

COLÁISTE/GAELCHOLÁISTE CHOILM

BALLINCOLLIG

CO. CORK

SCHOOL POLICY ON

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

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1. INTRODUCTION

A good education gives every child the best possible start in life. It helps them mature and develop into responsible young adults and it assists them in securing and maintaining meaningful employment.

The purpose of our school policy on attendance and punctuality is to encourage regular school attendance and participation in the education system. It is envisaged that students would stay in school as long as possible, preferably to completion of Leaving Certificate.

2. THE EDUCATION WELFARE ACT 2000

The main provisions of the Education Welfare Act are as follows:

- 1) Schools are required to establish and maintain a school register, showing attendance or non-attendance for each student.
- 2) Every child must attend school regularly up to sixteen years of age or complete at least three years of education in post primary, whichever comes later.
- 3) The act established a National Education Welfare Board. The NEWB has appointed Education Welfare Officers to work with schools to encourage school attendance.
- 4) The act stipulates that the school is obliged to report to the NEWB every time
 - it decides to expel a student
 - a student has been absent for 20 days or more cumulatively
 - a student's attendance causes concern for the school
 - a student's name is removed from the school register
 - a student has been suspended for six days consecutively
- 5) Schools must prepare a student absence report. This information must be submitted five times a year in summary format for all students.
- 6) Absences must be categorised under six headings
 - A. illness
 - B. Family Business
 - C. Appointment
 - D. Other (Religion, Holiday etc.)
 - E. Unexplained
 - F. Suspended
 - G. Transfer to another school

3. COLÁISTE CHOILM POLICY ON ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE AND ROLL SHEETS

- Accurate roll attendance sheets are kept. These sheets are legal documents and will be kept on file for a period of seven years

- Teachers have a duty of care in the collection, completion and return of these roll sheets. The system to be followed is
 - 1) Rolls to be taken at 9.40am and 2.40pm daily
 - 2) The roll is to be taken within the first five minutes of class
 - 3) A nominated student collects the roll. He/she presents the roll to the teacher. He/she waits by the teacher until roll is completed. He/she returns the roll.

- Lists of students who will be absent with leave are handed into the office by teachers on the day prior to the activity for example practical exams, work experience, ECA etc. List of students also posted on staff notice board.

- Teachers keep individual rolls in their teachers' yearbook for all classes. Absences are followed up and notes are checked in the next class.

ATTENDANCE AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

1. Students are required to be in the school building by 8.55am each morning and 1.55pm after lunch.

2. In the event of an absence the student must present a written note of explanation on his return to:
 - 1) The Year Head
 - 2) The Tutor
 - 3) The individual Subject Teacher

3. Students who wish to leave the school early for an appointment (e.g. Doctor, Dentist etc.) must present a note of explanation in advance to their year head. This note is signed by the year head and must be produced at the office by the student before they can sign out for their scheduled appointment.

4. In the event of a student becoming ill while at school, parental/guardian permission must be received before they sign out through office. He/she must remain at reception until collected.

5. Full attendance and participation in timetabled PE classes is required unless a medical certificate to the contrary is supplied.

6. To facilitate the above process Dialanns must be in the possession of students at all times.

ATTENDANCE AND PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

The primary responsibility for a students attendance in school lies with the parents (refer to The Education Welfare Act 2000).

- When a child is absent from school for any reason parents must notify the school by telephone on the second day of absence.

- Parents provide a note of explanation for any absences in their sons/daughters Dialann. These notes are inspected on the child's return to school.

- Parents must send their son or daughter to school until the age of sixteen or until three years education in post primary is completed whichever comes later.

- The Department of Education recommends – that parents must try to ensure that family holidays are scheduled during holiday times.

- Parents should only write notes of non-participation from PE classes if accompanied by a Doctor's medical certificate.

OUR ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES

The following are a list of strategies that we have put in place in Coláiste Choilm in order to encourage attendance:

1. The appointment of an attendance officer.
2. Building a warm, caring, respectful and compassionate atmosphere in which every person feels accepted and valued.
3. The provision of an excellent extra curricular activity package which has something for everyone and encourages the participation of "at risk" students.
4. A modern meaningful Curriculum which is inclusive of all students.
5. Well-structured pastoral care system.
6. Transition Year programme.
7. Leaving Certificate Applied programme.
8. Rewarding and Certification of good attendance [see appendix 1]
9. A comprehensive roll attendance system.
10. Comprehensive supervised evening study.
11. The school operates a "text a parent" system for students with a poor attendance record.

