

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY - ST KEVIN'S COLLEGE

The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Sec.21 (1) states: 'The principal of a recognised school shall cause to be maintained in respect of each school year a record of the attendance or non-attendance on each school day of each student registered in the school'.

The Attendance Officer in conjunction with the Form Teachers in Junior Cycle & Senior Cycle record all absences in their class group. Absences in all years are followed up by the respective Attendance Officer/Form Teachers who require notes of explanation from the parent(s)/guardian(s) for each absence.

A text will be sent home each day for each absence reminding parents to furnish a note to the school the following morning.

Sec. 22 (1) of the *Welfare Act* requires the Board of Management to prepare 'a statement of the strategies and measures it proposes to adopt for the purposes of fostering an appreciation of learning among students attending that school and encouraging regular attendance at school on the part of such students'.

- Parents are encouraged, at every available opportunity, to impress on their son(s) the benefits of being at school. This message is reinforced in the school by teachers, Attendance Officer, Form Teachers, Year-Heads, Deputy-Principal and Principal.
- Parents are constantly reminded that absences from school without good reason are detrimental to their son's education as they can create the impression that school has little value. Moreover, vital examination material may be covered during a pupil's absence. In Junior Certificate Science, for example, 10% of the total marks for the examination are allocated to Experiments and any absence while these are being done will almost certainly result in a loss of marks in the examination.
- The school avails of every opportunity [e.g. Meetings with parents, Assemblies] to actively discourage excessive part-time work as it can distort the balance between the world of work and school and diminish the value of education and learning in the eyes of the student.
- The careful monitoring of attendance and the requirement that all absences have to be explained by way of a signed note help reinforce the message that full attendance at school is important.
- Attendance at school is encouraged through an award system of certificates and prizes such as gift vouchers for those with the best attendance records. This is done at our regular assemblies.
- The whole school building is cleaned each evening and the corridors are deliberately bright and freshly painted to create a welcoming atmosphere. Moreover, all students are welcomed by name at the front door each morning by the Principal & Deputy Principal.
- The school discipline code is used to discourage non-authorised absenteeism.

- Form Teachers seek to identify at the earliest possible stage those students who are likely to have erratic attendance records and the Home School Liaison teacher establishes contact with the families concerned in the hope that early intervention may help prevent this problem developing.

In keeping with the requirements of the *Education (Welfare) Act, 2000*, the school shall notify the Education Welfare Officer with responsibility for the school of any instance where:

- i) a student is suspended for 6 days or more
- (ii) the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent in a school year is not less than 20
- (iii) the Principal is of the opinion that a particular student is not attending school regularly.

The school will also inform the parents by letter if their son's attendance is reaching 20 days absence indicating our legal obligations under the Welfare Act 2000.