

Monday, 4th February, 2008

Coachford College: Attendance Policy

Coachford College strives to promote good attendance and to encourage and maintain this attendance. This policy sets out the basic principles of our School Attendance Strategy and indicates how these will be implemented, sustained and evaluated. The policy has been developed in consultation with the Board of Management, parents, staff and students.

In this school we are educators first. Education is the foundation stone upon which a child's development for later life is built. Parents are the primary educators and as such are primarily responsible for ensuring that their children receive the education which they have a right to and deserve. The school is here to support and enhance this education.

Attendance at school and full participation in school life is therefore extremely important.

Research has shown that poor attendance and poor participation are directly linked to low educational achievement and early school leaving.

The school wants to work in partnership with parents to ensure that the environment is created where children want and look forward to coming to school and participating in school life.

The school wants to create conditions where children see that it is in their own interest to come to school regularly.

The school and parents have certain obligations under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 regarding attendance and participation.

Parents/Guardians/Pupils

- The school expects **all** students registered in the school to attend all timetabled classes every day.
- If your child is absent, then the school will require an explanation in writing from you, the parent/guardian.
- If your child is under 16 or he/she has not yet completed 3 years at post-primary school, it is **your legal responsibility** to ensure that your child attends school every day, and if he/she is absent, that you explain to the school why he/she has been absent.

When your child has been absent for 15 days you will be contacted, either by letter or by phone.

If your child is absent for a total of 20 days or more during the school year, the school is obliged in law to report this to the NEWB. ***This report must be made irrespective of the reasons your child is absent.*** If the school is very concerned about the pattern of your child's absences, then the school is also obliged to inform the NEWB.

The school will always inform you if a report is being made to the NEWB.

- Parents/Guardians will be informed if the attendance of a Senior Cycle pupil is unsatisfactory.
- Please see the School Calendar for school holidays and early school closures; also contained in this is information about parent-teacher meetings and staff meetings.
- **If your child is leaving school early, please ensure that a written note, with evidence of any appointment (i.e. appointment card) is included in his/her School Journal. Before leaving school, the note must be signed by either the Principal or Deputy Principal. On leaving the school, pupils must sign out at the School Office. Students must be collected by a parent or guardian at the school office.**
- Please do not take your child out of school for holidays. This has the potential to undermine their education. It is very difficult for any child to catch up when absent for an extended holiday. There are, of course, exceptional circumstances where parents/guardians may have to take their child out of school during term time. However, you should be always aware of the potential risk to education, and therefore these situations should be kept to an absolute minimum.
- If the child has attended a doctor, please forward a doctor's note to the school. Good communication is vital, and we would prefer if you would keep us up-to-date about your child's condition.
- The class teacher will record your child's attendance during the first timetabled class in the morning.
- **If your child is late, she/he should go directly on arrival to the school office with the written explanation from you and have the time of arrival recorded. If she/he is late without permission from you, this will be recorded and dealt with under the Code of Behaviour.**
- End of Term reports will contain the number of days that your daughter/son has missed to date. If you have any queries about this please contact the school office.

At the core of all relationships in the school is mutual respect and understanding, supported by good communication.

Our School Attendance Policy will work if there is good communication between the school, yourself and your daughter/son.

Please feel free at any time to contact the school if there are any matters of concern.