THE ROLE OF THE ATTENDANCE OFFICER

The attendance officer promotes good attendance and punctuality by:

- 1) Ensuring that the roll sheet system is operating effectively and efficiently.
- 2) Liaising with Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Tutors, Staff and Parents.
- 3) Contacting parents on the second day of absence if no contact has been made to the school.
- 4) Contacting parents when their child has reached ten days of cumulative absences reminding them of the twenty-day rule. [see appendix 2 sample letters]
- 5) Co-ordinates the "text a parent system" in cases of poor attendance.
- 6) Contacting the education welfare officer once a student has reached 20 days absence cumulatively.
- 7) Contacting the EWO when a student has been suspended for 6 consecutive days or more.
- 8) Preparing the annual report for the NEWB and ensuring that student absence reports are submitted 5 times a year on designated dates [see appendix 3 – absence report form]
- 9) Rewarding good attendance [see appendix 1 – sample certificate]

4. SCHOOL POLICY ON PUNCTUALITY

1. Attendance Officer will co-ordinate attendance and punctuality.
2. Students are requested to be in school at 8.55am each morning and by 1.55pm after lunch.
3. Classes begin at 9.00am.
4. School finishes at 4.00pm except on Wednesday when school finishes at 12.45pm.
5. Lunch break is from 1.15pm to 2.00pm and only senior cycle students are allowed leave the school during this break.
6. Students who arrive late with a satisfactory note of explanation from parent/guardian will receive a late slip from the office, to be presented to the subject teacher.
7. Students who arrive late with no note/unsatisfactory note of explanation will receive a late stamp in their Dialann and will receive a sanction (as written in discipline policy)
 - ❖ It is the duty of the subject teacher at 9.00am and 2pm to check that a student who arrives late to this class has either a late slip or a late stamp in their Dialann.
8. Students who arrive late to class during the day will be dealt with by the subject teacher using the following steps:
 - 1) Documented in teacher journal and sanction given by subject teacher.
 - 2) Documented in Dialann to parent/guardian.
 - 3) Re-occurrence to be communicated to the tutor/year head/attendance officer
 - 4) Students talking with another subject teacher or otherwise must have a signed note of explanation in Dialann from that subject teacher or whom-ever delayed them for class.
 - ❖ Parental/guardian signatures are requested as acknowledgement of all communication in the Dialann.
9. A record of non-punctual students will be kept in the main office and a daily record to be posted in the staff room notice board.

5. PARENTAL INFORMATION

ON

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

IN

COLÁISTE/GAELCHOLÁISTE CHOILM

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

INTRODUCTION

A good education gives every child the best possible start in life. It helps them to mature and develop into responsible young adults and it assists them in securing and maintaining meaningful employment. The purpose of our school policy on attendance and punctuality is to encourage regular school attendance and participation in the education system.

WHY IS GOOD ATTENDANCE AND BEING PUNCTUAL IMPORTANT FOR YOUR CHILD?

- It enables your child to keep up with schoolwork and makes school a more positive learning experience.
- It teaches them good habits for the future.
- It prevents them from getting involved in anti-social behaviour.

YOUR CHILD'S ATTENDANCE

The Education Welfare Act (2000):

- The purpose of the act is to encourage regular school attendance and participation in education and training for as long as possible, preferably until he/she completes his/her education.
- Every child must attend school regularly until the age of sixteen or complete at least three years post primary education, whichever comes later.
- It is the central responsibility of parents to ensure that they comply with the regulations stated in the Education Welfare Act 2000, with regard to the attendance and participation of their child in the school to which they have been enrolled.

The National Education Welfare Board (NEWB):

- The National Education Welfare Board was established to support school attendance and follow up on children who are not attending school regularly.
- The NEWB has appointed Education Welfare Officers to work with schools to encourage school attendance.

WHAT THE NEWB EXPECTS FROM THE SCHOOL

Under the act, a school is obliged to report to the NEWB every time

- It decides to expel students
- A student's name is removed from the school register
- A student has reached 20 days absence cumulatively
- A student has been suspended for six days
- A Principal is concerned about a student's attendance

Schools are asked to submit information about individual student absences five times a year.

PARENTAL - POINT OF INFORMATION

- Where there is concern about your child's attendance or about reasons given you may be
 - 1) Contacted by the schools attendance Officer
 - 2) Visited by an Education Welfare Officer.

ATTENDANCE AND PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

The primary responsibility for a student's attendance in school lies with the parents r.f. Education Welfare Act 2000.

- When a child is absent from school for any reason parents must notify the school by telephone on the second day of the absence.
- Parents are expected to provide a note of explanation for any absences in their son's/daughter's Dialann. These notes are inspected on the child's return to school.
- Parents should only write notes of non-participation from PE classes if accompanied by a Doctor's medical certificate.
- Where possible all appointments should be made outside school time.
- Should your son/daughter have occasion to leave school early for an appointment or otherwise the school requires a signed note of explanation in the Dialann.

