



## **Mungret Community College School Attendance Policy**

### **Introduction**

This policy is informed by the vision for Mungret Community College, coupled with the school's ethos which aims to enable students to reach their full potential academically. The policy will reflect the pastoral and supportive nature of our school.

### **Rationale**

- The rationale underpinning the formulation of this policy is as follows:
- To comply with the Education Welfare Act 2000.
- To form habits of regular and punctual attendance by our students.
- To discourage absenteeism, lateness and unwarranted withdrawal of students during the school day or term.
- To develop a sense of personal responsibility in our students.
- To make all school partners aware of the links between school attendance and academic achievement.
- To enable us to identify students who may be at risk and put supports in place to assist them.

### **Vision**

This policy complements the school ethos of nurturing the potential of every child in a caring environment and will utilise existing pastoral strategies in our school and will encourage the involvement of all school partners.

### **Aims**

The aims of this school policy are to:

Encourage full attendance and punctuality.

Detect and correct patterns of poor attendance as early as possible.

Accurately record students' attendance.

Raise awareness of the importance of regular school attendance.

Promote a positive learning environment.

Fulfil the legislative requirements of the Education Act 2000.

Adhere to the guidelines asset out by The Child & Family Agency Tusla.

**The Education Welfare Act (2000):**

The purpose of the act is to encourage regular school attendance and participation in education and training for as long as possible, preferably until he/she completes his/her education.

Every child must attend school regularly until the age of sixteen or complete at least three years post primary education, whichever comes later.

It is the central responsibility of parents to ensure that they comply with the regulations stated in the Education

Welfare Act 2000, with regard to the attendance and participation of their child in the school to which they have been enrolled.

**The National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) The Child & Family Agency Tulsa.**

The National Education Welfare Board now The Child & Family Agency Tulsa was established to support school attendance and follow up on children who are not attending school regularly.

TULSA has appointed Education Welfare Officers to work with schools to encourage school attendance.

Under the act, a school is obliged to report to Tulsa every time

- It decides to expel students
- A student's name is removed from the school register
- A student has reached 20 days absence cumulatively
- A student has been suspended for six days
- A Principal is concerned about a student's attendance

Schools are asked to submit information about individual student absences five times a year.

**Content**

Attendance records for all students will be maintained by the School as set out in this Policy.

Every member of staff will encourage regular attendance by students.

General School communications, meetings with parents and other occasions will be used to communicate to parents the importance of regular attendance and the negative impact of unwarranted absences.

Teachers will discuss attendance records of students with parents/guardians during the course of Parent/Teacher meetings.

Where unauthorised absences are suspected parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible.

## **Our Attendance Strategies**

The following are a list of strategies that we have put in place in Mungret Community College in order to encourage attendance:

1. Building a warm, caring, respectful and compassionate atmosphere in which every person feels accepted and valued.
2. The provision of an excellent extra curricular activity package which has something for everyone and encourages the participation of “at risk” students.
3. A modern meaningful Curriculum which is inclusive of all students.
4. Well-structured pastoral care system.
5. Acknowledgement of good attendance
6. A comprehensive roll attendance system.
7. The school operates a “text a parent” system for students with a poor attendance record.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Principal & Deputy Principal**

- To ensure that adequate systems are in place to record attendances and absences of students.
- To make reports to Tusla as required by the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.
- To inform parents/guardians and students of procedures for the notification of absences and/or withdrawal of students from the School.
- To remind students and parents/guardians of the importance of regular attendance and the negative impact of frequent absences on student progress.
- To encourage regular attendance by students.
- To monitor and investigate unauthorised absences of students from the School or from classes.
- To contact parents/guardians where unauthorised absences are suspected.

### **Tutor**

To record notations by parents/guardians and assign reason for absence.

Create a welcoming atmosphere for returning student, particularly after a prolonged absence.

Praise students within the group on full attendance and set targets for Caomhnoir groups to reach.

To check student journals for ‘Absence slips’ signed by parents/guardians from students who have been absent and to sign that these have been seen.

To write a note to parents in student journal regarding non-production of absence slip.

To keep a record of matters relating to attendance/absences of students.

To note trends in absence records of individual students.

**Class Teachers:**

- Take a roll call in every class and enter on school database at 9am and after lunch.
- Teachers to notify any discrepancies in class registration to Tutor or Deputy Principal for amendment.
- Create a warm welcoming atmosphere in class for returning students.
- Discuss students' attendance records with parents/guardians at Parent/Teacher Meetings.
- To impress on students the importance of regular attendance and ensure understanding of the links between academic achievement and regular attendance.
- Make comments on report forms regarding positive and negative attendance.

**Parents/Guardians**

- To ensure your son/daughter to be in school at 8.45am at the latest for assembly at 8.50am
- To ensure regular attendance of students and avoid unwarranted absences.
- To keep all holidays outside of the school term.
- To notify the School in writing of the reason for all student absences: such notice should be provided prior to the absence if possible or otherwise immediately afterwards. Telephone or oral messages relating to student absences must be confirmed in writing on return via the School Journal.
- To provide the School with reliable contact telephone numbers and alternative 'emergency' numbers so that the School may contact parents/guardians or other authorised parties if necessary.
- To adhere to the procedures set out in this Policy for the withdrawal of students from School during the school day.
- To acknowledge and where necessary reply to communications from the School in relation to attendance issues.

**School Office**

- To amend the school database to reflect latecomers to school.
- To prepare student lists for notification to Tusla, Class Tutors and Principal.
- To maintain a record of students withdrawn during the school day and their return to school.
- To ensure that when a student is withdrawn from the school, a parent/guardian personally accompanies the student who is leaving the school and signs the appropriate record before the student is withdrawn.
- To ensure that when a student is arriving late or returning to school after an appointment is accompanied by a parent/guardian who personally signs the appropriate record before the student returns to class.

### **Attendance Records**

- An official roll call will be conducted during Period 1 and Period 7 (Period 6 on Friday) each day. The school will maintain a record of student absences and record the number of absences on students' end-of-term Report Forms to parents.
- Letters from parents/guardians regarding student absences will be given by students to the Tutor. These letters will be initialled as seen by the Tutor.
- Parents/Guardians are required to give advance notice in writing of all foreseen absences giving a reason for the absence.
- Where an absence is unforeseen, the parent/guardian is required to notify the School by telephone on the morning of the absence. This notification must be confirmed by a written letter stating a reason for and duration of the absence.
- Where a student is to be withdrawn from the School during the school day, the student must present a written request from the parent/guardian to the Tutor in Assembly. This notice will be presented to the office when the student leaves the school.
- Parents/Guardians or a person nominated by the parents/guardians on the student's Registration Form, must present themselves at the School and sign the office Sign Out Register when a student is withdrawn from the School during the school day.
- Failure to comply with any of the above procedures for leaving the School during school hours is a serious breach of the School's Code of Conduct.

### **Success Criteria**

- Clear outline of responsibilities of all school partners.
- An effective record of attendance and trends will be kept and monitored.
- Clear lines of communication developed between parents and school on the issue of attendance.

### **Monitoring Procedures**

The policy will be monitored on an on-going basis by the Senior Management.

### **Review Procedures**

This policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

Signed: 

*Chairperson of Board of Management*



*Principal*

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018