

Policy No: 2

ATTENDANCE

RATIONALE

Regular attendance by pupils at school is key to educational attainment and success and must be actively encouraged within the school environment. Our school aims to foster a culture of regular attendance at school for all pupils – furthermore we seek to identify and support those pupils who are experiencing problems with attendance at school. Formal and informal structures are in place in our school to monitor, report and evaluate patterns of non-attendance amongst pupils. The provisions of the Education Welfare Act (2002) inform and support the policy on attendance.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The school policy is geared towards.

- Encouraging full attendance where possible
- Identifying pupils at risk
- Raising awareness of the importance of school attendance
- Fostering an appreciation of learning

The Welfare Act 2002 places certain demands on parents and Principals in the area of school record of attendance.

Section 18 of this act states that ‘ **the parents of an absent child shall..... Notify the Principal of the school of the reasons of the child’s absence.**’ Section 21 states that ‘ **the Principal shall cause to be maintained a record of non –attendance where a child fails to attend..... and the reasons for such failure**’.

All absences of more than 20 days have to be reported by the School Principal to the National Welfare Officer.

IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

An attendance record will be taken during the first period each morning and returned to the office - notes for absences are required and will be retained by Tutors. Failure to submit notes may require contact with parents.

Students who arrive late to school must report to the office and sign in. A ‘late’ stamp will be issued in the Journal. Any student leaving the school must sign out, and have their note countersigned. A ‘signed out’ stamp will be issued in the Journal.

All teachers must check the attendance record during the day and report any irregularities to the office.

Attendance will be monitored by a special duty teacher and spot checks on attendance will take place. In cases where a pupil has accumulated absences of 15 days in a school year, a letter will be sent to parents (a) alerting them of the accumulated absences and (b) informing parents that the child may be brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Board under the 20 days absence rule. The letter is intended to highlight the issue for parents and to impress upon them the need to keep all absences to a minimum. The school will do everything in its power to encourage good attendance by all pupils. The school will provide excellent facilities (including canteen facilities, computer labs, laboratories, pastoral care system, student council, extra curricular activities). The school will also encourage students to participate in the life of the school. (e.g. lunchtime activities, various clubs, tours, games, musicals, competitions, etc.). The school will also work towards ensuring a happy school environment exists so that students will look forward to attending school. Teachers will be encouraged to praise students wherever possible and the school will also facilitate this through Newsletters, Assemblies, Yearbook, Well Done Cards, Good attendance Cards, Honour Boards, etc.

MONITORING PROCEDURES

The Principal/Deputy Principals will monitor this policy

SUCCESS CRITERIA

The success of this policy will be evidenced by an improved attendance record of students.

REVIEW PROCEDURES

The Board of Management and a representative group of the teaching staff will review the policy on an annual basis. Next review due 2010/2011