

ATTENDANCE/PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Castlerea Community School strives to create an educational environment where students come to learn and to understand themselves, their abilities and their world. In the environment students are supported and encouraged so that they take responsibility for themselves so as to become independent adults.

This policy sets out to maximize each student's learning experiences by encouraging regular and punctual attendance at school.

Students are encouraged to attend school fully and regularly. Good attendance is vital for success and makes school a more meaningful experience.

Regular, punctual attendance maximizes academic performance and progress as well as skill in sports, social interaction and personal development. Regular attendance supports and progresses students' intellectual, emotional and psychological well being. Good attendance and punctuality lay the foundation stone for successful working lives, where they are perceived as mature, reliable and responsible persons.

In accordance with the requirements of the Education Welfare Act 2000 Castlerea Community School will keep adequate school attendance absence/records and develop school attendance strategies.

Under this Act, Castlerea Community School will return details as required to the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) of students who have exceeded twenty days absence and students whose attendance is a cause of concern. The school will also make an annual return on the general levels of attendance in the school.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Management

- Ensures that a policy is in place and is reviewed regularly

Principal

- Facilitates policy formation and review
- Reports to Board of Management on attendance issues
- Ensures that the curriculum and timetable facilitate good attendance
- Contacts Parents/Guardians re: poor attendance/punctuality
- Maintains regular contact with the Education Welfare Officer.
- Liaises with relevant school personnel re: at risk students

Deputy Principal

- Co-ordinates the daily roll calls.
- Displays absence records daily on the Staff Notice Board
- Signs permission slips for students leaving school for part of the school day and records same on notice board in Staffroom
- Informs tutors of students with unexplained absences from the previous afternoon
- Liaises with Principal, Year Heads and Tutors
- Contacts Parents/Guardians on a regular basis as part of a random check or where an absence arouses suspicion
- Provides individual student attendance records to Year Heads and LCA Co-ordinator as required
- Produces the required returns for the NEWB
- Maintains regular contact with the Education Welfare Officer

Year Head

- Liaises with Principal, Deputy Principal and on a more regular basis with tutors re: attendance/punctuality.
- Monitors attendance by checking the student journal and the daily printout displayed in the staffroom
- Signs permission slips for students leaving school for part of the school day and records same on notice board in the Staffroom

Class Tutor

- Takes Roll Call at each tutor class
- Checks absence notes and stores same for one year
- Monitors punctuality from Journal
- Liaises with Year Head
- Furnishes explanations for absences to the Deputy Principal where a student is being reported to the NEWB

Class Teachers

- Record a roll call for each class
- Inform the Deputy Principal of any anomalies which they detect
- Are legally responsible for their child's attendance at school
- Must inform the school, in writing preferably or by phone, of each absence with an accompanying explanation. This also applies even if the student has reached eighteen years.
- Are required to have their child at school on time

Parent/Guardians are requested to comply with legislation by:

- Planning family holidays during holiday time and not during term time
- Refusing requests for days/time off for activities such as shopping trips, concerts, sports events, visits to the barber etc.,
- Arranging necessary appointments (medical, dental) for after school where possible.
- Discouraging involvement in part-time work. School attendance suffers as a result.

Strategies to improve Attendance/Punctuality

- Student attendance and punctuality details are printed on school reports. Parents are asked to check these details and to contact the Deputy Principal where queries arise.
- Students with attendance/punctuality record is sent to the Parent/Guardian
- Lunchtime detention will operate for students who are regularly unpunctual. Further sanctions including suspension from school will be imposed where necessary.
- Parents/Guardians may be asked to meet the Principal and/or Deputy Principal in order to devise a strategy to improve attendance.
- Referral to outside agencies may be necessary.
- Students with full attendance are recognized at the Annual Awards Ceremony.
- Individual teachers may implement their own sanction re: punctuality, such as sanction having received prior approval by the Principal/Deputy Principal.