



## **Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

Approved by the Board of Management on: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Date of next review: 2024/25 academic Year

## **Clonturk Community College School Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

### **Introduction**

Here in Clonturk Community College we understand the positive impact that high levels of attendance can have on student engagement, peer relationships and academic achievement. We have high expectations of ourselves and of our students in terms of attendance and participation and we communicate these expectations to all our internal stakeholders: staff, students and parents. This policy is drafted with the aim to enable students to reach their full potential both academically and socially. The policy will reflect the pastoral nature of our school.

### **Rationale**

The rationale underpinning the formulation of this policy is as follows:

- To form habits of regular and punctual attendance by our students.
- To discourage absenteeism, lateness and unwarranted withdrawal of students during the school day or term.
- To develop a sense of personal responsibility in our students.
- To make all school partners aware of the links between school attendance and academic achievement.
- To enable us to identify students who may be at risk and put supports in place to assist them.
- To comply with the Education Welfare Act 2000.

### **Content**

- Attendance records for all students will be maintained by the School as set out in this Policy
- Every member of staff will encourage regular attendance by students.
- General School communications, 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/Guardian & Teacher meetings.
- Where unauthorised absences are suspected, parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible.
- The Attendance Officer, in consultation with the Student Support Team, will encourage and facilitate regular attendance by children from families with special difficulties or needs.

### **Related Policies**

- Admissions Policy
- Code of Positive Behaviour

### **Recording and Monitoring Attendance:**

- A roll-call is called for every class and recorded on vsware. Roll-Call is set up for the first class of the day and the first class after lunch. Attendance and explanations for absences are checked and recorded during SPHE and/or Tutor Time.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to check on vsware for absence. Parents/Guardians are informed of student absence daily via a vsware notification and/or text.
- Students who present late must present to class, the teacher will adjust roll to late.
- Students who are leaving early must have note in their journal or vsware, this note must be shown to, the first instance, the tutor and in the second instance, the student's year head. A signed note will be provided to the student to present to the office before they will be permitted to sign out.
- No student under the age of 16 will be permitted to leave the premises unaccompanied if they are leaving school early. A parent or guardian (or another adult, appointed in writing, by the parent) must accompany the student when signing out early.
- For students over the age of 16, the above procedure applies, however, students do not require collection.
- For students over the age of 18, the family has an option to allow the student to take responsibility for their education. This is documented using the 'Over 18's permission' Appendix I.
- If a student is absent they must either:
  - provide a signed note from home
  - use vsware to document/explain absence
- Parents have been asked to notify the school on vsware if their child will be absent. Tutor will be required to check vsware during tutor time or SPHE for unexplained absence. Persistent unexplained absences must be reported to the Year Head.

### **Prolonged Unexplained Absence**

- If a student is absent for more than 3 days, the tutor will send a text home using the school absence template '3 day Absence'.
- If there are any suspicions regarding absence, even if it is less than 2-3 days, the tutor will send a text home.
- After one week of absence with no contact, the tutor/year head will phone home.
- For unavoidable absence such as illness, work is available through our virtual learning platform. This is modelled by our teaching staff who will provide work for all of their classes should an absence resulting from illness or CPD occur.

Families are informed after 15 days (Appendix 1) and 20 days (Appendix 2) absenteeism via a letter posted home by the attendance officer.

  - This letter includes supports and strategies outlined below in 'responding to poor attendance'

### **Responding to Poor Punctuality/Attendance:**

- Positive relationships and regular communication with parents and students regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Working with students to identify and understand causes of poor attendance and developing strategies and possible solutions with students and applying a timeframe.
- Referral to the student support team. The SST will devise ways of supporting students who are experiencing issues at school or at home which are contributing to their absenteeism.
- Working with teachers and tutor to develop opportunities for success inside and outside the classroom.
- If needed, involving other agencies in developing strategies to support the student.
- Setting small, achievable goals. Rewarding the student for any improvement in relation to attendance and punctuality.
- Engaging with organisational support classes.
- Working with family/parents/guardians who themselves may have had a negative school experience. Inviting them in, involving them in school life.
- Students who present to Extended School Time 'EST' due to ongoing lates may engage with additional work to support the time missed.
- The school may need to seek the support of other agencies such as CAMHS, ISPPC, HSE. A referral may need to be made to TUSLA.

