

St Killian's College Garron Tower



Student Attendance Policy

Mission Statement

“St Killian’s is a Catholic College which strives to achieve excellence for all, within a happy, supportive and stimulating learning community.”

Date Reviewed
03/03/2011
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St Killian's College, Garron Tower Student Attendance Policy



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RATIONALE:

St Killian's College believes that good attendance and punctuality are central to the learning process. For a child to succeed at school, it is essential that a high level of attendance be maintained. It has been proven that there is a strong correlation between academic achievement and high levels of attendance. This means that a clear, workable policy to monitor, improve and maintain attendance needs to be in place

AIMS:

St Killian's aims through the Student Attendance Policy to promote high levels of attendance by seeking the continued support of parents to ensure students attain high levels of punctuality and attendance. This policy actively promotes and maintains best practice and encourages improvement. The College aims to achieve an annual attendance rate of between 96%-97%. (Please note 95% is 9 days absence throughout the year and is seen as only satisfactory.) The implementation of this policy shall seek the co-operation and support of students, staff, parents and the school's Educational Welfare Officer. The College will also use a wide range of professionals and outside agencies to support our overall aims.

All parents are made aware of the school's attendance policy (available on the school website) on an annual basis with the issue of an information leaflet, 'School Attendance Matters – A Parent's Guide'. The same information leaflet, but personalised with the % attendance of their son/daughter is given out at the relevant Parent Teacher meeting. The need for and the importance of good attendance is emphasised at every opportunity (Induction Evenings, Parent/Teacher Evenings and College Reports etc). The Induction Programme for Year 8 students introduces students and parents to attendance and absence procedures, and this is repeated again at Year 11 and 13 Induction Evenings.

Parents/Guardians and the college must work together to maintain an excellent attendance record for their child. It is important to note that young people who regularly miss school without good reason are more likely to become isolated from their friends, to underachieve in examinations and/or become involved in anti-social behaviour.

OUT WORKINGS OF THE POLICY:

The College has clear workable procedures to identify casual, long term or patterns of absence and has mechanisms in place to deal with each. The College will be proactive involving parent/guardians to help improve their child's attendance and ensure they are informed about any changes in policy.



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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

To facilitate a high level of attendance among our students the following procedures are in place:

Class Teacher:

- Attendance is recorded each period using Lesson Monitor on SIMS with attendance registers taken at the beginning of each class.
- Report issues to Form Teachers regarding record of attendance or on the student's punctuality for their class (eg. a student who is regularly late or absent on specific days.)
- Class teachers can generate reports using SIMS to monitor student attendance in their own subject if required.

Form Teacher:

The Form Teacher has a major role to play in the monitoring of attendance. They have a unique knowledge of the form class and can identify those students whose attendance record is (or may become) a problem. Students who are potentially poor attenders can be targeted by form teachers and through counselling and support be encouraged to attend school more frequently.

- The Form Teacher plays an important role in the promotion of good attendance and monitors the attendance records of the students in their Form Class.
- Attendance is recorded and reviewed using Lesson Monitor on SIMS. Student attendance is recorded during morning registration.
- The Form Teacher encourages good attendance and highlights its importance during Form Class and morning registration.
- The Form Teacher initiates contact with parents on a student's third day of absence alerting the office to ring home if a reason for absence has not been supplied.
- If a student is to be confined at home (e.g. due to illness) for a longer period of time, the Form Teacher should organise work to be sent home.
- The Form Teacher deals with minor absences by confirming reasons and checking that notes have been received. If students return to school without notes the Form Teacher makes a phone call home, and records the date(s) and time(s).
- If the Form Teacher is not able to make contact, by telephone, with home he/she issues the standard letter (available from the office) requesting the reason for absence. **Form Teacher should speak to the Year Head before sending out the letter. (Appendix 1)**
- The Form Teacher regularly reviews attendance and if a student's attendance drops to 90% he/she **informs the Head of Year** to issue the standard letter informing the student's parents that their son/daughter's attendance is becoming a concern. Head of Year **should consult** with Senior Leader in charge of the Key Stage before sending letter. This letter acts as an early warning to parents and advises that if their child's attendance drops to 85% the Educational Welfare Officer is informed. **Contact with parents should always be of a supportive nature. (Appendix 2)**



