Coláiste
Bhaile Chláir

Claregalway

76233C

POLASAÍ TINRIMH - ATTENDANCE POLICY

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
15 November 2017

Submitted to Tusla

4 December 2017

Approved by Galway & Roscommon Education & Training Board

13 FEBRUARY 2018

THIS POLICY HAS BEEN PREPARED IN CONSULTATION WITH PARENTS, STUDENTS, STAFF, THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT AND GALWAY AND ROSCOMMON EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

INTRODUCTION

We are committed to ensuring that all students benefit fully from the education provided in our school. To ACHIEVE this regular and punctual attendance is essential. We want to make school and school attendance a pleasant and positive experience. We have designed a range of subjects, programmes and extra-curricular activities to make our school as inclusive as possible, to enable all students to participate fully and to benefit from their time at school.

The Education Welfare Act 2000 places a statutory responsibility on schools and parents to provide for the optimum attendance of every student. Under the Act, Education Welfare Boards have been established to oversee school attendance nationwide. Each school has been assigned an Education Welfare Officer whose duty is to liaise with the school in relation to any attendance problems which may emerge. The school recognises the central role of parents in supporting and encouraging good attendance among the student body.

The school attendance policy is directed by:

- The School Mission Statement.
- The Pastoral Care Policy.
- The Education Welfare Act 2000

DEARFACHAS

- Full attendance is promoted in the school through a culture of high expectation which encourages each student to take responsibility for his/her own learning.
- Across the curriculum, students are made aware of the incremental nature of learning and the long-term implications for them of irregular attendance.
- Full attendance is promoted and is encouraged by all staff
- Attendance rewards and merits are given at the end of each year

Initial meeting with parents/guardians includes:

- Introduction to student school journal.
- Explanation of the Education Welfare Act and the responsibilities of parents in relation to absences.

School:

- Each teacher takes their class roll and records attendance at the beginning of each class using VSware.
- Phone calls may be made by the Caomhnóir/ Ceannaire / Deputy Principal / Principal to check /verify attendance.
- A record of attendance is accessible on VSware to all Parents.
- A text message will automatically be sent at 11:00am to Parents/ Guardians of any student marked absent for class, stating their child is not present in school.
- Teachers have the opportunity at both Parent-Teacher meetings and on school reports to refer to the lack of progress made by student's due to absenteeism and/or poor punctuality.
- The Ceannaire tracks the attendance of all students in their year group on a weekly basis. The Ceannaire will meet with students not attending to encourage them and will arrange a

meeting with Parents/Guardians when necessary. At this early stage, the Ceannaire will try to resolve any issues and impediments affecting their attendance at school.

- The Ceannaire will communicate the names of any students with poor attendance at the weekly pastoral care meeting. The Pastoral Care team may make recommendations to support the student or make a referral to an outside agency as appropriate.
- If a student is late for class between 8:55 and 9:53 they must report to the hall in Building A where a teacher is assigned everyday to monitor late attendance. A note is also recorded in the student's school journal and must be signed by Parent/Guardian. Persistent lateness may involve detention as a sanction. Those students who arrive persistently late will also be discussed at pastoral care meetings.
- Students, who are absent, are marked absent in the school records to provide the basis for information transfer to the National Education Welfare Board, as required by the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. A text will be sent home to the parents/guardians of the students whose absence has not been explained. Students who are under 16 and have 20 absences or more will be reported to NEWB in accordance with their reporting provisions.
- Students who have reached the age of 16 years and completed 3 years post primary education will not be reported unless the student has been suspended or expelled.

School Activity

Absences from class due to participation in a school activity or work experience are recorded as school activity (SCH) on VSware. Teachers organising the school activity will set up a group on VSware and mark the students involved as SCH.

Parents/ Guardians:

- Parents/Guardians need to be mindful of the educational importance of full attendance when scheduling appointments or family events which may necessitate the withdrawal of a student from school.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for providing a written explanation for all absences. These notes must be written in the Students Journal. The student then posts the note in the relevant years' postbox outside the office.

- Parents/Guardians must provide written notes in the Students Journal explaining reasons for lateness.
- Students will not be allowed leave the school for appointments *without written parental notification.*
- If Parents/Guardians are aware in advance that a student will be absent for any part of the school day they should notify the school.
- Notes to excuse students for appointments etc. during the school day must be signed by the Year Head or Deputy Principal / Principal.
- Students with signed permission (as per above) to leave the school for any reason must be signed out by their Parent/Guardian on the 'sign out sheet' in the office before they leave. If they are returning during the school day the student must sign in at the office.

Students:

Students must adhere to the following:

- They must be in attendance and ready for class, at 8.50am.
- Submit a parental written explanation for absence on their return to school.
- Present notes from parents / guardians, explaining late arrival, to reception after first class, prior to first class present to teacher recording lates at reception in the A building.
- Students who arrive late in the morning will receive a late note in their journal. This will be recorded in VSware and sanctions may be imposed.

Students who become ill during the course of the day should inform their Ceannaire. Parents / Guardians will be contacted by the school.

In this case the student will only be allowed to go home when collected by Parent / Guardian.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Education Welfare Board will be contacted where any of the following occur:

- The aggregate number of days on which a student is absent from school during a school year is more than twenty.
- A student who is, in the opinion of the Principal, not attending school regularly.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF THIS POLICY

The implementation, monitoring and review of this policy will be a done by senior management in conjunction with the staff, parents and the board of management on an ongoing basis as admission policies are under legislative review nationally. It is envisaged that the policy would be reviewed on a formal basis two years after the date of adoption by the board of management.