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***Loreto college crumlin***

***Attendance and punctuality Policy***

**Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

This policy operates within the context of the **School Mission Statement** and the **Education (Welfare) Act 2000.**

**Aims of Policy on Attendance and Punctuality**

* To have a positive impact on pupil attendance and punctuality in order to maximise the individual potential and performance of each pupil
* To increase motivation for both parents/guardians and pupils to improve school attendance and punctuality.
* To improve the quality of participation and educational attainment for each pupil in the educational process.

**Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School**

This policy reflects our school philosophy in providing a caring environment in which all students can grow and achieve their full potential.

**Objectives of Attendance Policy**

* Maintain an effective attendance tracking system through the use of the school administration system.
* Provide Senior Management, Year Heads, Teachers and Parents with access to computerised reports on pupil attendance. ( VS Ware )
* Encourage good attendance at school and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance amongst students and parents/guardians. To encourage parents/guardians to send students to school in all but exceptional circumstances.
* Communicate concerns to parents/guardians regarding an individual pupil’s attendance and punctuality record, and develop suitable intervention strategies.

**Rationale of Policy**

* A good education gives a student the best possible start in life.
* A student who goes to school regularly and punctually will be better able to keep up with school work and gain from the school ethos and environment.
* A student who consistently attends school is less likely to be drawn into anti-social behaviour.
* The school must meet its obligations in compliance with the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.
* The promotion of Educational Attainment and Progression.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

* All school staff contribute to the fostering of a positive school climate
* The principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of the school’s attendance policy and procedures.
* Year Heads will monitor student attendance and communicate with parents if absenteeism becomes a concern for any student.
* The principal will meet regularly with the H/S/C/L teacher and the School Completion Co-Ordinator to monitor attendance issues.
* The H/S/C/L teacher will promote good attendance and foster supportive relationships with parents/guardians
* Class teachers promote attendance/punctuality and record daily attendance

**Education (Welfare) Act, 2000**

Under Section 20 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, the school must maintain a register of all students attending the school.

Under Section 21 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the school must record the attendance or non-attendance of students registered at the school on each school day.

Under legislation, every child between the ages of 6 and 16 must attend school regularly up to 16 years of age or complete 3 years’ education in a post primary school; whichever comes later. The Child and Family agency TUSLA was set up to support school attendance and Educational Welfare Officers were appointed to follow up on children who are not attending school regularly. Under the Act, a school is obliged to report to TUSLA every time:

* It decides to expel a student.
* A Student has been absent for 20 days or more cumulatively.
* A student who is, in the opinion of the Principal, not attending school regularly
* A student’s name is removed from the school register.
* A student has been suspended for not less than 6 days in the course of a school year.

The school must prepare two student absence reports and one annual attendance report. These can be submitted online on www.schoolreturn.ie.

If there is a concern that a child is missing out on his education, the Educational Welfare Officer may visit the family home to discuss the matter. He or she will work with the family and the school to identify what needs to be done to ensure that the individual child gets every chance to enjoy school.

**Attendance and Student Responsibility**

* Pupils are expected to be present and punctual for school and all classes. Pupils are required to be in class every morning at 8.50am
* Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds during the school day without permission from a parent or guardian recorded on the School App, written permission presented to the Year Head or a phone call to the school office.
* Pupils are expected to be in school from 8.50 am – 3.40 pm on Monday and Tuesday and from 8.50am – 3pm on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
* Pupils are not allowed to leave school grounds during small break 10.50-11.10 and lunch time 1.10 pm – 1.40pm.

**Attendance and Parental Responsibility**

The primary responsibility for a student’s attendance lies with the parents (The Education Welfare Act 2000).

* When a student is absent from school for any reason, parents/guardians must notify the school by uploading a note detailing why the student was absent onto the school app. Unique the school app administrators then upload this information to VS Ware to update the student’s attendance records.
* Parents/guardians may also provide a written note to the Year Head to explain student’s absence which they will then use to update the student’s attendance records.
* The Department of Education and Science recommends that parents must try to ensure that family holidays are scheduled during holiday times and that any appointments where possible are made outside of school hours.