### **School Strategies to Promote attendance:**

#### **Environment**

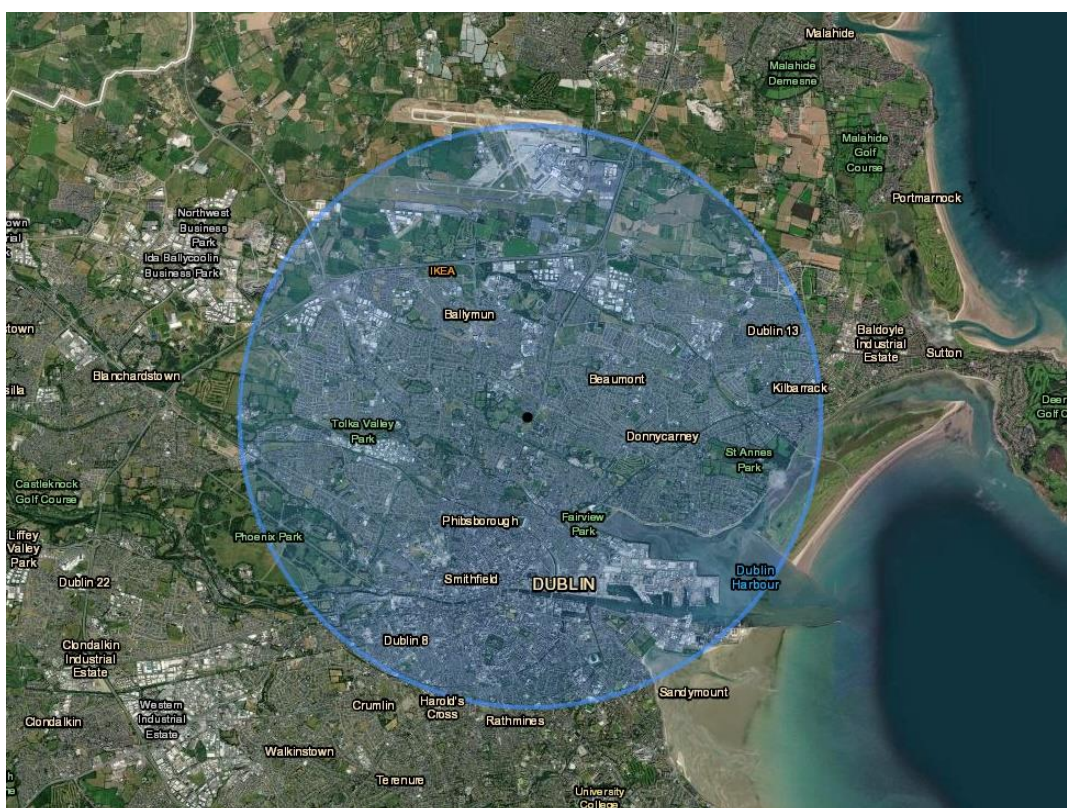
Above all else, it is our school culture that encourages and supports attendance. We believe that there must be a positive climate in the school and in the classroom. Student-teacher relationships are positive and respectful. For students we have worked hard to develop:

- A caring & safe environment.
- The promotion of positive behaviour strategies and rewards, we are a restorative practice school and our Code of Positive Behaviour reflects and supports this.
- An emphasis on positive values.
  - Respect, fairness, kindness, self-discipline & hard work.
- Relationships – interpersonal connections.
- An equitable & inclusive atmosphere and culture.
- Opportunities for students to have an active role in life of school.
- Opportunities for students to be involved in cross-curricular & extra-curricular activities to support their sense of belonging and their relationships with both teachers and peers.
- Opportunities for students to succeed academically at their own pace, differentiating to meet the needs of individual learners in our classrooms, class organisation based on mixed ability.
- Opportunities for parental & community involvement.
- An active and effective student support team.
- Students are rewarded for full attendance at the end of the Christmas term and at the end of the year. We continuously reinforce that this is an award that anyone can achieve.