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Head of Year:

- The Head of Year plays an important role in the promotion of good attendance and monitors the attendance records of students in their Year Group using Lesson Monitor on SIMS, highlighting and rewarding 100% attendance.
- The Head of Year encourages good attendance and highlights its importance during weekly assemblies and at Year Team Meetings.
- The Head of Year supports Form Teachers regarding poor attendance within their Year Group.
- The Head of Year generates a report on a half termly basis to identify students whose attendance is below 90%.
- If attendance drops to 90% the Head of Year sends out the standard letter (available from the office) informing the student's parents that their son/daughter's attendance is becoming a concern. This letter will act as an early warning to parents and advises that if their child's attendance drops to 85% then the Educational Welfare Officer is informed. **Contact with parents should always be of a supportive nature. (Appendix 2)**

Senior Leadership Team (SLT):

- The SLT plays an important role in the promotion of good attendance and monitors the attendance records of students throughout the school using Lesson Monitor on SIMS.
- The SLT will continue to monitor attendance across key stages in order to assist the Year Heads.
- The Senior Leader informs, where appropriate, the relevant external agencies (e.g.) Educational Welfare Officer (EWO), Behavioural Support, Youth Tutor etc. of student's poor attendance. This is normally done through discussion at termly School Based Care Team meetings.
- The Senior Leader supports Year Heads regarding poor attendance in their year group, by way of interviewing students, contacting home and following the College's Positive Behaviour Policy. **Contact with parents should always be of a supportive nature.**
- The Senior Leader monitors and informs stakeholders of the impact of attendance on exam outcomes, to ensure the importance of attendance is highlighted at every opportunity.
- The Senior Leader informs the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) when a student's attendance is 85% or below and he/she issues a letter to parents to inform them that their child has been referred to the EWO. **(Appendix 3)**

Parents and Guardians:

- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to work closely with the school to promote a positive approach towards good attendance.
- Parents/Guardians are asked to make all appointments for their child after school whenever possible.
- Family holidays should not be booked during term time.
- Parents/Guardians are advised to telephone the College as soon as a prolonged period of absence becomes obvious. The secretary (028 28885202) will ensure the message is forwarded to the Form Teacher/Year Head.
- Parents/Guardians should inform the school, by telephone, if their child is absent due to illness and follow-up with a written note when their child returns to school.



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CONTINUOUS ABSENCE:

- The Form Teacher initiates contact with parents on a student's third day of absence (alerting the office to ring home) if a reason for absence has not been supplied.
- Letters are issued to parents when their child's attendance drops below 90%. Even when a parental note covers the absences, the Form Teacher will contact the home and voice the school's concern about the number of absences. **Contact with parents should always be of a supportive nature.**
- If there is a pattern of absence, e.g. every Friday, the parents shall be contacted by the Form Teacher and asked to give an explanation.
- The School Councillor and Youth Tutor may be used in extreme circumstances to help students with poor attendance records.
- The termly meeting of the School Based Care Team (links with EWO, Child Psychology etc.) provides an opportunity to address chronic absences using a supportive multi-agency approach.

LATE COMING:

- Late coming is recorded on Lesson Monitor using code 'L'.
- A student arriving late to school must report to the General Office.
- If a student is late more than three times in the month then the parent/guardian is informed.
- If late coming becomes regular then the Form Teacher shall contact the parents/guardians to invite them for interview to discuss the matter.
- If late coming continues and becomes chronic then the E.W.O. shall be asked to contact the parents.

TRUANCY:

- If any student absent themselves from the school without permission the Year Head will contact his/her parents and follow the College's Positive Behaviour Policy.
- If truancy happens more than once, the parents/guardians will be invited to the school by the Head of Year to discuss the problem.
- If the truancy becomes chronic the E.W.O. shall be asked to visit the home.
- Class truancy within school shall be dealt with by the Form Teacher. A continuing problem shall be referred through the Positive Behaviour Policy.

The E.W.O. visits the school regularly and examines the rolls for poor attenders (less than 85%). To formalise this, a Service Level Agreement has been drawn up between the E.W.O. and the school. It is recommended that the E.W.O. should meet the SLT on a monthly basis at a time agreed by both.