ATTENDANCE AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

- Students are requested to be in school at 8.55am each morning and 1.55pm after lunch
- In the event of an absence the student must present written note of explanation on his/her return to
 - 1) The Year Head
 - 2) The Tutor
 - 3) The Subject Teacher
- Students who wish to leave school early for an appointment or otherwise must present a signed note of explanation in advance to the Year Head.
- The note must be signed by the Year Head and must be produced at the office by the student before they can sign out officially.
- In the event of a student becoming ill while at school, parental/guardian permission must be received before they sign out through office. He/she must remain at reception until collected.
- Students are expected to always have their Dialanns in their possession.
- Students who arrive late for school must have a signed note of explanation in order to receive a late slip from the office.
- Students who arrive late with no note will get a late stamp in their Dialann and receive the appropriate sanction before going to class.
- Students are expected to be on time for class throughout the school day.
- Students are expected to have full attendance and participation in timetabled PE classes unless a medical certificate to the contrary is supplied.

COLÁISTE/GAELCHOLÁISTE CHOILM

SCHOOL POLICY ON PUNCTUALITY

1. Attendance Officer will co-ordinate attendance and punctuality.
2. Students are requested to be in school at 8.55am each morning and 1.55pm after lunch.
3. Classes begin at 9.00am.
4. School finishes at 4.00pm except on Wednesday when school finishes at 12.45pm.
5. Lunch break is from 1.15pm to 2.00pm and only senior cycle students are allowed leave the school during this break.
6. Students who arrive late with a satisfactory note of explanation from parent/guardian will receive a late slip from the office, to be presented to the subject teacher.
7. Students who arrive late with no note/unsatisfactory note of explanation will receive a late stamp in their Dialann and will receive a sanction (as written in discipline policy)
 - ❖ It is the duty of the subject teacher at 9.00am and 2pm to check that a student who arrives late to this class has either a late slip or a late stamp in their Dialann.
8. Students who arrive late to class during the day will be dealt with by the subject teacher using the following steps:
 - 5) Documented in teacher journal and sanction given by subject teacher.
 - 6) Documented in Dialann to parent/guardian.
 - 7) Re-occurrence to be communicated to the year head/attendance officer
 - ❖ Parental/guardian signatures are requested as acknowledgement of all communication in the Dialann.
9. A record of non-punctual students will be kept in the main office and a daily record to be posted in the staff room notice board.

PARENTS ROLE IN PUNCTUALITY AND ATTENDANCE

The primary responsibility for a student's attendance in school lies with the parents r.f. Education Welfare Act 2000.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- Promote regular attendance
- Ensure that your child is in school on time.
- Make contact with the school on second day of absence.
- Ensure that a note of explanation is written in their Dialann on returning to school signed by a parent/guardian.
- Highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Attend annual parent teacher meetings to find out how your child is progressing.
- Organise family holidays outside school term.
- Ensure that part-time work doesn't affect your child's progress

EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS:

Young people between the ages of 16 and 18 who leave school to work must register with the National Education Welfare Board, so as to ensure that they can be helped with further education and training.

Coláiste/Gaelcholáiste Choilm
Ballincollig, Co. Cork

Attendance Certificate

This certificate is awarded to

in recognition of full attendance

for Term _____

Principal: _____

Attendance
Officer: _____



APPENDIX 2 - SAMPLE LETTERS

Sample Letter 1

Introductory letter to all parents concerning the Education Welfare Act, 2000.

Sample Letter 2

Letter to parents regarding a child's absence where no contact has been made with the school.

Sample Letter 3

Letter regarding a child's absence where the school is concerned about a child's non-attendance and the concern is being passed to the NEWB.

Sample Letter 4

Letter regarding a child's absence where the school is not concerned about the pattern of absences but where the child's name is being passed on to the NEWB.

SAMPLE LETTER 1

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am writing to you to inform you about the Education Welfare Act 2000 and about some of the responsibilities we now share under this act.

The purpose of the act is to encourage regular school attendance and participation in education and training for as long as possible preferably until he/she completes his/her leaving Certificate. Every child must attend school regularly until the age of sixteen or complete at least three years post primary education, whichever comes later.

The National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) was established to support school attendance and follow up on children who are not attending school regularly. The school requests that as a parent/guardian that you inform us of your child's absence, stating the reason, on the second day of their absence of school.

It is school policy that when your son/daughter returns to school that he/she provides a detailed note for his/her absence in his/her Dialann signed by a parent/guardian. All absences must be accounted for by the school in a student absence report to the NEWB. The school will notify the NEWB if a child is absent for 20 days or more or if a child's absence is causing concern. If your child is sick or absent for other good reasons no action will be taken by the NEWB. However, where there is concern about your child's attendance or about reasons given, you may be visited by an Education Welfare Officer who will discuss your child's education with you. The officer will work with you and take full account of the circumstances of the child and family before deciding what further action is required to ensure that your child receives his/her entitlement to an education.

