

Coléiste an Chreagáin



Policy: Attendance

REVIEW

This policy was ratified at the Board of Management meeting on 27/11 //zs—

The policy is due for review on

NOVEMBER 2028.



Coláiste an Chreagáin
Mountbellew, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
School Roll No: 71290M

Statement of Strategy for School Attendance



1. INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Board of Management of Coláiste an Chreagáin recognises that punctual and regular school attendance is an essential precondition of social inclusion and is a prerequisite to effective learning. It believes that children should attend school regularly and punctually because school is where they learn, and school is where they are safe.

The Board of Management is, therefore, committed to improving levels of school attendance and punctuality. It aims to do this by:

- a) promoting the value and importance of regular school attendance.
- b) reducing all forms of unexplained absenteeism, especially levels of persistent absenteeism (a child is classified as being a persistent absentee if he/she has an absence rate of 20 or more days).

The Board of Management is obliged under the Education Act to make three written reports to the National Educational Welfare Board during the school year regarding school absences.

As a school community, the staff of Coláiste an Chreagáin believe that there is a direct relationship between a student's success in school and regular attendance.

- Those students who have good attendance records, enjoy their school experience more than students who do not attend regularly.

2. Scope



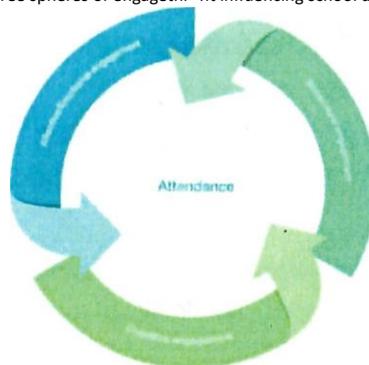
This strategy applies to the students, staff and parents of Coláiste an Chreagáin and relates to all aspects of school attendance and punctuality. This strategy was drawn up in consultation with all the school partners, including the Board of Management, staff, parents and students.

3. RELATIONSHIP TO THE SCHOOL'S MISSION, VISION AND AIMS

In Coláiste an Chreagáin we will endeavor to:

- Provide a curriculum appropriate to all students in a safe and caring environment.
- Foster a spirit of co-operation and mutual respect between students, staff and community. ● Enable each student to reach his/her full potential by recognising the singular and unique talents of each student.
- Promote the development of personal responsibility founded on honesty, justice and truth. We hope to achieve our aims by recognising, developing and rewarding the inherent good in all our young people.

Figure 1: The three spheres of engagement influencing school attendance



Our Attendance Policy involves helping each student develop to his/her full potential. We believe that improving student outcomes in behavioural, cognitive and emotional experiences

can positively contribute to the quantity and quality of students' school attendance. This is best achieved where each student is encouraged to attend punctually every day.

4. RATIONALE

In Coláiste an Chreagáin we have identified attendance and punctuality as an area of focus. This strategy is intended to foster a good mature attitude towards attendance and punctuality.

5. OBJECTIVES

Through implementation of this strategy Coláiste an Chreagáin expects to:

- To encourage full attendance at school.
- To highlight the importance of punctuality and attendance amongst students and parents.
- To positively enforce punctual attendance morning and evening and at each class throughout the day.
- To maintain an effective attendance record-keeping system through our VS WARE system.
- To develop suitable intervention strategies to improve school attendance and punctuality.

6. POLICY CONTENT

6.1 National Educational Welfare Board

Under legislation every child must attend school regularly up to sixteen years of age or complete at least three years' education in a post primary school; whichever comes later. The National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) was established to support school attendance and follow up on children who are not attending school regularly.

Under the act, parents must notify the school when a child is absent and it is recommended that the explanation be in writing. The school will notify the Educational Welfare Board if a child is absent for 20 days. This is outlined below:

6.2 The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 18

Where a child is absent from the school at which he or she is registered during part of the school day, or for a school day or more than a school day, the parent of such child shall notify the Principal of the school of the reasons for the child's absence.

