

School Attendance Policy - Colaiste Choilm

Mission Statement

“To provide a holistic education which is driven by a Catholic ethos. We strive to create a safe environment which fosters inclusion, honesty, dignity and respect. The school community encourages the individual in their pursuit of excellence. We aim to promote among students a sense of pride in their school”

Scope

- This policy strives to set out the basic principles upon which the School Attendance Strategy will be implemented, sustained and evaluated in our school.
- This policy itself has been developed through partnership and consultation with the Board of Management, parents, staff and students.

Rationale

- Attendance at school and full participation in school life is extremely important in a child’s development.
- Parents are the primary educators and the school wants to work in partnership with parents to ensure that the environment is created where children look forward to coming to school and participating in school life
- The school and parents have certain obligations under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 regarding attendance and participation.

Policy Goals

- Assist towards developing a school environment where all students feel welcome
- Highlight and encourage regular attendance.
- Encourage good communication between parents and school.
- Implement the monitoring and recording aspects of the school’s attendance strategy successfully.
- Establish procedures for monitoring attendance and good record keeping.
- Develop working relationships with relevant agencies such as the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB)
- Support students and parents where attendance issues arise

Content of Policy

Parents and Legal Responsibility

The school expects all students registered in the school to attend classes every day and attend organised events within the school day, both in and out of school. If your son is absent the school will require an explanation in writing from the parent or guardian

If your son is under 16 and has not yet completed 3 years at post-primary school, it is the parents' legal responsibility to ensure that the student attends school everyday.

If a student is absent for 20 or more days in a school year or if the school is concerned about the pattern of a student's absence, the school is obliged to report this to the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB). The school will always inform parents if such a report is being made.

School Calendar and Timetable

- The school will provide a calendar for the opening and closing times of the school, the school holidays and information about parent teacher meetings and staff meetings.
- Reminders will be sent by mobile text and in writing.
- Information will also be posted on the school website.
- Parents should try to avoid taking their sons on holiday during school term.

Medical Appointments

If your son has permission to leave school early e.g. for a medical appointment, please ensure that he has a signed note in his school journal. He is required to sign out at the school office when leaving to attend his appointment.

If your son becomes unwell at school he should report at the school office from where his parents/guardians will be contacted. If he needs to leave school as a consequence, he is required to sign out at the school office and have his journal stamped.

(Please see school Code of Behaviour for procedures regarding consequences/sanctions if a student leaves the school without permission.)

Contacting the School in cases of absence

Please contact the school as soon as you can to inform us that your son is absent. This can be done by phone to the office at 8401420 or, out of office hours, by leaving a message on the answering machine.

When your son returns to school please ensure that he has a signed note in the school journal with an explanation for the absence. This should be given to the Year-Head.

For extended absences please keep in contact with the Year Head and if the extended absence is for medical reasons please furnish a doctor's note to the Year-Head. As good communication is vital, we would appreciate if you keep the school up to date about your child's absence.

Recording of non-attendance

The school is open to accept students from 8.35.a.m. and again at 1.55 p.m. each day. An electronic attendance system (*Anseo*) is in operation and it is the responsibility of each student to swipe in each morning before 8.50 a.m and again each afternoon at 2 p.m. The absence lists are printed out every morning and afternoon and checked in each class-room. An SMS text message may then be sent to alert parents/guardians that their son is not present.

Please note it is the policy of the school, and good practice, that an attendance roll is kept by the classroom teachers. When your son has been recorded as absent for 7 school days (in total for the school year), a letter will be sent reminding you of the fact. When he has been absent for 12 school days and there has been no response to the first letter, a second letter will be sent asking you to contact the school. After an absence of 15 school days a letter will be issued asking you to make an appointment with the school, reminding you of your responsibilities under the law. Our primary concern is your son's educational welfare and regular contact and communication are vital. End of term reports will also contain an attendance record.

Contact details

School Secretary: Phone 8401420
E-mail : *colchoilm.ias .net*

Implementation

This policy will be implemented by The Board of Management in a spirit of co-operation through consultation with the school partners, within the resources available to the school.

Links to Other Policies

This policy links to :

- The School plan
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection
- Admissions Policy
- Pastoral Care

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Board of Management in consultation with the Principal, Teaching Staff, Students Council and Parents Council, will monitor the policy. The Policy will be reviewed every two years.

Success Criteria

Success criteria may include:

- Attendance rates
- Improved explanations for absences
- Homework/study
- Increased school completion to Leaving Certificate
- Improved communication with parents
- Fewer reports to National Educational Welfare Board.

Ratification

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting.....

Signed.....