Should you require any further information you can ring the National Lo-Call Education Helpline on 1890 36 36 66.

Yours sincerely,

SAMPLE LETTER 2

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you regarding <name> attendance at school.

<Name> has been absent on the following days <days>. To date, the school has not received any letter or contact from you. You are asked to contact the school as soon as possible to arrange an appointment and discuss the matter with <teacher>.

Under the law, every child must attend school regularly up to sixteen years of age or complete at least three years post primary, whichever comes later. When your child is absent, you as a parent must let the school know the reason for this absence every time. It is school policy that you do this in writing.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

SAMPLE LETTER 3

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you regarding <name> attendance at school.

<Name> has been absent on the following days <days>. The school has written to you about this matter but has not received an explanation from you. The school is now very concerned that <name> is not receiving an education and we will be writing to the National Education Welfare Board to pass on our concern. An Education Welfare Officer may therefore be in contact with you shortly to discuss the matter further.

Under the law, every child must attend school regularly up to sixteen years of age or complete at least three years post primary, whichever comes later. When your child is absent, you as a parent must let the school know the reason for this absence every time. It is school policy that you do this in writing.

If you wish to discuss <name> attendance, please contact the school to arrange an appointment to meet with <teacher> as soon as possible.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours truly,

SAMPLE LETTER 4

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you regarding <name> attendance at school. He/she has been absent on the following days <days>.

Because <name> has been absent through illness, the school will be reporting the absence in the normal way but will not be informing the National Education Welfare Board that it is concerned about your child's educational welfare.

Under the law, every child must attend school regularly up to sixteen years of age or complete at least three years post primary, whichever comes later. When your child is absent, you as a parent must let the school know the reason for this absence every time. It is school policy that you do this in writing.

If you wish to discuss <name> attendance please contact the school to arrange an appointment to meet with the <teacher> as soon as possible.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours truly,

National Educational Welfare Board,
16 – 22 Green St, Dublin 7.
www.newb.ie



EXAMPLE COMPLETED STUDENT ABSENCE REPORT - PERIOD 3

Roll Number	1234567U
School name	Test School
School address	Address details here Address details here Address details here
Telephone number	0000 / 99999999
Period covered	(Tick the return period this submission covers) 01/09/2004 to 31/12/2004 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (due by 04/02/2005) - (Report Period 3) 01/09/2004 to 31/03/2005 <input type="checkbox"/> (due by 08/04/2005) -(Report Period 4) 01/09/2004 to when school closes <input type="checkbox"/> (due by 08/07/2005) -(Report Period 5) <i>Please note that the data is cumulative from the start of the school year. Absences for individual students are carried forward from one reporting period to the next and reported even if no additional absences have occurred.</i>
Signed (Principal)	XX <i>I certify that this return is in accordance with school records.</i>
Date:	04/02/2005.....

To Submit:

Post	School Returns Section, National Educational Welfare Board, 16 – 22 Green Street, Dublin 7
On line	www.schoolreturn.ie

This report is to be used:

- Where a student is absent 20 days or more and the reasons why
- The Principal is concerned about a Student's Attendance
- Students whose names have been removed from the register (e.g. expelled/transferred to another school).



Education Helpline

1890 36 36 66

CATEGORY OF ABSENCE

- A** Illness
- B** Urgent Family Reasons
- C** Expelled
- D** Suspended
- E** Other (e.g Religious observance, Death of Student, Emigration, Holidays)
- F** Unexplained
- G** Transfer to another school

Do not include students who are sixteen years of age and have completed three years post primary level or are pursuing Adult Education or PLC courses unless the student has been suspended or expelled.

Name of Student	PPSN	Class/Year	Address of student	Gender	Date of Birth	Name of parent(s)/ guardian(s)	Parent/ Guardian Phone Number	Enter cumulative Number of Days absent in each category (use list above)							School comment		
								A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total		
Joe A	1234567Y	1st	XXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX	M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>	22/07/1998	Mr and Mrs A	0000 / 999999								25	25	Very concerned as absences unexplained
Mary Y	1234567ZZ	1st	XXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX	M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	21/12/1998	Mr X and Ms Y	0000 / 999999								26	26	Genuine Certified illness
Tom C	1234567ZX	2nd	XXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX	M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>	04/09/1996	Ms C	0000 / 999999								17	17	Less than 20 but concerned as no reasons yet received
				M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>				A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total		
				M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>				A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total		
				M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>				A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total		
				M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>				A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total		
				M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>				A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total		