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POST 16:

The Attendance Policy relates to the whole school and includes the Years 13 and 14 even though they are beyond the Compulsory School Age. When students are intending to return to the school particular attention will be paid to the attendance record of the previous year. Senior students who have enrolled must commit themselves to the rules and regulations of the school. Good attendance in Year 13 and 14 is linked to student's EMA payments.

REWARD SYSTEM:

As part of its attendance policy and to reinforce the importance and the positive aspects of attendance, the school has developed and uses a reward system whereby good attendance is rewarded and recognised.

- If a student has a full year's attendance, he/she shall be recognised and rewarded at Prize Night.
- Parents/guardians of students who have 100% attendance after the first term will be written to and congratulated by the Principal. **(Appendix 4)**
- Students who have excellent attendance will be interviewed and congratulated by Head of Year, Senior Leader for that Key Stage and Principal.
- The school website, assemblies, school reports, twitter and the internal TVs will be used to congratulate students on 100% attendance and to promote good attendance.
- A student who has moved from poor attendance to good attendance shall also be given praise and rewarded by the school. This is to be monitored by the Form Teacher.

It is the responsibility of everyone to promote good attendance. Staff, students, parents and outside agencies are encouraged to share the same focus and move forward towards a common goal; good education for all to ensure each student is inspired to achieve his/her full potential.



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APPENDIX 1

01 October 2015

Mrs and Mrs A Smith
The Castle
Garron Circle
Co Antrim
BT99 1GT

Dear Mr and Mrs Smith

Attendance: John Smith - D.O.B. - 01/01/2000 - Class 10 Lurig

John has been absent on the following dates for which I do not have a note to explain his absence.

Dates of Absence

1. 23 September 2015
2. 24 September 2015
3. 25 September 2015

I have tried to contact you by telephone on the following date(s),

- Tuesday 23 September 2015
- Wednesday 24 September 2015
- Thursday 25 September 2015 however could not get any response.

I would be obliged if you would send in the outstanding notes for explaining the absences on the dates above to me as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

**Miss A N Other
Form Teacher**



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APPENDIX 2

01 October 2015

Mrs and Mrs A Smith
The Castle
Garron Circle
Co Antrim
BT99 1GT

Dear Mr and Mrs Smith

Attendance: John Smith - D.O.B. - 01/01/2000 - Class 10 Lurig

This year the college is trying to ensure that all of our student attendance is improved.

John has a percentage attendance of 90%. If this was to carry through until the end of the year it would represent nineteen days absence from school. Research shows that seventeen school days lost results in a drop of one full grade at GCSE/A level. Please be aware that we must refer any student whose attendance drops to 85% to the Educational Welfare Service.

I would encourage you to ensure that John makes his attendance at school a priority.

Thank you for your continued support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mr A N Other
Head of Year 10



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APPENDIX 3

01 October 2015

Mrs and Mrs A Smith
The Castle
Garron Circle
Co Antrim
BT99 1GT

Dear Mr and Mrs Smith

Attendance: John Smith - D.O.B. - 01/01/2000 - Class 10 Lurig

As you will appreciate good attendance is essential for academic achievement. Unfortunately the audit for the Educational Welfare Officer has shown John's attendance at present to be 85%.

The Educational Welfare Officer has requested that John is referred to their services.

If you have any queries regarding this matter please contact me at the college.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A N Other
Senior Leader



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APPENDIX 4

27 February 2015

Mrs and Mrs A Smith
The Castle
Garron Circle
Co Antrim
BT99 1GT

Dear Mr and Mrs Smith

Attendance: Bill Smith - D.O.B. - 01/01/1998 - Class 12 Moyle

I would like to congratulate Bill, for his 100% attendance record from September 2014 to 27 February 2015. Attendance continues to be one of the key areas targeted in St Killian's to help each child reach their full potential. We are very proud that Bill is one of 165 pupils who have achieved 100% attendance to date.

This is a tremendous achievement by Bill. We all recognise that there is a strong link between good attendance and strong academic performance; it is also one of the prerequisites that some universities and employers seek from schools.

Once again, well done and together we will continue to encourage Bill to maintain this record and strive towards reaching his full potential.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Brady
Principal