

Attendance Policy



St. Kevin's College

Lisnaskea

Mission Statement

St. Kevin's College will strive to promote the core values of respect, compassion, justice and community; a belief in the power and place of prayer and worship in the school community, a belief in the dignity and worth of all, a belief in the difference education can make and a commitment to excellence for all pupils and staff.

Rationale

St Kevin's College recognises that school attendance is linked to academic performance and improved self-esteem. In keeping with our Mission statement, the College strives to promote an ethos which encourages consistent high attendance and where each child reaches his or her potential within a safe and secure environment.

We are committed to working in partnership with students and parents. To enable our school to record and monitor attendance in a consistent way, the College adheres to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2017/15. This Attendance Policy for Students also reflects guidance in Miss School = Miss Out: Improving Pupil Attendance Strategy (DE, December 2016).

The College acknowledges that full attendance is not always possible, and that absence may be the result of circumstances beyond the control of the student such as illness, bereavement or other family circumstances.

It is also recognised that underachievement may be the result of many interrelated factors of which poor attendance is only one.

Being a child centred listening school with a Catholic ethos, we at St Kevin's strive to work in liaison with the pastoral team, the EWO, the school counsellor and other external agencies to promote student well-being and attendance.

Aims

- To maximise the attendance and punctuality rate of students to ensure they reach their full potential and improve their life chances.
- To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/carers and students.
- To recognise and reward good attendance.
- To promote and develop effective working relationships with the Education Welfare Service.

Procedures for Managing Non-attendance

Attendance data for each individual student and Form class is monitored by Form teachers, Heads of Year and Mrs E MacDonald, the Vice Principal.

Aware that early intervention can potentially avoid the emergence of poor attendance patterns, the Pastoral Team within St Kevin's endeavours to implement many interventions to tackle barriers to attendance.

Form teachers will check attendance and punctuality monthly.

Students will record their attendance at the end of each month into their planners. Those students whose attendance falls below 95% will meet with their Form teacher. If their personal monthly attendance does not improve, the Head of Year will intervene.

Parents/carers will be contacted, the cause of poor attendance will be discussed, and strategies will be put in place to aid improvement.

If poor attendance persists, Mrs MacDonald will have a meeting with the student; parents (carers) will be contacted and or a second standard letter will be sent home.

A referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service if attendance does not improve within an agreed timeframe.

Education Welfare Service

The Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service has a legal responsibility to make sure that parents/carers meet their responsibility towards their children's education. Regular attendance is an essential requirement for good educational outcomes and where attendance difficulties exist, or a student's attendance falls below 85%, the Education Welfare Service (EWS) will support staff and parents/guardians in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance. The Education Authority will take legal action, where appropriate, to ensure a child receives an appropriate education.

The Vice Principal, Mrs E MacDonald will meet with the school's EWO Mrs Lee McDaid at least once a month.

Responsibilities

Parents have a legal duty to ensure:

“Every child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient full-time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.” (Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986)

It is the **parents/carers** responsibility

- to ensure that their child attends school and is punctual.
- to ring the school if their child is absent from school and to write a note in the student planner on the day of return to school
- to familiarise themselves with the school procedures regarding absence and punctuality.
- to arrange GP and or dental appointments outside school hours
- to only take holidays when school is off
- to work closely with the school and or other support agencies to overcome any issues which may impact on attendance. (If a child appears reluctant to attend school, parents should discuss the matter promptly with the Form teacher to ensure that both parents and students receive maximum support.)

It is the **students'** responsibility

- to attend school every day punctually (Those who arrive late must report to their Form Teacher immediately and then quickly go to their timetabled class) If you are late (with no genuine reason) **3 times** within the same month you will be issued a detention.
- to be in form class by **9.14am**. If there is morning assembly, then students go directly to the hall for **9.14am**.
- to never leave school during the day without permission. This permission is granted by the **Year Head**, who will issue the student with a permission slip. The **'Sign out'** book must then be signed by **you the student** in the office.
- to notify the form teacher of their departure from school if a parent/carer rings and/or arrives to collect them. Those who ring or arrive to the school foyer must be verified by Olivia or another member of staff.
- to return to school with an explanation note
- to 'catch up' on all work missed during his/her absence
- to record his/her attendance in the student planner monthly.

It is the responsibility of all staff

- to ensure that all pupils are clear about the procedures regarding absence and punctuality.

Subject teachers will

- complete the class register using SIMS at the beginning of every lesson.

Form teachers will

- complete morning registration ***

***** students who come to school late must go to their Form Teacher before going on to normal class.**

- monitor the attendance & punctuality of students in their form class; strategies will be put in place to promote excellent attendance. KS3 students will be asked to record their personal monthly attendance into their planners at the end of each month.
- acknowledge those students who attain 100% monthly attendance through the reward system
- contact parents/carers if a student is
 - absent for 3 consecutive days; students must furnish their Form teacher with an absenteeism note on their return to school.
 - constantly late
- ensure that students attain a permission slip from the Year Head and sign the 'Sign out' book in the office if they have a note from a parent/carer requesting their son/daughter to leave school early.

Year Heads will

- support their Form teachers
- monitor monthly attendance for students in their year group and in consultation with the form teacher take appropriate action. This could involve sending a letter home and or requesting parents/carers to come into the school when preceding interventions have not improved a student's attendance.
- sign and issue the blue permission slip to those students who have parental consent to leave school early; this will be recorded and students will be reminded to sign the 'sign out' book in the office.
- sanction, record and monitor students who 'go home sick'.
- provide Mrs MacDonald, the Vice Principal with a monthly report of students whose attendance is causing concern
- support students whose attendance is affected by illness, bereavement or other issues

Mrs E MacDonald (Vice Principal) will

- liaise with Year Heads with respect to students whose attendance is causing concern
- support students whose attendance is poor to identify and address underlying issues
- support students whose attendance is affected by illness, bereavement or other issues
- involve relevant members of the pastoral team including Miss O'Connor, SENCo, Mrs A Farrell, the school counsellor and Mrs L McDaid, the EWO when there are serious concerns about a student's attendance.
- contact parents/carers and send a second letter home when preceding interventions have not improved a student's attendance.
- make a referral to Mrs L McDaid, the EWO if deemed necessary to do so

Procedures for Monitoring and Evaluating this Policy

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy is monitored by means of:

- Data from SIMS Lesson Monitor
- Discussion at Pastoral Care Meetings
- Consultation between Heads of Year and the Vice Principal to quantify reports of poor attendance and to monitor the impact of support given.
- Feedback from the student council

Reviewed: September, 2018

