



Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna

School Attendance Strategy (Updated 2024)

Review Date: 2024

Next Review: Annually or as required

School Vision and Values in Relation to Attendance

Mary Immaculate Secondary School is committed to encouraging all students to develop habits of regular and punctual attendance to ensure they can fully benefit from the education provided. Regular attendance supports the development of each student as a whole person — spiritually, educationally, intellectually, emotionally, socially, culturally, morally and physically — in an environment rooted in Christian care and respect.

High Expectations Around Attendance

The school aims:

1. To promote student care and welfare in every aspect of school life.
2. To ensure continuity, progression and best outcomes in learning.
3. To maximise the benefits gained from being present in class daily.
4. To ensure parents/guardians, students and staff understand their responsibilities around attendance.
5. To fulfil legal obligations under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and related legislation.

How Attendance Will Be Monitored

1. Accurate records of students' whereabouts will be maintained at all times.
2. Students will learn responsibility for punctuality and attendance.
3. Parents/guardians will be supported in understanding their key role.
4. Early identification of attendance concerns will be prioritised.
5. VSware will be used to record and monitor attendance.

Summary of the School's Approach to Attendance

- A culture of high expectations promotes strong attendance.
- Students are reminded of the cumulative nature of learning and the impact of absences.
- Pastoral Care structures support students with difficulties.
- The Year Head and Care Team will intervene where patterns of absenteeism or lateness appear.
- Reports to parents include detailed attendance records.
- Attendance information is available to parents/guardians via VSware.

Roles and Responsibilities — Students

- Attend all scheduled classes punctually each day.
- Provide written explanations for absences on return to school.
- If late, present a note from a parent/guardian or ensure parent/guardian contacts the school office so it can be logged on VSware.

Roles and Responsibilities — Parents/Guardians

- Support the school's Attendance Strategy in line with the Education Welfare Act 2000.
- Ensure regular and punctual attendance and avoid unnecessary absences.
- Provide written explanations on the student's return.
- Confirm messages regarding absences as soon as possible.
- Provide updated contact details for communication.
- Arrange appointments outside school time where possible.

Roles and Responsibilities — Principal

- Ensure adequate systems exist for recording attendance.
- Monitor attendance regularly.
- Report to the Education Welfare Officer as required.
- Remind parents/guardians and students of procedures and the importance of attendance.

Roles and Responsibilities — Deputy Principal

- Support the Principal, Year Heads, and staff in implementing the policy.
- Liaise with relevant teams regarding students with attendance concerns.
- Meet students with unexplained absences with the Year Head.

Roles and Responsibilities — Class Teachers

- Record the attendance of every class.
- Enter attendance for the first and sixth periods into VSware.
- Record attendance manually if a technical difficulty arises and submit it to the office.
- Reinforce the importance of attendance and punctuality.

Roles and Responsibilities — Year Heads

- Monitor attendance on VShare regularly.
- Liaise with Pastoral/Management teams about concerns.
- Contact parents where unauthorised absences occur.
- Regularly remind students of attendance expectations.

Roles and Responsibilities — Tutors

- Check absence notes and follow up where needed with the Year Head.

Roles and Responsibilities — Administrative Staff

- Input attendance data when required.
- Provide attendance data for reporting to the NEWB/Tusla.
- Administer signing in and out of students and record it on VShare.
- Monitor late sign-ins.

Partnership Arrangements

- Collaboration with local primary schools to support transition.
- Post-primary networks to share best practice.
- Involvement with Comhairle na nÓg to include student voice.

Monitoring the Strategy (Day-to-Day Implementation)

- Roll Call at 8.55am; attendance recorded on VShare or manually as required.
- Late arrivals sign in at the office; records updated on VShare.
- Early leavers sign out at the office; recorded on VShare.
- School-related activities are marked as 'school business' by admin staff.

Review Process and Dates

Reviewed: 2024

Next Review: Annually or as required