



Kilrush Community School

School Attendance Policy

Kilrush Community School Mission and Ethos

In an Irish and global context, Kilrush Community School endeavours to create an inclusive community of mutual understanding and respect within which students can learn and thrive. We co-create opportunities for every student to fulfil their potential.

Kilrush Community School Aims

1. To develop an excellent learning environment which promotes high expectations of individual performance from students.
2. To give students access to a broad and balanced curriculum within a caring, co-operative and inclusive community.
3. To ensure that all staff and students enjoy equality of esteem and opportunity.
4. To foster among students an awareness of their environment, heritage and health enabling them to play a positive role within the local and wider community.
5. To equip students with a strong sense of self-esteem, self-discipline and self-motivation.
6. To foster universal values of care, inclusion respect and innovation.

School Policy

The legislative context for this School Attendance Policy arises essentially from the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Educational Welfare Services (EWS) which are part of the Tusla Education Support Service (tess) promote school attendance, participation and retention. It operates under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

The aims and objectives of this statutory service are “to ensure that every child either attends school regularly or otherwise receives a minimum education; to ensure and secure every child’s entitlement to education”.

The EWS has appointed Educational Welfare Officers (EWO’s) throughout the country. The board of management, principal, teachers, and other members of staff are obliged to give “all such assistance as may reasonably be required by an EWO in the performance of his/her functions”

Rationale

Attendance at school and full participation in school life is extremely important in a child’s development.

Parents are the primary educators, and the school wants to work in partnership with parents to ensure that the environment is created where children look forward to coming to school and participating in school life.

It is hoped that by constantly monitoring and tracking students’ attendance records, absenteeism will improve, and students will have a positive school experience.

Policy Goals

- Assist towards developing a school environment where all students feel welcome
- Highlight and encourage regular attendance.
- Encourage good communication between parents and school.
- Implement the monitoring and recording aspects of the school’s attendance strategy successfully.
- Establish procedures for monitoring attendance and good record keeping.
- Develop working relationships with relevant agencies such as the Education Welfare Services (EWS)
- Support students and parents where attendance issues arise

The Obligation of Parents

The school expects all students registered in the school to attend classes every day and attend organised events within the school day, both in and out of school. It is the parents’ legal responsibility to ensure that children under 16 years old and who have not yet completed 3 years at post-primary school, attends school every day

The school is obliged to record the reason(s) for a student's absence on any particular day. The school code states that each student is obliged:

"To attend school on all school days and to present to the Year Head an explanatory note from his/her parent(s), legal guardian(s) in the case of each absence".

While parents may phone the school to report a student's absence, it is preferable that all absences are recorded on the Vsware Parental App. The school records student absence under the designated regulations of the EWS.

These are:

- Illness.
- Urgent Family Reasons e.g. Bereavement.
- Expulsion.
- Suspension.
- Other e.g. holidays.
- Unexplained.
- Transfer to another school.

It is helpful if parents indicate the particular reason for a student's absence. Parents who fail to send in a letter of explanation of absence will result in the absence being reported as 'unexplained'.

Parents/guardians should ensure that their son/daughter comes to school on time and in her/his full school uniform.

Should a student be absent from school for a period of **five days or more**, without the school being informed as to the reason for the absence, parents/guardians will be contacted by telephone. Failing this a letter will be sent home seeking the reason(s) for absence.

Prior to a 'Tusla Education Welfare Services' school attendance referral, the school will adhere to all internal attendance protocols.

The School's Obligations

As per the Education Welfare Act, 2000, any named student who is aged between 6 and 16 years of age and who has not yet completed 3 years of post-primary education, whichever comes later and who has reached a cumulative total of 20 or more days absence from school must be reported to Tusla Educational Welfare Services. The school will report on student absences on two occasions throughout the school year.

The school is obliged to inform by notice in writing an Educational Welfare Officer where:

- A student is suspended from school for a period of not less than six days.
- The aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from school during the school year is not less than twenty.
- A student's name is, for whatever reason, removed from the school register.
- A student is, in the opinion of the principal, not attending school regularly.

The school will seek an explanation, where one hasn't been provided, for the failure of a student to transfer from Primary School into the Community School, where an application has been accepted.

School Register

There are two occasions when you may remove a child from your school register:

- a) If the principal receives a confirmation letter from another recognised school indicating that a student who had attended Kilrush Community School has now been registered in another school, then you may remove the student from your school register except where the child may be still receiving any portion of their education in your school.
- b) If the principal receives notification in writing from Tusla Alternative Education and Registration Service indicating that a student has been placed on the Section 14 register and is being home schooled.

Attendance Records

A student's attendance or absence will be recorded throughout the day on VShare.

Notes relating to absence should be written in on the VShare Parental App and presented, for school records.

Parents/Guardians are officially notified, by way of the school reports three/four times a year, of the number of days their son/daughter was absent from school.

Part Days (Appointments, Sick etc.)

- Students that have permission to leave school early e.g., for a medical appointment etc, must inform the school on the VShare Parental App and sign out at the school office when leaving to attend this appointment.
- Students who become unwell at school, should report to the school office from where their parents/guardians will be contacted. If they need to leave school as a consequence, they are required to sign out at the school office and have their journal stamped. (Please see school Code of Behaviour for procedures regarding consequences/sanctions if a student leaves the school without permission.)
- Students coming to school late or returning to school having left for an appointment earlier must report to Reception.

Emergencies

The parent should ring the school as soon as possible and explain the situation. The secretary can then have the child collected from the class and ready to meet the parent. The child will be signed out on VShare.

Punctuality

School starts at 9.00am. Students arriving to school after 9.00am, must report to reception. Students will be recorded as late on VShare. (Please see school Code of Behaviour for procedures regarding consequences/sanctions if a student is continuously late.)

School Attendance Strategies

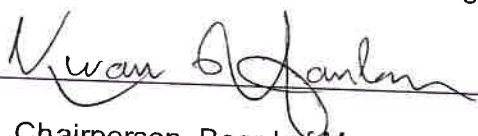
The school will:

- (a) Maintain daily attendance records.
- (b) Alert parents to a student's absence.
- (c) Routinely inform parents of their son/daughter's attendance and punctuality through VSware and school reports.
- (d) Notify parents/guardians in writing whose child has reached 10 days absence and where there is an attendance concern and again when a student is absent for 20 days.
- (e) Where possible, will seek adequate explanations from parents/guardians regarding unexplained absences/unsatisfactory explanations.
- (f) Through the offices of the Home School Liaison co-ordinator and the school's Pastoral Care Team, seek to identify underlying causes for persistent absenteeism.
- (g) Provide support for students with underlying attendance problems.
- (h) Praise/award with recognition those students whose attendance merits such recognition.
- (i) Consider completion of School avoidance toolkit for Post Primary Schools with students where there is a pattern of attendance dropping.

We encourage parents to download and check the VSware parental app regularly in order to monitor daily attendance. A step-by-step guide on using the VSware Parental app is available on our school website. Our HSCL is available to guide parents where necessary.

This Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on

29/09/26

Signed 

Date 29/09/26

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed 

Date 29/09/26

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Next Review date Sept 27