6.3 The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 21 (4)

The Principal of the school concerned shall inform, by notice of writing to the Educational Welfare Officer, Where:

- 1) A student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than 6 days. 2) The aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from a recognised school during a school year is not less than 20 days.

Coláiste an Chreagáin recognises the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Regular or prolonged absences will have a negative impact on a student's learning and development and therefore should be avoided whenever possible. The school has an Attendance Strategy in place, the aim of which is to promote good attendance in the school. Poor punctuality has a similarly negative impact on the learning of the student, and has the further effect of disrupting the class into which the student is arriving late. The guidelines below should be adhered to by all students.

1. The school day begins at 9.00a.m. Students are expected to be on time for class. Lunch is from 1:15 p.m. to 1.50 p.m. and students are expected to be in their classrooms on time upon their return from lunch.

2. Students who arrive late to school in the morning (after 9.00a.m.) and the afternoon (after 1.50 p.m.) must report to the secretary's office and sign in the Late Book. 3. When a student is absent, the student must present an absence note to the attendance officer on the day they return to school.

4. A student may not leave school during the school day without permission;

a. If a student needs to attend an appointment, she must present a Permission to Leave note at the office and sign out in the Sign-out book.

b. On return the same day, the student must sign back in at the office.

c. If a student leaves school and does not return on the same day, an absence note is required on return to school.

d. If a student has no note she may not leave school without the permission of the Principal or Deputy Principal.

e. Any contact with parents/guardians in relation to leaving school must be made through the office.

7. PUPILS ATTENDING CLASSES IN COLÁISTE AN CHREAGÁIN .

1. Pupils should go to and return from these classes in an orderly and prompt manner.

2. Students must respect the authority of the Principal and teachers of Coláiste an Chreagáin.

3. Attendance at classes in Coláiste an Chreagáin will be recorded and monitored on a weekly basis by the class teacher and Attendance Officer.

4. Introduction to the journal as part of the settling in programme and in September for all year groups by the class tutor.

8. THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

Coláiste an Chreagáin has a positive and proactive approach towards attendance matters and encourages parents to take an active role in the schooling of their children. It is a legal requirement that schools will:

- a) be open for 166 sessions each school year;
- b) maintain attendance registers;
- c) accurately record and monitor all absenteeism and lateness;
- d) clearly distinguish between absence which is authorised and absence which is unauthorised;
- e) submit, termly, absence returns to the National Educational Welfare Board;
- f) liaise with the National Educational Welfare Officer regarding absence issues and meet with relevant families;
- g) inform the National Educational Welfare Board of students who are suspended from school for six days or more.

The following procedures are used by the school:

- a) parents are given attendance information through letters, phone calls, text, student reports or VShare.
- b) Teachers/Attendance Officer/ VSHARE keep records of absence and punctuality for each student in their year.
- c) Teachers must take a roll for each class on VShare.
- d) The Guidance/Pastoral Care team are alerted of students at risk.
- e) Post-registration truancy is monitored through the taking of class registers and spot checks. Parents are promptly informed of any post registration truancy.

The school aims to create an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance by rewarding students who have achieved 100% attendance and punctuality with a School Certificate.

Full Attendance and Punctuality Certificates can only be awarded to students who attend each day on time. Taking regular half days (6 or more) for explained or unexplained reasons precludes a student from receiving full attendance.

9. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Coláiste an Chreagáin acknowledges the contribution of all members of the school community in the implementation of this Attendance and Punctuality Strategy.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENTS

- Students are expected to be in school before 8:55 a.m. and remain for all classes. Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during the school day.
- Students are responsible for bringing in notes of explanation regarding punctuality and attendance and for giving them to Attendance Officer.

