

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Adopted by the Board of Management of Alexandra College, Dublin, August 2014, this policy is informed by the school's Mission Statement which aims to provide opportunities for students to benefit from teaching and learning which lead to good academic achievement.

1. Rationale

- a To comply with the Education Welfare Act 2000
- b To maintain accurate records of school attendance by students
- c To form habits of regular and punctual attendance in students
- d To discourage absenteeism, lateness and unwarranted withdrawal of students by parents/guardians during the school day or school term
- e To develop a sense of personal responsibility in students
- f To make students aware of the importance of a good habit of attendance for later life

2. Goals

- Attendance by all students for the full school year
- Attendance by all students for each full school day
- Attendance by all students at all classes
- Minimum rate of absenteeism
- The early detection and correction of patterns of poor attendance
- Accurate recording of students' attendance

3. Content

- The Attendance records for all students will be maintained by the College as set out in this Policy.
- The Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Form Tutors and all teachers will encourage regular attendance by students.
- Alexpress and other written means, meetings with parents and other occasions will be used to communicate to parents the importance of regular attendance and the negative impact of unwarranted absences.
- Teachers will discuss attendance records of students with parents/guardians during the course of Parent/Teacher meetings.
- Where unauthorised absences are suspected parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

- To ensure that adequate systems are in place to record attendances and absences of students
- To monitor attendance records regularly
- To make reports to the Education Welfare Officer as required by the Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- To inform parents/guardians and students of procedures for the notification of absences/withdrawal of students from the School
- To remind students and parents/guardians of the importance of regular attendance and the negative impact of frequent absences on student progress

Deputy Principal

- To encourage regular attendance by students
- To receive reports from Year Heads on issues relating to attendance
- To monitor and investigate unauthorised absences of students from the School or from classes in consultation with Year Heads
- To contact parents/guardians where unauthorised absences are suspected in consultation with Year Heads

Year Heads

- To monitor student attendance regularly
- To **seek and file** written explanations for student absences from parents/guardians
- To note trends in absence records of individual students e.g. Monday or Friday absences and to bring these to the attention of the parents/guardians of the students concerned
- To send standard Absence Letters to parents/guardians where frequent absences occur
- To contact parents/guardians where unauthorised absences occur or are suspected and to notify the Deputy Principal of same
- To place students with repeated 'lates' or unexcused absences in Early Morning Detention and check that the students have attended this detention

Form Tutors

- To conduct a daily roll call at Register Class
- To **receive** 'Absence Letters' signed by parents/guardians from students who have been absent and to deposit these letters in the box provided for the purpose beside the Register books near the photocopy room after registration class each day. Absence Letters will then be given to the Principal's PA by the Year Heads to be filed.
- To keep a record of matters relating to attendance/absences of students e.g. failure to provide Absence Letter from parents/guardians.
- To liaise with Year Heads on matters relating to attendance records of students.
- To notify the Year Head of students being referred for Early Morning Detention

Teachers

- To take a roll call in every class
- To follow up on any students who are absent from class

- To give a 'Bad Report' to any student who has an unexcused absence
- To discuss students' attendance records with parents/guardians at Parent/Teacher Meetings
- To impress on students the importance of regular attendance and ensure they understand their responsibility to find out about and to 'catch up' on work missed during their absence

Parents

- To ensure regular attendance of students and avoid unwarranted absences
- To notify the School in writing of the reason for all student absences: such notice should be provided prior to the absence if possible, or otherwise immediately afterwards. Telephone or oral messages relating to student absences must be confirmed in writing as soon as possible. (The school reserves the right not to permit students returning from an absence to attend class until a written explanation is furnished as described above)
- To provide to the School reliable contact telephone numbers and alternative 'emergency' numbers so that the School may contact parents/guardians or other authorised parties if necessary
- To adhere to the procedures set out in this Policy for the withdrawal of students from School during the school day
- To acknowledge and, where necessary reply to, communications from the School in relation to attendance issues

Administration Office

- To post, daily as required, and not later than 9.30am a list of student absences on the Staff Room notice board for the attention of teachers
- To provide the Principal, Deputy Principal and Year Heads with a weekly list of student absences/lateness collated by year group
- To provide the Principal, Deputy Principal and Year Heads with any other list of student attendance which may be required from time to time
- To maintain a record of students withdrawn from school during the school day and their return to the school

5. Attendance Records

Teachers will conduct a roll call in each class.

An official roll call will be conducted at each morning through the 'hand swipe system'. A roll call will be taken every morning at Daily Registration. The Form Tutor will enter a record of student absences/lates in the student reports.

Students will give letters from parents/guardians regarding student absences to the Form Tutor immediately on the student's return to School. These letters will be deposited in the box provided for this purpose at the end of registration period each day.

Parents/Guardians are required to give advance notice in writing of all foreseen absences giving a reason for the absence. Where an absence is unforeseen, the parent/guardian is required to notify the School by telephone on the morning of the absence. This notification must be confirmed by a written letter stating a reason for and duration of the absence.

Where a student is to be withdrawn from the School during the school day, the student must present a written request from the parent/guardian to the Deputy Principal before Class 1. This notice will be presented to the office when the student leaves the School and she must sign the office Attendance Register at reception before she leaves. On returning to the school after an absence for part of a school day the student must again sign the office Attendance Register.

Failure to comply with any of the above procedures for leaving the School during school hours is a serious breach of the School's Code of Conduct. The School reserves the right not to permit students returning from an absence to attend class until a written explanation is furnished as described above.

6. Strategies to Encourage School Attendance

Informing and reminding students and parents of the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 in relation to attendance.

Informing parents through circulars, newsletters and meetings, of the negative impact of absenteeism on the students' education. Encouragement of full attendance by students, particularly on days prior to school breaks

7. Monitoring

The Principal will liaise with the Deputy Principal and Year Heads in monitoring the implementation of the policy.

8. Review and Evaluation

The policy will be reviewed annually by the whole staff at its April meeting