accurate
- To record notes of explanation and reasons for absences
- To ensure the school register of all students attending the school is maintained
- To notify the EWO in writing where:

The student is suspended for a period of not less than six days

The aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from the school during the school year is not less than twenty

The Principal for whatever reason removes a student's name from the register

A student is, in the opinion of the Principal, not attending school regularly

- In consultation with teachers, students and parents to devise strategies and measures for the purpose of fostering an appreciation of learning among students attending the school and encouraging regular attendance
- To analyse the rates of absenteeism and any identifiable trends
- To submit to NEWB a summary report on student absences on five occasions during each school year
- To keep in the office a record of all students on school trips
- To maintain in the office a book that records the time a student leaves the school during the school day
- To ensure that students on extra curricular outings sign the "out of school" book that will be kept in the Main Office. The teacher involved will collect the book from the office and return when signed by students.

Year Tutor

- To actively promote good attendance and punctuality during assemblies
- To monitor attendance and punctuality in the year group
- To discuss the list of absences at the weekly meetings
- To inform parents of students on attendance and poor punctuality
- To work in partnership with students and parents in order to identify and address problems which may be affecting a student's attendance or punctuality
- To carry out regular spot checks of the year group
- To develop in consultation with class teachers and students appropriate awards to improve attendance etc.

Subject Teacher

- To encourage good attendance
- To provide a welcoming atmosphere in the classroom
- To provide a sympathetic response to student's concerns
- To maintain an accurate daily roll call for each class

- To ensure class lists are accurate and up to date
- To complete the roll for Period 1 and Period 7 each day using the e-portal system and where it is not possible to use the e-portal system to record absences, an absence list will be sent to the office (i.e. classes in the cafeteria)
- To record reasons for non-attendance using the e-portal system
- To work in partnership with the Year Tutor, parents and students in order to identify and address problems which may be affecting attendance and punctuality
- To place any collected absence notes in the Year Tutor's pigeon holes in the staffroom

Student

- To attend school and all their classes regularly and punctually
- When absent, to bring in a written explanation signed and dated by parent/guardian on the day of return to school
- To give prior notification of appointments or family circumstances to the Year Tutor, Deputy Principal or Principal
- To get themselves signed in at the office if a student arrives after the official roll is taken in Period 1 as otherwise they will be recorded as absent for the day
- To get permission from Year Tutor/Deputy Principal/Principal if they need to leave the school during the school day

Parent/Guardian

- Actively supporting and reinforcing the school's position on attendance/punctuality
- Parents/Guardians are obliged by law to have their children engaged in full-time education up to 16 years of age
- To ensure their child arrives on time
- To always inform the school in writing of any planned or actual absence or lateness
- To inform the school of circumstances which may be affecting their child's attendance to enable the school to work in partnership with the parent to get the student back into school
- When possible to make medical and dental appointments for their child outside of school time

8. Implementation Procedures (Attendance Policy):

- The roll will be taken each day by the Subject Teacher in Period 1 and Period 7
- Unexplained absences will be pursued by the Pastoral Care Group (Year Tutor/Class Teachers) of each year group
- Students who arrive in after 9.00 a.m. must sign a Sign-In Sheet and, without parent authorisation for lateness, will be given a Yellow Card
- Similarly, if a student is late for class without permission during the day, they will receive a Yellow Card
- On receipt of three Yellow Cards for punctuality, the student will be given a half-hour detention
- On receipt of an unacceptable number of yellow (late) cards parents and student are met by the Year Tutor
- Prolonged or unexplained absence (more than two days without any communication from parents) will result in a telephone call and Letter A (see Appendix) being sent to parents from the Class Teacher/Year Tutor/Deputy Principal
- When the absence of a student is approaching 20 days then Letter B (see Appendix) will be sent home by the Year Tutor
- After Letter B has been sent, the EWO will be notified of this student's non-attendance by the Deputy Principal
- Students wishing to return to school after a prolonged absence will having their cases considered if:
 - (a) A satisfactory explanation for leaving school was provided
 - (b) Parents and students are willing to meet the teachers concerned
- Parents of students who leave the school without permission will be contacted by Year Tutor/Deputy Principal

9. Pre-Implementation Procedures

- Presentation of attendance figures for School Year 05/06 at August 2006 staff meeting
- Review of the policy at Halloween, Christmas and Easter
- Attendance will be a priority for School Year 06/07
- Attendance will be Item 1 at all Class Teacher/Year Tutor meeting
- Attendance will be an item at each Management Meeting
- The Parents' Association and students will be briefed on this policy

Definitions.

ABSENCE: Where a student does not arrive at school

CONSTRUCTIVE TRUANCY: Where a student is taken on holiday by parents during school time.

CATEGORIES OF ABSENCE (NEWB):

- A. Illness
- B. Urgent Family Reason eg. bereavement
- C. Expelled
- D. Suspended
- E. Other - All other reasons eg holidays, religious observance, death of a student, emigration (where the parents have notified the school in writing)
- F. Unexplained - school has not yet received a reason from parent/guardian
- G. Transfer to Another School - school has received written notice from other school that the student has transferred to that other school