- Students who have a medical/dental appointment during the course of the school day, must bring a signed Permission to Leave note from their school journal requesting permission to leave school early.
- It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation (e.g. appointment slips, notes etc.) and present them to the office for all appointments that will prevent them from attending a class. Such documentation should be presented prior to their release from school.
- Students must report to the office if late arriving to school in the morning and the afternoon. If a student has no note she may not leave school without permission from the Principal or Deputy Principal and SIGN the Sign Out Book in the office. If a student returns to school during class time he/she must SIGN back in at the office. ● Students must take responsibility for their own attendance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children attend the school at which they are registered regularly, on time, dressed in the school uniform and in a fit condition to learn. (Parents are also responsible for ensuring that their children stay at school once they have registered). Parents can do a great deal to support the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents should:

- a) to support the school's attendance strategy in compliance with the EWO Act 2000;
- b) ensure your child attends school regularly;
- c) be aware of letters from school which their child brings home;
- d) ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day; e) ensure that their child only misses school for reasons which are unavoidable or justified, such as illness;
- f) always notify the school as soon as possible — preferably on the first morning — of any absence;
- g) confirm this in writing when the child returns to school;
- h) avoid booking family holidays during the school term;
- i) talk to the school if they are concerned that their child may be reluctant to attend;
- j) avoid collecting their child unexpectedly from school as this causes significant disruption to teaching and learning;
- k) to reply, where necessary to communications from the school relating to attendance and punctuality.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL & DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

- The Principal and Deputy Principal to carry out spot checks on absences.
- Apply disciplinary procedures to students for unexcused absences and lateness. ● If a student has no note he/she may not leave school without the permission of the Principal or Deputy Principal.

- To ensure adequate systems are in place to record attendance and absence of students.
- To monitor attendance records regularly.
- To oversee the submission of reports to the Educational Welfare Officer as required by the Education Welfare Act 2000.
- To inform parents/guardians of procedures for the notification of absences and withdrawal of students from the school.
- To remind students of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality and the negative impact of irregular school attendance on student progress.
- To work in cooperation with the Principal, Attendance Officer, Year Head, Pastoral Care Team, Class Tutors, Class Teachers and Administration Staff to implement the school policy.
- To liaise with the Pastoral Care Team, Year Head and Attendance Officer in order to address difficulties regarding student attendance.
- To encourage teachers to record attendance for each lesson.
- To follow up students who fail to turn up for detention for lateness.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ATTENDANCE OFFICER

- Record student absences and file all absence notes as per year group.
- Record all verbal and written communication from parents/guardians to the attendance officer.
- Record student absences.
- To monitor the recording of attendance on VShare.
- Contact parents' where appropriate by letter, re student's number of absences on reaching fifteen days during an academic year.
- Good attendance and punctuality will be acknowledged in the reports issued to students and parents/guardians at the end of the first term and at the end of the academic year. ● Update attendance from the teachers list of students partaking in a school related activity.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CLASS TEACHER

- All teachers will keep individual class attendance records for every class taught on VShare.
- Classteachers will follow up on student absences and report to the Attendance officer if necessary.
- Students away for school activities must not be marked absent.
- Promote and encourage good attendance in class.

- Teachers may communicate with parents/guardians at parent teacher meetings on the importance and value of good attendance.
- To record attendance on VSWARE during periods of S&S.
- To provide a list of students partaking in a school related activity, to the attendance officer so that the roll can be amended for the school activity.

10. ATTENDANCE INCENTIVES

- Coláiste an Chreagáin will recognise students' who achieve full attendance in the school year by presenting the students with a certificate of full attendance.at the end of term.
- Presenting certificates to pupils who have full and almost full attendance at the end of each year and who have produced notes of absence for time missed.
- Organising attendance drives twice a year (last three weeks before Christmas and last three weeks before the summer holidays). All pupils with one week, two weeks and three weeks' full attendance will be included in a draw for a prize and a certificate.

11. DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

The remaining content of this policy outlines in detail the whole school approach to the following attendance and punctuality procedures:

- Daily monitoring of attendance at 9.00am and 1.50pm.
- Daily monitoring of punctuality at 9.00am and 1.50pm. • Recording of daily attendance for each class.
- 0 Recording lateness.
- Recording notes and communications.
- Recording early departures.
- Sanctions for lateness.
- Sanctions for unexcused absences.
- Informing parents when concerns arise.

12. STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING ATTENDANCE:

The following strategies will be employed to improve attendance:

- The school curriculum, insofar as is practicable, will be flexible and relevant to the needs of the individual child.
- Coláiste an Chreagáin will promote development of good self-esteem and self-worth in its pupils.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs in accordance with DEY guidelines.

- Attendance rates of pupils will be monitored by the class teacher in the first instance.
- The school will maintain regular communication, offering updates and reminders to promote attendance and punctuality.
- Where concerns arise, the class teacher or secretary monitoring attendance brings the concern to the attention of the Attendance Officer and/or Principal.
- The class teacher will encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually.
- The class teacher will ensure that contact is made with parents/guardians in instances where absences are not explained. A standard note is used for this purpose.
- The class teacher will keep a daily record of attendance on VS Ware.
- Attendance figures are monitored by the Attendance Officer.
- The principal will promote the importance of good school attendance among pupils, parents and staff.
- The Attendance Officer will inform the NEWB:
- When a pupil has been missing for twenty or more days during the course of the school year.
- When a pupil has been suspended from school more than six days under the Code of Behaviour.
- Evidence of non-attendance is a factor in including pupils in the various activities; football, hurling, art, pottery, music, dance, etc.
- Extra-curricular activities, such as those listed will be timetabled for Mondays and Fridays (days traditionally associated with reduced attendance).

13. IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WHO ARE AT RISK OF DEVELOPING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROBLEMS:

The following strategies may be employed to identify students at risk of developing school attendance problems:

- On transfer to Coláiste an Chreagáin, attendance records will be sought from previous schools on pupil attendance.
- Class teachers will inform the Attendance Officer and principal of any concerns s/he may have regarding the attendance of any pupil.
- Contact with various agencies who are involved with such students.

14. ESTABLISHMENT OF CLOSER CONTACTS BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND HOME: Closer home/school relations will be fostered through:

- The Parents Council.
- Attendance at meetings (Parent/Teacher, etc).
- Parent Courses.
- Attendance at Sports Day.
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Attendance at school events (e.g. Concerts, Masses, etc). Newsletters to families.

- Updates on the school website and Social Media.
- Open-door policy in principal's office for daily communication.

15. FOSTERING CONTACTS:

Contact with the following bodies will be fostered and developed in order to promote the good attendance of students in Coláiste an Chreagáin:

- TUSLA.
- Other schools in the vicinity.
- Local GAA clubs, soccer clubs, etc. • Community Gardai.

16. ENCOURAGING FULL PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS IN THE LIFE OF THE SCHOOL:

In so far as is practicable, programmes will be developed with the bodies mentioned above which will encourage the full participation with students in the life of the school. Examples of these are:

- Attendance incentive scheme.
- Counselling (Rainbows, behavioural, bereavement, Get Lippy Club etc). • Gaelic Games and soccer.

17. IDENTIFICATION OF ASPECTS AND STRATEGIES:

The Board of Management, teachers and whole school community will be mindful at all times of:

- The identification of aspects of the operation and management of the school and of the teaching of the school curriculum that may contribute to problems relating to school attendance on the part of certain students.
- The identification of strategies for the removal of those aspects in so far as they are not necessary or expedient for the proper and effective running of the school having regard, in particular, to the educational needs of students.
- The identification of strategies that will encourage more regular attendance at school on the part of such students.
- The need to review this strategy into the future to accommodate the changing needs of the school and of its population.

REVIEW

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This policy was ratified at the Board of Management meeting on Chairman:

Michelle Corn

The policy is due for review in NOVEMBER 2028.