



## **School Attendance Policy**

Regular attendance is essential for all students so that they may reach their potential in school. St. Peter's College aims to foster a culture of regular attendance at school for all pupils. In addition, we seek to identify and support those pupils who are experiencing problems with attendance at school. The provisions of the Education Welfare Act 2002 inform and support this policy.

### **Aims and Objectives**

This school policy sets out to:

- Encourage maximum possible attendance for all students
- Identify pupils at risk
- Raise awareness of the importance of school attendance

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Students:**

Each student has a personal responsibility to attend school each day

#### **Parents/Guardians:**

As the primary educators parents/guardians have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school unless there is an unavoidable and legitimate reason for their absence. Parents/guardians are furnished with log in details for VSware. Parents/guardians are requested to check their son's attendance record on a regular basis using this system. Parents/guardians are requested to contact the relevant Year Head to correct any inaccuracies or to discuss any concerns they may have in relation to their son's attendance record.

#### **Principal:**

Overall responsibility for school attendance

#### **Deputy Principals:**

Liaise with Principal/ Year heads/NEWB with regard to school attendance

#### **Year Heads:**

Monitor attendance in Year Group and make students aware of importance of regular attendance. Correct attendance record if inaccuracies are identified. Make contact with parents/guardians when appropriate in an effort to improve attendance. Communicate in writing/email/text with parents/guardians when non-attendance reaches defined levels

#### **Class Tutors:**

Ensure that students are aware of the importance of good attendance and the procedures involved in recording partial and full day absences. Take roll call at tutor time and update system with absentee notes. Correct attendance record if inaccuracies are identified.

### **Class Teachers:**

Keep their own record of class attendance via VSware. Bring any concerns regarding student attendance to the appropriate year head.

## **Procedures**

- Every student is expected to be in attendance from 9.00 a.m. until school finishes on every school day
- A student may not be absent from school except when the absence is unavoidable due to illness, urgent family reason or other legitimate and unavoidable reason
- It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to furnish the school with a signed and dated note outlining the date and reason for every recorded absence. Such notes will be used to fill in returns to the E.W.B. as outlined in the Educational Welfare Act (2002). Parents/guardians are requested to ensure all discretionary absences occur outside term time. School management furnish them with a provisional calendar of the school year to assist them in this regard
- A student arriving late for school at 9.01 a.m. must swipe in **before** proceeding to class. Such a student is expected to produce a note from his parents/guardians explaining the reason he was late. Late arrival to school on a repeated basis may be viewed as a breach of discipline and appropriate sanctions may apply. In the event of a student becoming ill or getting injured during the day he should inform his class teacher who may send them to the Year Head/Deputy Principals/Principal to obtain permission to go home. If such permission is granted contact with their parents/guardians should be through the school office. **A student should not contact home to arrange to leave, via a mobile phone or prior to getting permission to leave the school premises.** Parents/guardians are expected to make arrangements for the collection of their son at the school office in the event of a student being ill or injured. A student must request a member of school staff to sign them out on VSware before they leave. When a student returns to school after such an absence a note of explanation should be presented
- During the school day every student must attend every class according to his timetable unless **prior** permission has been received from the Principal or Deputy Principals or Year Head. The unauthorised absence of a student from any class during the school day will be viewed as a breach of discipline and appropriate sanctions may apply
- On occasion a student may be absent from class due to school related activities such as sport and drama. Such absences are sanctioned on the understanding that the student ensures all homework is sourced and carried out to a satisfactory standard. Where a teacher is organising an approved activity which necessitates the absence of students from class a list of such students is posted in the staffroom
- A student wishing to leave the school premises for a legitimate reason during the school day must have a signed note from their parents/guardians before they leave. This note should include the reason for the absence, the time the student is leaving and a contact number for verification. The student must get this note signed by the Year Head or Tutor and then sign out at the school office using VSware. No student will be permitted to sign out without producing a signed note. Any student who leaves the school premises without such authorisation will be deemed to have breached the school code of discipline and appropriate sanctions may be applied
- On rare occasions a student may be absent from school due to suspension for breach of discipline. In such instances parents/guardians will be consulted in advance and the student is expected to use his time productively by applying himself to his studies. In such instances, where a student is suspended, they should not be on the school premises or engaged in any school activity as there may be insurance implications

## **Communication**

- In the event of a student taking ill during lunchtime while off the school premises the school must be notified immediately by parents/guardians
- Teachers are encouraged to record on VSware all students in attendance and absent for each class period on a daily basis
- Parents/guardians may be notified via phone call or text messaging if the school has a concern about a particular absence any time on any given date

- The relevant Year Head will contact the parents/guardians if there is a concern about a particular absence or absences as they come to our attention
- The parents/guardians may be requested to make an appointment to discuss the matter with school management
- The Year Head will inform parents/guardians by letter/email when a student exceeds 10 uncertified absences or more. This letter will outline the school's responsibility under the Education Welfare Act 2002. A copy of all recorded absences will also be enclosed. The parents/guardians will be invited to contact the school to discuss the matter if they may wish to do so
- Parents/guardians are furnished with log in details for VSware. Parents/guardians are expected to check their son's attendance record on a regular basis using this system. Parents/guardians are requested to contact the relevant Year Head to discuss any concerns they may have in relation to their son's attendance record

### **Measures to improve attendance**

- Encouragement from Tutor/Year Head/Deputy Principals/Principal
- Targets set by Year Head
- Certificate for exemplary attendance
- Referral to guidance counsellor
- Communication with Parents/Guardians
- Liaise with NEWB

### **Sanctions for Breaches of School Attendance Policy**

- The student may be placed on Lunchtime Detention
- Persistent late-comers may be placed on Evening Detention
- Un-authorized absence during the school day may result in Evening Detention or Suspension
- Absences will be notified to the E.W.B. as per the Education Welfare Act 2002

## School Attendance Policy for St. Peter's College, Wexford

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

Fr. Odhrán Furlong,  
Chairperson of the Board of Management

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

Mr. John Banville,  
Principal and Secretary of the Board of Management