## **Communication**

We also work very hard to ensure a healthy transition for students from primary school via open communication between student, school, family and primary school. Steps taken include:

- An effective mode of communication, via student journal, communication journals, school emails and vsware exist between teachers and parents. Regular contact on issues regarding homework, dress code, curriculum areas etc. Ensure these issues do not contribute to the non-attendance of pupils.
- Parents are given access to their child’s live attendance record on vsware and absences are recorded on school reports.
- Early intervention: New parents to the school are made aware of attendance requirements and the importance of attendance.
- A written agreement may be drawn up for students who live outside of a 6km radius of the school and/or require multiple modes of transport to attend:



## **Information**

- An information evening is held for enrolled students' parents in the spring prior to entry. Attendance is an important feature of this presentation. It is highlighted to parents how missed classes can have a negative effect on a student's achievement and can cause stress for the student. Parents and guardians are advised of the procedures to follow should their child be late or absent from school.
- First year parents have an induction session on the morning of their child's first day. Again, the importance of full attendance is underlined in detail at this meeting. Parents are reminded that holidays should not be booked during term time and that appointments such as dental appointments should take place after school.
- To support parents a yearly calendar is sent out in June each year which outlines school holidays and other dates that have been fixed.
- Parents will be informed of their responsibilities and the responsibilities of the School with regard to the Education Act.
- Tutors are asked to send names of students they identify with poor attendance- after utilising the structures in place to the Attendance Officer to ensure every effort is made to help children at risk as soon as possible.
- Families are informed after 15 days and 20 days absenteeism via a letter posted home by the attendance officer.

## **Reports**

Every parent is provided with details of their child's total attendance for the term in the student's school report. Attendance patterns are also discussed at parent-teacher meetings.

## **Monitoring Procedures**

The policy will be monitored on an on-going basis by the Attendance Officer in consultation with Senior Management.

## **Review Procedures**

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the school community.

**Appendix I**

**Over 18 Student Request Form**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ student at Clonturk Community College, aged 18 or older, hereby give request and give consent to Clonturk Community College providing the **adult** person(s) nominated below with my personal data, on the same or similar basis as such was communicated prior to my reaching 18 years of age.

**For the purpose of this request, please inform your nominees(s) of your decision to nominate them and obtain from them the information required below. Please also have your nominee(s) sign this request.**

**Name of Nominee(s):**

(Nominee 1) \_\_\_\_\_ (Nominee 2) \_\_\_\_\_

**The methods selected ordinary post, please provide the address(es) of the contacted are:**

Ordinary Post, Email, SMS Text Message/Telephone Call

**If you select ordinary post, please provide the address(es) of Nominee(s):**

(Nominee 1) \_\_\_\_\_

(Nominee 2) \_\_\_\_\_

**If you selected email, please provide the email address(es) of Nominees(s):**

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_ (Student/Data Subject) acknowledge and declare that I have made this request to share my personal data of **my own free will and volition** and **was not coerced** to do so, **nor was I under duress** at the time of signing this nomination form, and that I have **chosen to make this request voluntarily and knowingly** and can withdraw this request in writing at any time.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Nominee 1) acknowledge this request and hereby consent to the nomination such that I will receive from the school personal data regarding the data subject. I give this consent voluntarily and knowingly.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Nominee 2) acknowledge this request and hereby consent to the nomination such that I will receive from the school personal data regarding the data subject. I give this consent voluntarily and knowingly.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_