**Punctuality**

Parents/guardians are expected to cooperate with the school in ensuring punctuality, which is essential for the smooth running of the school. It is an important discipline that is vital for the teaching and learning environment of the school. Poor punctuality causes disruption and contributes to the loss of class time.

* Students are expected to be in class every morning at 8.50am.
* Students are expected to be punctual for every class throughout the day and may not leave class without the permission of the incoming teacher. Sanctions will be imposed for persistent lateness to school and lateness to individual classes.
* If a student is late then they scan their card on the tablet at reception and if the parent has sent in a late note on the app this will register and the student can go on to class. If parents have not sent in a late note then they must still scan their card and enter a reason for their lateness manually. If a student does not scan in/sign in when late then their parents will receive an automatic text alerting them to the fact that their daughter has not arrived in school.

**School Policies that Support Good Attendance**

* Code of Behaviour/Anti-Bullying Policy
* Child Protection Guidelines
* SPHE Curriculum Plan

**Procedures For Monitoring Attendance**

* Each teacher takes a morning roll call 8.50 am using a computerised registration system ( VS Ware ). Teachers also have the facility to take individual class roll calls on this system. Parents/guardians of absent students for the morning roll call are notified by SMS at 10.30 am . Lists of students who will be absent on any activities are recorded on the administration system. Students must sign in late on the tablet at reception, notification of their late arrival to school is then sent to parents via the school app.
* Year Heads are informed on a daily basis of student absences. Year Head will talk to student about their absence after 5 days consecutive absence. Where there is a concern contact is made with a parent/guardian. This contact is made by the Year Head after 5 days absent and a conversation with the student in question.
* The Year Head contacts( phones ) parents/guardians if a student has 10 days’ absence from school, outlining the consequences of further absences.
* Year Head may convene a face to face meeting with the parent/guardian if there is no improvement at this stage. The Home School Community Liaison teacher will be involved at this stage and will attend this meeting.
* The student will then be brought up at the weekly Care Team meeting.
* The student is then highlighted as a concern to the Principal at the weekly Year Head Meeting.
* There is further communication to parents/guardians once a student reaches 20 days absence from school. This letter informs parents that these absences will be notified to the Educational Welfare Officer.
* As part of the School Completion Programme, the school liaises with the school completion coordinator. The role of the coordinator is to monitor pupil attendance, prepare attendance reports and communicate with the Principal, Deputy Principal and Year Heads on matters relating to attendance. He/she also liaises with the Educational Welfare Officer and prepares reports for TUSLA.
* Returns are made to the TUSLA on a regular basis and the school liaises frequently with the appointed Educational Welfare Officer.
* The Home School Community Liaison Officer provides support to parents/guardians in order to improve the educational outcomes for the pupils. The scheme aims to promote partnership and cooperation between home, school and relevant community agencies to ensure every child attends regularly and receives an equal educational opportunity in our school.

**TUSLA**

* TUSLA is informed if a student has missed more than 20 days
* TUSLA is informed if a student is suspended and/or expelled
* TUSLA is furnished with the total attendances in the school year

**Sanctions**

Disciplinary actions consistent with the school’s Code of Behaviour will be imposed by the Principal, Deputy Principal and Year Heads for absences from school without permission.

**School Refusal/ Prolonged Absence**

In exceptional or sensitive circumstances, a student may be absent for a prolonged period. Prior to the student’s return, the School Care Team will set individualised procedures or support structures to meet the needs of the student and to facilitate the student’s return to school.

**Rewarding Students for Good Attendance:**

Pupils with good attendance records are presented with certificates of attendance each term and at the end of the year awards ceremony.

**Evaluation of Policy**

The Attendance and Punctuality Policy will be monitored by the Principal and Deputy Principal in conjunction with staff on an annual basis and will be formally reviewed in the 2022 /2023 academic year.

**Reviewed and Ratified by the Board of Management:**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson)**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**